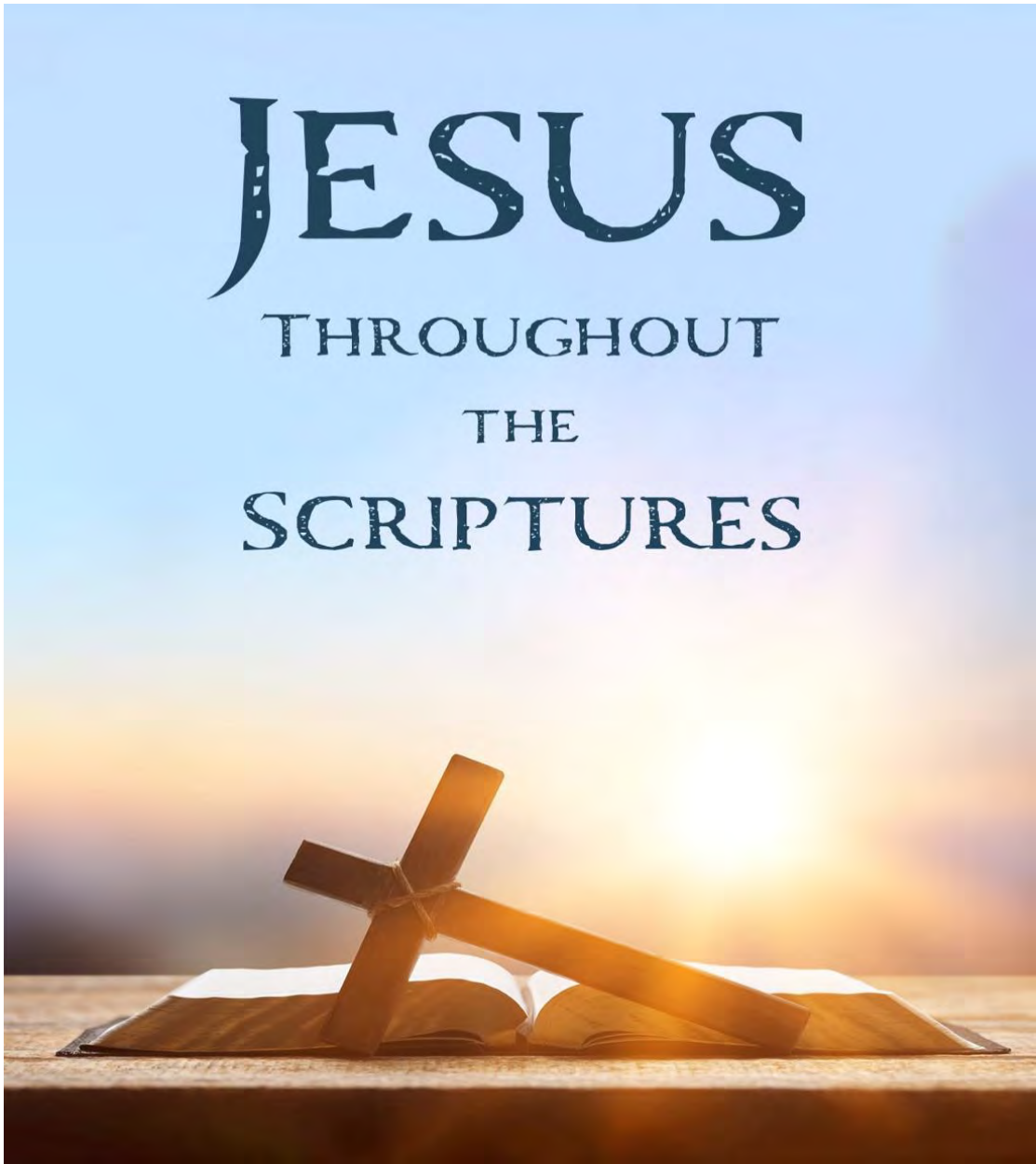


JESUS

THROUGHOUT
THE
SCRIPTURES



Part 6: 1 Samuel-2 Chronicles

T. M. and Susie Moore

A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

Jesus throughout the Scriptures
Part 6: 1 Samuel-2 Chronicles
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Jesus throughout the Scriptures: 1 Samuel-2 Chronicles—Introduction

This section of our study covers a long period of time and takes a single focus: Kingship and the coming of God's eternal King.

The focus is mostly on the southern Kingdom of Judah for the simple reason that Israel, the northern kingdom, offered no exemplary kings to point us to Jesus. At best, these rebellious kings show us where departing from God's covenant leads. It's not pretty, and we won't spend any time on it for our purposes.

God had promised His people could have a king, and several of them gave us glimpses of what the great King would be like when He brought His Kingdom to earth.

We are pleased to offer this resource at no charge to readers, but we encourage to pray and seek the Lord whether He might have you join in supporting the work of The Fellowship of Ailbe. You can use the contribute button at our website to give online, or you may send a check to The Fellowship of Ailbe, P. O. Box 8213, Essex, VT 05451.

We hope you find these studies helpful so that you grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to increase in love for God and your neighbors.

T. M. Moore
Principal

1 Right Idea, Wrong Approach

Pray Psalm 17.1-3.

