

Tuesday, September 8, 2020—2 Chronicles 26-29

Holiness is a gift of God. He calls His people to be holy as He is holy, but only He can provide the righteousness that is equal to His. We cannot become righteous on our own. If we could, Jesus wasted His life.

Holiness is a daily choice. Though we cannot earn it, we can walk in it. God gives the Holy Spirit to be Counselor and empowering presence so we can become who He has made us to be. From the day of salvation until the day of death, God expects His people to walk in holiness.

The kings of the Old Testament did not have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them, but they did have the Law, the prophets, and the priests to give them guidance and remind them of the expectations of Yahweh. King Uzziah began his reign seeking the Lord, and God gave him success (26:5). God gave him great help which resulted in great power (26:15).

Uzziah's pride then became his downfall (26:16), and he lived with disease until he died. His son, Jotham, avoided this curse because he walked faithfully before Yahweh his God (27:6). His power was secure in his faith.

Ahaz did not learn the lessons of humility, and he did what was detestable before Yahweh. He even sacrificed his infant son in the fire. He trusted kings and idols more than Yahweh (28:1-27). Hezekiah saw this unholiness and purified the Temple and the people (29:1-36).

Holiness is possible because of Jesus. Holiness is a choice to follow God rather than self. Holiness walks away from the world's influence.

Monday, September 7, 2020—2 Chronicles 23-25

Serious problems do not always have immediate solutions. In His wisdom, justice, grace, and mercy, God often works over a period of time to bring about the good He desires. Patience is not easy but necessary.

Athaliah, the mother of King Ahaziah, seized the throne when her son died, and she put to death the royal family so she could be in control. One of the family members hid the infant Joash, and the priest Jehoida devised a plan to recognize him as king, but this did not take place until Joash was seven years old. For nearly

seven years, the people had to endure the terror and idolatry of the wicked woman.

Some years later, Joash decided to repair the Temple. Under Athaliah's reign, the Temple was neglected and looted. Joash then encouraged the people to give freely for the restoration of the Temple, and they gladly filled the chest (24:10). The restoration of the Temple and its furnishings went forward, and the Temple functioned properly again.

When Jehoiada, the high priest, died, the faithfulness of Joash died with him. The king who had brought revival to the land turned toward wickedness, and he was assassinated. His son Amaziah took the throne and had his father's assassins killed. He lacked wholehearted devotion to God and practiced idolatry, and he was eventually deposed and killed.

Faithfulness requires discipline, patience, and time, but wickedness is a rapidly-spreading infection. Pray for daily renewal of faithful living.

Sunday, September 6, 2020—2 Chronicles 20-22

God calls His people into the Body of Christ. Each person is a member, and Jesus is the Head. No one ever has to face a struggle alone because they are connected to Christ and His congregation.

This idea of community came from the nation of Israel. God had chosen His people and given them prophets, priests, and kings to guide them through the highs and lows of life. When King Jehoshaphat learned that huge armies were marching unprovoked against Judah, he called the people to prayer. They gathered together to pray at the Temple (20:4).

Jehoshaphat began not by asking for help but by praising God. Then, he shared the need of the nation and concluded, "We don't know what to do, but our eyes are on you" (20:12). One of the men urged them to trust the Lord to fight the battle. They simply needed to show up. The next day, the king placed the men's choir at the front of the battle formation, and they began to sing and praise. God fought the battle while they worshiped, and they gathered plunder for three days (20:13-29).

Sometimes God uses His people to encourage one another to pray.

Sometimes He uses people like Elijah to call each other to repentance (21:12-15). These encounters are uncomfortable but necessary for God's glory and the health of the Body. When there is continual sin and disobedience, the Body suffers greatly (22:1-12).

Thank God for the church in which He has placed you. Pray for each person to be faithful to the gifting God has given.

Saturday, September 5, 2020—2 Chronicles 17-19

Jehoshaphat had seen his father walk faithfully and make mistakes. Jehoshaphat had to choose for himself how he would walk and, therefore, how he would lead. His heart was devoted to the ways of Yahweh, and he actively removed the places of idol worship around the country (17:6).

He was not content with these preliminary steps. He sent officials throughout the kingdom to teach the Bible to the people (17:9). Thereafter, the fear of the Lord fell on all the kingdoms of the lands surrounding Judah (17:10). They did not make war, and some brought the king gifts. God was blessing Jehoshaphat externally for the internal choice to worship.