Hear a just cause, O LORD,
Attend to my cry;
Give ear to my prayer *which is* not from deceitful lips.
Let my vindication come from Your presence;
Let Your eyes look on the things that are upright.
You have tested my heart;
You have visited *me* in the night;
You have tried me and have found nothing;
I have purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.

Sing Psalm 17.1-3.

(Park Street: *All You That Fear Jehovah's Name*)

Hear a just cause, O God the LORD! Gladly receive my plaintive word.
I cry with lips of purity: Look on my case with equity!
Look on my case with equity!

Let judgment from Your throne proceed; You have discerned my every need.
Let naught of sin in me be found, and from my tongue let truth resound!
And from my tongue let truth resound!

Read 1 Samuel 8.1-7; 10.17-24; 16.7; meditate on 1 Samuel 16.7.

Preparation

1. What did Israel want Samuel to do?
2. What were the people looking at as qualities of a king?

Meditation

In this installment of our series, “Jesus throughout the Scripture”, we will be looking at 6 books and a long sweep of Old Testament history. But our focus will be on kings and their work. That should already suggest how much of this part of Scripture invites us to look ahead to the coming of the King of kings.

We begin with Saul. The people had a good idea, one which God had anticipated and laid out the parameters for in Deuteronomy 17.14-20. Israel could have a king, but in this case, God could see that, while their idea was good, their hearts were wrong and thus their approach to naming a king would be disastrous.

The people’s desire was not to be better prepared to serve the Lord but to be like the other nations (1 Sam. 8.5). Right away we know that’s not right. But that’s what we do so often in the church, isn’t it? We want to be like the surrounding culture so that people from that culture will be more likely to drift into our pews.

To them, the best man was the tallest. God knew their desire, which is why He prepared the way for their folly, 1 Sam. 10.17-24. The people should have desired a king from the line of Judah (Gen. 49.6-8). But they weren’t interested in what Scripture said, only in what they wanted. This was the period of judges, after all.

Just as the people in Jesus’ day. The Jews under Roman occupation were looking for a mighty conquering king to deliver them from their oppressors—a king who had a heart for war. But God sent them a King with the purest heart ever, a heart for peace—Shiloh, our Lord Jesus. He wasn’t what they were looking for,

however, because they were not looking according to God's Word. They had worldly hearts. What about us?

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

Samuel had two bad sons, whom he set as judges in the land of Israel. They were bad because they chose to be, not because Samuel had raised them poorly. "But his sons did not walk in his ways" (1 Sam. 8.1-3).

The people clamored for a king because they didn't like Joel and Abijah; but this was merely an excuse, for none of the people acted in a godly fashion. "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Jdgs. 21.25). Mainly, they just wanted to be like everybody else (1 Sam. 8.5).

This provoked these words from God, meant to comfort the heart of Samuel, yet showing the total depravity of the heart of man: "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Sam. 8.7).

"I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you. But you have today rejected your God, Who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said to Him, 'No, set a king over us!'" (1 Sam. 10.18, 19).

And history repeated itself with Jesus: Pilate said to the clamoring crowds, "Behold your King!" But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" (Jn. 19.14, 15).

Jesus, The ultimate King, said to His disciples, "He who hears you hears Me; he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him Who sent Me" (Lk. 10.16).

When we contemplate our own lives, do we ever clamor for another king?
Do we find ourselves longing to be just like everybody else?
Do we want our churches to be more user-friendly?
More lenient? More up to date with the times?
Or do we long to do everything God's way (Ex. 20.1-17; Matt. 22.37-40)?

Have we completely misunderstood what true worship entails?
Do we see others through the world's eyes (1 Sam. 10.24)?
Or do we see them through God's eyes (1 Sam. 16.7)?
Do we like our leaders because they are tall and good looking?
Or maybe because they are related to just the right Christian superstar?
Do we show partiality to "fame"? Or wealth?
Or do we look to Jesus Christ as The King, The Only Savior, and The Supreme Example of all we long to be and do

"If then you were raised with Christ,
seek those things which are above,
where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.
Set your mind on things above,
not on things on the earth.
For you died,
and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3.1-3).

Right idea. Right approach.

Reflection

1. What does it mean for us to confess Jesus as our King?

2. How can you resist the pull of the culture that wants to draw you away from the things of God?
3. Whom will you encourage today to remain steadfast in following the Lord Jesus?

*[T]he Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. His anointing was not an empty ceremony, a Divine power went with that instituted sign; he found himself advanced in wisdom and courage, with all the qualifications of a prince, though not advanced in his outward circumstances. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on 1 Samuel 16.6-14**

Pray Psalm 17.4-9, 15.

Pray that God will keep you from all sin, that He will hear and answer your prayers throughout the day, fill you to overflowing with His kindness, and make you more like Jesus today.

Sing Psalm 17.4-9, 15.

(Park Street: All You That Fear Jehovah's Name)

As for the deeds of sinful men, I will not walk those paths again.

My feet hold firm from first to last: Help me to walk Your righteous path,
help me to walk Your righteous path!

When I have called, You answered me, LORD; hear now my fervent, seeking word!
Let kindness flow by Your command. Keep and preserve me by Your Right Hand,
keep and preserve me by Your Right Hand.

Treasure me in Your holy eye; shelter me from a troubling sky.
Around me all my enemies eagerly would despoil me,
eagerly would despoil me.

But as for me, LORD, save and bless! Let me behold Your righteousness.
Your face in glory I would see, and thus forever blessed be,
and thus forever blessed be.

2 The Weapons of Our Warfare

Pray Psalm 78.1-5

Give ear, O my people, *to* my law;
Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings of old,
Which we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told us.
We will not hide *them* from their children,
Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD,
And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.
For He established a testimony in Jacob,
And appointed a law in Israel,
Which He commanded our fathers,
That they should make them known to their children...

Sing Psalm 78.1-5.

(Foundation: *How Firm a Foundation*)

Give ear, O my people, attend to my word,
dark sayings and parables sent from the LORD,
things we have before by our Fathers been told,
which we would not dare from our children withhold.

The glorious deeds of our God in His might,
and all of the works He has done in our sight,
together with all of the words of His Law,
would we on ourselves and our children bestow.

Read 1 Samuel 17.4-11, 38-51; meditate on verses 40-45.

Preparation

1. How did David prepare to fight Goliath?
2. What was the outcome of his victory?

Meditation

We are focusing on kings in this installment of our study of Jesus throughout the Scriptures. We're taking this tack because the kings of ancient Israel and Judah—well, some of them, at least—not only point forward to Jesus but this entire period reminds us that two kingdoms define our world and two rulers claim sovereignty over it. The false and foolish kings of Israel and Judah ruled for self and unto the destruction of their kingdoms, just as Satan is all about himself, and his kingdom is in its death throes. Meanwhile, the good kings of Judah—several of whom we will consider in this series—point to Jesus and His Kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. His is the Kingdom that prevails, the Kingdom into which we have been conveyed and on behalf of which we are ambassadors.

But how is such an unlikely victory accomplished? After all, Satan has nations, institutions, and mega-billions of forces, spiritual and human, enlisted in his cause. The weapons of our warfare (Eph. 6.10-20) seem paltry by comparison. The world mocks and scorns them. But, like David, we have the Name of the LORD upon us, and we trust in His might and His Word. We are committed to His agenda and to strong and courageous

obedience to our King. We seek daily victories by small steps and in every small area of our lives, because we know the giants of wrong-belief can be tumbled by the humblest gesture of love or the merest Word of truth. As Luther wrote, teaching us to resist the devil, “One little Word shall fell him.”

The wrong-believing world and its demonic monarch flee the Presence of the Lord Jesus. And He makes that Presence known in, to, and through us as we walk in obedience to His Word.

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162.

“Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD’s, and He will give you into our hands” (1 Sam. 17.47). So said the youth David to the giant Goliath.

And so says God, to all His children through all of history—even now.

The world is armed with sword, spear, and javelin; but we are armed with a shepherd’s staff, five smooth stones, and a sling through His Word and Spirit.

When Jesus was born, His people were still expecting a King on a big white horse, wielding weapons of earthly warfare, to rescue them. Would they never learn? Will we?

We do not serve a God Who will rescue us through tanks or bullets or bombs.

We do not serve a God Who means to rescue us through politics or governments or judges.

We do not serve a God Who desires to impress with fiery speech or eloquent tongue.

We serve a God Who rescued us for Himself through His perfect Son, Jesus Christ (Rom. 6.23; 5.8; Eph. 2.8,9).

And He gifted us with His Holy Spirit to enable us to fight the good fight with His armaments (Eph. 6.10-20).

“Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (Eph. 6.10).

And why does God choose to do it this way?

“That all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel” (1 Sam. 17.46).

The same is true for today.

Why is God victorious through fruits of the Spirit instead of guns and knives and other forms of mayhem?

Because this is the way of righteousness.

This is the way of peace.

This is the way of holiness.

This is the way God chooses to win.

Because the battle is not of this world.

The battle is a spiritual one.

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6.12).

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 Jn. 5.4, 5).

There is no law against “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Gal. 5.22, 23). Let us, as God’s children, sling these smooth stones out into our Personal Mission Field to see the many victories He will win on our behalf. That all the world may know there is a God in all the earth—wherever we reside—for He is everywhere (Ps. 139.7-12).

These are the weapons—This is the victory of King Jesus.

Reflection

1. What are the weapons God has given us to make progress in His Kingdom (Eph. 6.10-20)? How adept are you at wielding these?
2. How do you experience the Lord being with you throughout the day? What can you do to enhance your awareness of His Presence with you always?
3. What “Goliaths” are you facing today? How should you prepare to do battle with them?

The security and presumption of fools destroy them. Nothing can excel the humility, faith, and piety which appear in David's words. He expressed his assured expectation of success; he gloried in his mean appearance and arms, that the victory might be ascribed to the Lord alone. Matthew Henry (1642-1714), Commentary on 1 Samuel 17.40-47

Pray Psalm 78.56-72.

Thank God that He provides for all your daily needs and seek forgiveness for any times you have failed to be grateful for His provision. Look to Jesus, meek and lowly but exalted and glorious, and call on Him to equip you for today's battles in the spiritual warfare.

Sing Psalm 78.56-72.