When Jehoshaphat allied himself with the king of Israel, Ahab, they considered going into battle. Jehoshaphat suggested they pray first and seek the counsel of God (18:4). The prophet Micaiah came and said Ahab would die in battle, and Ahab ordered he be sent to prison. Sometimes, complete obedience results in difficulty. God calls us to faithfulness despite the consequences. After the battle, Ahab was dead, and Jehu the seer reprimanded Jehoshaphat for going into battle with someone so wicked.

Jehoshaphat had the wisdom to know he could not maintain righteousness in the country alone. He appointed judges throughout the land and charged them with living in the fear of the Lord as they guided the people (19:6-7) and encouraging the people to do the same. Obedience comes from personal decision, outward action, and corporate partnership.

Pray for a God-honoring faith, life, and church family.

Friday, September 4, 2020—2 Chronicles 14-16

The stories of 1 and 2 Chronicles parallel those of 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings, but they are not identical. In 1 Chronicles 13, King Abijah gives a bold call to battle and to trust in Yahweh. In 1 Kings 15, there is evidence that most of his reign was marked by unfaithfulness.

When Asa became king, he had to deal with the rampant idolatry and compromise throughout the country. He cleansed the land, and God gave them spiritual and military peace. Going into battle, Asa prayed, “Lord, there is no one like you to help the powerless against the mighty. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this vast army. O Lord, you are our God; do not let man prevail against you” (14:11).

Asa was in his fifteenth year as king when Azariah the prophet came to him and encouraged him to continue pursuing Yahweh. History had shown the benefits of seeking the Lord and the pitfalls of forsaking him. Asa called the country to a mutual covenant of seeking Yahweh with all their heart and soul (15:12). He even deposed his grandmother because she was an idol worshiper (15:16).

In his later years, Asa trusted money and armies more than he trusted Yahweh, though he had seen Yahweh do great things. God is looking for those whose hearts are wholeheartedly devoted to Him so He can show Himself mighty (16:9). Pray for faith that is strong and steady to the very day God calls you home.

Thursday, September 3, 2020—2 Chronicles 10-13

Rebuilding after a natural disaster is hard work. The site has to be cleaned. Memories and possessions have to be sorted. Dreams are shared, and plans are made. Then, the rebuilding begins.

The exiles returning to Israel had the privilege and responsibility to rebuild, but they needed to remember why the rebuilding was necessary. Each leader and tribe had weaknesses that could be problematic.

When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became king. The people asked Rehoboam to require less labor from them than Solomon had. Rehoboam consulted his elders, who said this was good. His younger advisers, however, said he should be more strict. He needed to show he was bigger, stronger, and more

kingly than his father. Rehoboam agreed with the advice of the younger, but the people rebelled against him (10:16).

This led to national division. Those intent on seeking Yahweh alone moved to Jerusalem and the surrounding area of Judah (11:16-17). The rest of the nation abandoned exclusivity to Yahweh and followed King Jeroboam of Israel. They rejected the priests and Levites and established their own standards for worship of God

King Rehoboam established himself over Judah and then compromised his worship of Yahweh. God allowed the king of Egypt to attack and subject the people of Judah so they could learn the difference between serving Yahweh and serving the kings of other lands (12:8). Reliance on Yahweh provided victory against a much stronger foe (13:18).

Worship is recognition of God and obedience to Him, not compliance by convenience or according to personal standards.

#### Wednesday, September 2, 2020—2 Chronicles 7-9

When Solomon finished praying his dedication prayer over the Temple, the fire of God came down and consumed the burnt offerings and sacrifices. The glory of God was so manifest that the priests could not enter the Temple but knelt before God with their faces to the ground. Physically, mentally, and spiritually arrested by the power of God, how did the priests react? They gave thanks and recognized the eternally enduring love of God.

“He is good; his love endures forever” (7:3). Think of it. Seeing and feeling the glory of God, the people did not run away in fear. They worshiped God because of His love. Yahweh is mighty and powerful, yet He is able to express His love in a way that moves His people to worship (7:4-10). God told Solomon He wanted the Temple to be a place where His people would continually find audience with Him, and He assured Solomon His faithful obedience would allow his family to continue leading.

Solomon’s fame spread, and the queen of Sheba came to visit him, asking hard questions. Solomon answered all her inquiries (9:3). Seeing his great wisdom

and his amazing possessions, she was overwhelmed (9:4). She spoke praise to God for His delight in placing Solomon on the throne and blessing the people through him (9:8). Eventually, all the kings of the earth would come for an audience with Solomon (9:23).

Pray for a life of faith and obedience in response to the great love of God.  
Pray for wisdom that moves people to worship Him.