(Foundation: *How Firm a Foundation*)

Yet over and over they turned from His love
and scorned Him Who ruled them from heaven above.
His glory departed, they fell to their foes
and suffered His wrath in uncountable woes.

While they were still suffering, He rose in His strength
and fought for His people and saved them at length.
From Judah a king He set for Israel,
a temple He built with His people to dwell.

Now Jesus, God's servant, is King evermore,
and we are His people, and He is our Lord.
His heart is upright as He leads by His hand
and causes us ever before Him to stand.

3 An Eternal Throne

Pray Psalm 132.11, 12.

The LORD has sworn in truth to David;
He will not turn from it:
“I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body.
If your sons will keep My covenant
And My testimony which I shall teach them,
Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore.”

Sing Psalm 132.11, 12.

(Finlandia: *Be Still, My Soul*)

Remember, LORD, the oath You swore to David;
do not turn back, do not deny Your Word:
“One of your sons, with your throne I will favor,
if he shall keep My cov’nant evermore,
and walk within My testimonies ever,
Thus he shall ever rule by Israel’s LORD.”

Read 2 Samuel 7.8-16; meditate on verse 16.

Preparation

1. What did God promise David?
2. What kind of Kingdom would this be?

Meditation

The mention of God’s having made David a “great name” (v. 9) is significant, for it harks back to the promise made to Abraham, that God would give him a great name (Gen. 12.1-3). God is not making a new covenant with David; rather, He is clarifying terms of His covenant previously mentioned, especially in Genesis 17.3-6, Genesis 49.8-11, and Deuteronomy 17.14-20.

We can see in our text the beginnings of the Davidic dynasty, the ups and downs of its history, and its culmination in an eternal Kingdom (vv. 13, 16) ruled by David’s offspring. We note, however, that it is David’s *throne* and not his *offspring* that will continue forever. For this to be the case, an eternal King must ascend that throne, and this King, of course, is Jesus.

David’s royal lineage culminates in Jesus, the Heir of David’s throne and the promised Shiloh and Law-taught King of previous revelation. The royal offspring of David will continue until the exile to Babylon in the 5th century BC. No king will assume the role upon Israel’s return to Jerusalem, and this naturally would have created anticipation among the people: “Where is the King Who is to come?”

Jesus fulfilled that role and inaugurated a Kingdom not of this world and unlike anything ever known because of the righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit it brings to the world. And we are ambassadors of that Kingdom, having been conveyed into it by our Lord Jesus Christ. Our calling now is to seek that Kingdom as the defining priority and framework of our lives, drawing on the power of the Spirit and looking to the eternal glory of Jesus, exalted to the Father’s right hand (Ps. 110.1, Col. 3.1-3).

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

Although this passage, on one level is about the question of an earthly building, God includes herein a promise to David, through Nathan, about a much grander Ruler-Redeemer, His Kingdom, and those who

would inhabit it—even we who have been grafted in (Rom. 11.11-25).

David wanted to build God a dwelling place. One made with cedar, not one that could be carried from place to place. One with a firm foundation.

God's message back to David was this: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. And I have been with you... moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously... Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house" (2 Sam. 7.8-10).

David needn't have worried about building a house for God. God was building a house for David. And furthermore, about that dwelling for God? He had chosen David's son Solomon for that task.

Our job is not to conjure up extra work for ourselves to do for God.
Our job is to do what God has already told us to do.
God does not need our help; He wants our obedience.

"For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.
I know all the birds of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are Mine.
If I were hungry, I would not tell you; for the world is Mine, and all its fullness...
Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High.
Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you,
and you shall glorify Me" (Ps. 50.10-12, 14, 15).

And that house that He promised David, that throne to bless all mankind?
Jesus fulfilled that promise fully. Jesus is the culmination of the house of David.
"Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end,
upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,
to order it and establish it with judgment and justice
from that time forward, even forever.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Is. 9.7).

"And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever,
and of His Kingdom there will be no end" (Lk. 1.33).

God is not asking us to build Him a house, either. He still doesn't need anything.
But what God wants is the obedience of His children, and their love.
Nothing has changed.
But just look at the house He is building for us:
"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you.
I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you,
I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I AM, there you may be also.
And where I go you know, and the way you know. I AM the way..." (Jn. 14.1-6).

He is the King, and He is the Way into His Kingdom. "A Kingdom not of this world and unlike anything ever known because of the righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit it brings to the world. And we are ambassadors of that Kingdom... to seek that Kingdom as the defining priority and framework of our lives, drawing on the power of the Spirit and looking to the eternal glory of Jesus, exalted to the Father's right hand."

Reflection

1. How would you explain the Kingdom of God to a nonbelieving friend?
2. Why do you suppose Christians seem to have little awareness or experience of the Kingdom?
3. What does it mean to be an ambassador of the Kingdom of God?

The establishing of his house, his throne, and his kingdom for ever, can be applied to no other than to Christ and his kingdom: David's house and kingdom long since came to an end. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on 2 Samuel 7.4-17

Pray Psalm 132.13-18.

Give thanks to the Lord for all His blessings and provision. Call on Him to clothe you with more of Christ's salvation and to Guide you as you follow Jesus today.

Sing Psalm 132.13-18.

(Finlandia: *Be Still, My Soul*)

God dwells among us, and He will forever,
to meet our needs and clothe us with His grace.
He has to us sent Jesus Christ, our Savior—
Beloved, eternal light and resting place.
His foes are banished from His Presence ever,
but we shall reign with Him before His face.

4 Heart of a King

Pray Psalm 28.8, 9.

The LORD *is* their strength,
And He *is* the saving refuge of His anointed.
Save Your people,
And bless Your inheritance;
Shepherd them also,
And bear them up forever.

Sing Psalm 28.8, 9.

(Angel's Story: O Jesus, I Have Promised)

Our strength are You, O Savior, our strong defense and sure.
Anointed with Your favor, we rest in You secure.
Save us, and bless us, Jesus, upon us turn Your face.
With shepherd's care, LORD, keep us forever in Your grace.

Read 1 Kings 3.4; 4.29-34; meditate on 4.34.

Preparation

1. What did Solomon seek from the Lord? Why did he seek it?
2. How did God respond to his prayer?

Meditation

An old spiritual expresses what should be the desire of every believing heart:

In the mornin', when I rise,

In the mornin', when I rise,

In the mornin', when I rise,

Give me Jesus.

Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus.

You can have all this world—

give me Jesus!

This, in essence, was what Solomon was seeking. He well knew that the Wisdom of God was a Person, an eternal Person Whose power and understanding were infinite and Who was truly the desire of all people (cf. Prov. 8).

But, of course, Solomon did not know that Person like we do. Nevertheless, God answered His prayer and gave Him Wisdom, making him more like Jesus so that he could judge the people of Israel well and lead them in creating beautiful things, doing good and useful works, and living in the peace and grace of the Lord.

The humility that led Solomon to seek God's Wisdom and that enabled him to use that Wisdom to serve others would not last. As Solomon relates in Ecclesiastes 2, he thought he could continue in the Wisdom of God while, at the same time, indulging folly, fun, and frivolity. That choice was his downfall and led to the division of the nation and a series of disappointing kingships.

But the Wisdom of God testified that He is greater than Solomon (Matt. 12.42). And He proved that to be true at every turn, resisting every temptation and holding to the Law of God and usher in the eternal Kingdom of the Lord. Seek Wisdom, friends. Seek Jesus day by day and moment by moment. He is all our

joy, strength, hope, love, and might.

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

As our Bible study teacher, Pat Hunter, used to say, “The strongest man (Samson), the most powerful man (David), and the wisest man (Solomon) all fell into sins of the flesh.” They all fell for the lies of Satan, and they all committed crimes against themselves and others for their foibles and transgressions. Solomon himself wrote a pithy proverb about it:

“Now therefore, listen to me, my children; pay attention to the words of my mouth:

Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths;

For she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men.

Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death” (Prov. 7.24-27).

Of course, this encompasses far more than adulterous behavior. This includes all things that are betrayals to God and His Sovereign rule—anything that transgresses the Law of God (Ex. 20.1-17).

If two kings and a judge fell, where does that leave us?

Well, actually, it leaves us in a potentially good place if we are looking to Jesus for strength—filled with the Holy Spirit—longing to please only Him, living only for Him. The Spirit that said, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (Jn. 16.33).

“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He Who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 Jn. 4.4).

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My Name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (Jn. 14.26, 27).

We can succeed, where Samson, David, and even Solomon failed—just:

Give me Jesus,

Give me Jesus.

You can have all the rest,

Give me Jesus.

Reflection

1. What is wisdom? How does wisdom differ from understanding?
2. Why should we as Christians expect to grow in wisdom in our walk with and work for the Lord?
3. What would you say are the keys to increasing in wisdom?

Solomon was herein a type of Christ, in whom are hid all treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and hid for us, for he is made of God to us, wisdom. Christ's fame shall spread through all the earth, and men of all nations shall come to him, learn of him, and take upon them his easy yoke, and find rest for their souls.. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on 1 Kings 4.29-34

Pray Psalm 28.1-7.

Pray that the Lord will give you wisdom—that is, that He will give you Jesus, more and more of Jesus every day. Seek His strength and the joy that comes from knowing His Presence with you always.

Sing Psalm 28.1-7.

(Angel's Story: O Jesus, I Have Promised)

I cry to You, our Savior, O, be not deaf to me!
LORD, speak to me with favor, lest I should dying be.
Hear now my supplications when for Your help I cry.
Receive these, my oblations, before Your throne on high.

LORD, count me not among those who walk in sinful ways.
With words of peace their tongue glows while evil fills their days.
Your works they disregard, LORD, while evil fills their hands.
Destroy them by Your Word, LORD, and let them no more stand.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus, for He will hear our prayer.
His strength protects and shields us with mercy and with care.
In You our heart rejoices; You help us by Your Word.
To You we raise our voices to praise and thank You, LORD.

5 A Dwelling Place for God

Pray Psalm 139.23, 24.

Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
And see if there is any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

Sing Psalm 139.23, 24.

(Ripley: *Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah, O My Soul*)

Search my heart, O LORD, and know me, as You only, LORD, can do.
Test my thoughts and contemplations, whether they be vain or true.
Let there be no sin in me, LORD, nothing that Your Spirit grieves.
Lead me in the righteous way, LORD, unto everlasting peace!

Read 1 Kings 6.11-14; 8.10-13, 55-61 meditate on 8.57, 58.

Preparation

1. Why did Solomon build the temple?
2. What did he call on the LORD to do for His people?

Meditation

The details of the building of the temple, from the initial contracts with Hiram of Tyre, to the gathering of resources and the details of construction, unto the final adornments of the whole project, are reported in 1 Kings 5-8. The temple was to be the earthly abode of God, where His people would meet with Him for worship and instruction. It had to be a majestic and beautiful temple, because God is majestic and beautiful.

The idea that God would come to dwell among His people was new with Israel. It began with the tabernacle; but that did not seem a fitting dwelling place for the eternal God. David and Solomon moved to create a more permanent structure. They reasoned, God loves us. He receives our worship. He guides us in His Law. He has been among us in this earthly tent. He should be here with us, among us, dwelling with us in a more permanent and glorious structure; and the place where He dwells should reflect the majesty and beauty of His divine character.

All this points us forward to Jesus, in Whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. He came among us, not in majesty and beauty, but lowly, and as a servant, obedient to His Father on our behalf, even unto death. “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him...” (Phil. 2.9). Now Jesus is exalted in glory, has been given a Name above all names, and rules from His throne in heaven where He ever lives to intercede for us. And He has sent His Spirit to dwell in us and to transform us into His likeness.

We who believe are thus “temples” of the Lord, and our churches—we as communities of believers—are temples in the temple of the worldwide Church, dwelling places of God through faith in Jesus Christ. God dwells among us now because of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who promised to be with us always, even to the end of the age (Matt. 28.20). David in Psalm 139 celebrated and wondered over the Presence of our Lord with us; we should do so as well.

God is building a dwelling place for Himself in the soul of every believer in Jesus. And He calls us to join in that work which makes us day by day more a refraction of the living Lord Jesus in this world (Phil. 2.12; 2 Cor. 3.12-18).

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162.

As “God is building a dwelling place for Himself in the soul of every believer” we must make sure to keep ourselves ready for Him to inhabit us. God tells us exactly how we should be prepared:

“Concerning this temple which you are building,
if you walk in My statutes,
execute My judgments,
keep all My commandments,
and walk in them,
then I will perform My word with you,
which I spoke to your father David.
And I will dwell among the children of Israel,
and will not forsake My people Israel” (1 Kgs. 6.12, 13).

Why is it that so many believers today think we bear no responsibility?
That there are no requirements to fulfill in our walk with the Lord?
That we have ostensibly received our *Get out of jail free* card and that is the end of the story?
Why is keeping all His commandments not even a thing anymore?
How is it we miss the if/then clauses in so much of Scripture?
Why is there a laziness of spirit toward all things godly?
What has happened to cause this confusion?
Is it that we are blind to the enemy’s tactical strikes?
Is it that he would like us to forget that we are called to holiness and godliness?
And we willingly don’t remember?

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit Who is in you,
Whom you have from God, and you are not your own?
For you were bought at a price;
therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit,
which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6.19, 20).

You were bought by Jesus, *therefore* glorify God in your body and spirit.

“In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity;
and by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil” (Prov. 16.6).

This was Solomon’s foray into providing the first *Four Spiritual Laws* or *Steps to Peace With God* booklet.
Only it’s better, more concise, and complete, covering things the others leave out.
Namely, the step after salvation.

God provides atonement for sin through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son Jesus.
Then we fear the LORD, follow His Word, and depart from evil in the process.
It is hard work—the whole story—not just near Christianity.
It’s the work that prepares us to be a dwelling place for God—fully habitable.

Reflection

1. How is it evident in your life that you are a dwelling place of God?
2. Jesus said, “I will build My church” (Matt. 16.18). What makes a local church a dwelling place of God?
3. How does God intend for us to adorn and beautify the temple He is making of us?

What Solomon asks for in this prayer, is still granted in the intercession of Christ, of which his supplication was a type. We shall

receive grace sufficient, suitable, and seasonable, in every time of need. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on 1 Kings 8.54-61*

Pray Psalm 139.11-18.

Jesus is, indeed, with us always. Give Him thanks and praise, and call on Him for grace and strength to serve Him this day.

Sing Psalm 139.11-18.

(Ripley: *Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah, O My Soul*)

Neither light nor dark conceals me; day as night is with You, LORD!

All my inward parts You fashioned by Your all-decreeing Word.

Praise the LORD, for You have made me; all Your wondrous works I'll tell!

All Your works declare Your glory, and my soul knows this full well!

All my unformed frame You witnessed when You destined all my days.

Precious to me, LORD, Your precepts; all Your wondrous Word I praise.

More than sand, Your thoughts to me, LORD, far too vast their sum for me!

When the morning breaks upon me, in Your Presence I shall be.

6 Judah Ascendant

Pray Psalm 105.8-11, 45.

He remembers His covenant forever,
The word *which* He commanded, for a thousand generations,
The covenant which He made with Abraham,
And His oath to Isaac,
And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute,
To Israel as an everlasting covenant,
Saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan
As the allotment of your inheritance,”...
That they might observe His statutes
And keep His laws.
Praise the LORD!

Sing Psalm 105.8-11, 45.

(Warrington: *Give to Our God Immortal Praise*)

He will His covenant faithfully guard—His oath, the promise of His Word.
That which He to our fathers swore, He will perform forevermore!

So let us all in our Savior confide, and in His holy Law abide.
Let us observe His glorious Word, and praise our sovereign, faithful LORD!

Read 2 Chronicles 15.1-15; meditate on verses 1, 2, and 12.

Preparation

1. What did the prophet command Asa to do?
2. How did he and the people respond?

Meditation

Asa begins a string of mostly good kings in Judah, while the nation of Israel continued following wicked kings as they cycled ever downward toward captivity in Assyria.

In this passage we hear language we have heard before in our study: “be strong”, “took courage”, “entered a covenant”, and so forth. Clearly, under the leadership of the prophet Azariah, Judah is getting back on track with the Lord following the disastrous reigns of Rehoboam and Abijam. It will still be an up and down experience until, finally, even Judah succumbs to sinfulness and is carried away captive to Babylon. But for now, these good kings remind us of what God requires of His people and point us forward to the coming of Jesus.

While the books of 1 and 2 Kings give a running history of both Israel and Judah, 1 and 2 Chronicles—written perhaps later than 1 and 2 Kings—concentrate only on Judah. The nation and tribe of Judah are clearly ascendant following the division of the tribes under Rehoboam. The focus for the remainder of the Old Testament—some minor prophets excepted—is on Judah. The future is in Judah. And the future will be from Judah, when Jesus comes to claim the throne of David and to inaugurate the Kingdom of God.

In Judah under the good kings we see the sort of reformation that believers in Jesus seek: Removing all idols, returning to true worship, renewing covenant with the Lord, seeking Him with all our heart, enjoying the rest and peace of the Lord. Again, such periods were episodic, even in Judah under the best kings. But with Jesus,

these become the permanent attributes of those who have a new heart and in whom the Spirit of God dwells.

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

“But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For God is not unjust to forget your work and love which you have shown toward His Name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Heb. 6.9-12).

“As the Father loved Me,
I also have loved you;
abide in My love.
If you keep My commandments,
you will abide in My love,
just as I have kept My Father’s commandments
and abide in His love.
These things I have spoken to you,
that My joy may remain in you,
and that your joy may be full” (Jn. 15.9-11).

“Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin [and those who are afar off—Eph. 2.17.
The LORD is with you while you are with Him.
If you seek Him, He will be found by you;
but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you” (2 Chron. 15.2).

“Seek the LORD while He may be found,
call upon Him while He is near” (Is. 55.6).
“When You said, ‘Seek My face,’
my heart said to You, ‘Your face, LORD, I will seek’” (Ps. 27.8).

“For everyone who asks receives,
and he who seeks finds,
and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Matt. 7.8).
“But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,
and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6.33).

For we have sworn with all our heart
and sought Him with all our soul.
And He was found by us—and the LORD gave us rest (2 Chron. 15.15).

He gave us Jesus.

Reflection

1. What are the best ways to make sure you don’t forsake the Lord when temptations arise?
2. How would you counsel a new believer to seek the Lord each day?

3. How will you use tomorrow to rest in the Lord and be renewed for the week to come?

What is religion but seeking God, inquiring after him, applying to him upon all occasions? We make nothing of our religion, if we do not make heart-work of it; God will have all the heart, or none. Our devotedness to God our Savior, should be avowed and shown in the most solemn and public manner. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on 2 Chronicles 15

Pray Psalm 105.1-7.

Thank God for choosing, creating, keeping, saving, and sanctifying you. Commit yourself to sharing His deeds and love with others today. Be specific.

Sing Psalm 105.1-7.

(Warrington: Give to Our God Immortal Praise)

Give thanks unto the LORD Most High; call on His Name, before Him cry!

Make known His deeds in every land; sing praise for all the works of His hand.

Glory in God, rejoice in heart, all you who seek His holy part.

Him and His strength and Presence seek; His works proclaim, His judgments speak.

You holy children of Abraham, you chosen ones of Jacob, stand!

He is our LORD, of wondrous worth; His judgments are in all the earth.

7 A Stumbling Trajectory

Pray Psalm 119.25, 26.

My soul clings to the dust;
Revive me according to Your word.
I have declared my ways, and You answered me;
Teach me Your statutes.

Sing Psalm 119.25, 26.

(Festal Song: *Rise Up, O Men of God*)
My soul clings to the dust; revive me by Your Word!
My ways I have declared to You; teach me Your statutes, LORD!

Read 2 Chronicles 34.18-21; 29-33.; meditate on verses 30, 31.

Preparation

1. How did Josiah respond to hearing God's Law?
2. What did he lead the nation to do?

Meditation

Unlike the kings of Israel, those of Judah were, from time to time, committed to doing the will of the Lord. Especially as the nation lurched steadily toward judgment and captivity, God in His grace provided them with good kings. It's as if, no matter how bad things got or how rebellious the people became, God reminded them of His promises and love by providing them with a good king. Especially Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 17.3-6), Joash (2 Chron. 24.4, 5), Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29.3-5, 30), and Josiah (today's text) provided a trajectory of kings who honored God, kept His commandments, rallied the people to worship and serve the LORD, and protected them from enemies.

Thus a trajectory of good kings, ruling in the Name of the LORD, and defending the people from their foes, marks the direction of the historical progress of God's covenant. God's promise—first to Abraham and then to David—would not fail. He would care for His people according to His Word.

But it was a stumbling trajectory at best, for none of these good kings finished very well. They gave in to neglect or pride or a "good enough" rule, leaving the nation to suffer for their folly.

And to long for a truly good and reliable king.

So the historical books of the Old Testament—1 Samuel through 2 Chronicles—point upward to God, backwards to His promises, and forward to the coming of the promised King for Whom the throne of David was inaugurated according to God's Word (Gen. 49.8-11). And this coming King—Shiloh—would have an eternal Kingdom and would rule and shepherd His people unto righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14.17, 18).

When good kings ruled in Judah, the people knew a foretaste of the rule of King Jesus. Now that Jesus has ascended His throne (Ps. 110; Dan. 7.13-18) and we have been conveyed into His Kingdom, we know that our King rules in justice and righteousness forever. Thus, we embrace as the defining priority of His realm to seek His Kingdom and righteousness as the defining priority of our lives.

Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

America has more well-dressed pastors than we know what to do with. Snazzy looks, upbeat sermons, in praise-tastic services, but with not a clue as to how to be chided by God's Word. Thus, our churches are languishing.

Where are the shepherds with torn clothes—torn in response to hearing God's Word?

“Thus it happened, when the king heard the words of the Law, that he tore his clothes” (2 Chron. 34.19).

Then he sent some of his men to, “Go, inquire of the LORD for me, and for those who are left in Israel and Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book” (2 Chron. 34.21).

However, because we are filled with the Holy Spirit, and we have these very Words of the Law at our disposal, to read daily and live by, we are without excuse.

Even if our pastors have dropped the ball? Yep.

Even if they are not convicted by God's Word. Also, yes.

Even if they are not shepherding their flocks at all? Affirmative.

Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit to convict us personally of sin, teach us how to be righteous, and how to use good judgment in all our roles and responsibilities (Jn. 16.7-11).

As much as I would like to lay all the blame at someone else's feet, I cannot.

We are saved and called and responsible (Eph. 2.8-10; Phil. 2.12).

But, yes, just as Solomon wrote, we would love to rejoice because of godly leadership:

“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when a wicked man rules, the people groan” (Prov. 29.2).

“When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; and when the wicked perish there is jubilation” (Prov. 11.10).

And we can rejoice, because Jesus is our King, our Shepherd, and our Leader:

“The king who judges the poor with truth, his throne will be established forever” (Prov. 29.14).

“He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, and will break in pieces the oppressor” (Ps. 72.4)

“But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth...” (Is. 11.4).

We must pray for our pastors that God will revive them, to hear the words of the Law of the LORD, for they do carry an extra burden before Him because they chose the role of Shepherd (Jms. 3.1).

But we must also pray for ourselves, that we will daily “Go and inquire of the LORD” about our walk with Him, and our keeping of His Law—to “make a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all [our] heart and all [our] soul, to perform the words of the covenant that [are] written in this book” (2 Chron. 34.31).

“I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes forever, to the very end” (Ps. 119.112).

Righteously tattered and torn if needed; but forgiven and ready to serve our King Jesus.

Take my love, my God, I pour, at Thy feet its treasure store;

Take myself and I will be, ever, only, all for Thee, ever, only, all for Thee.

(Frances R. Havergal, 1874)

Reflection

1. What should you pray for your pastor?
2. What can you do to improve your hearing of the Word of God?
3. Pride, neglect, complacency, outright sin. So we also may stumble on our path to the Lord. What are the keys to avoiding these pitfalls?

Very few of the kings of Judah promised to follow the Lord as Josiah did. After David, only Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah made such public commitments (see 23:3; 29:10; 1 Chr. 17:7–14). They stand head and shoulders above the other kings of Judah and Israel. Earl Radmacher (1933-2014), NKJV Study Bible Note on 2 Chronicles 34.31

Pray Psalm 119.27-32.

Pray that God will give you greater love for His Word, love to sustain you in the face of every temptation and to bring you day by day to feed on His Word with rejoicing.

Sing Psalm 119.27-32.

(Festal Song: *Rise Up, O Men of God*)

Make me to understand Your precepts and Your ways,
as on Your works I meditate with wonder and with praise!

My soul weighs down with woe, I need Your strength, O LORD!
Remove from me all lying ways; grant me Your holy Word!

I choose the way of truth; Your judgments I proclaim.
Your testimonies I embrace, LORD, put me not to shame!

Command my course, O LORD; Your gracious truth impart.
I cling to You and know You will enlarge my seeking heart.

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

1. Why was Saul the wrong choice as king over Israel? Why did God allow the people to make this choice?
2. David was not a perfect king, but the Lord said that he had a heart for Him. What does it mean to have a heart for God? Does this describe your heart?
3. The division of Israel into two nations is regarded as a bad thing. But what good came of it? How did the ascendancy of Judah help prepare the way for the coming of Jesus?
4. Why did God keep giving His people good kings? What made them good?
5. What's the most important lesson you have learned from seeing Jesus in these historical books?

For Prayer:

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