

## **Thursday, September 2, 2021—2 Chronicles 7-9**

Corrie ten Boom and her sister Betsy spent years in a Nazi concentration camp. Their sleeping accommodations were infested with fleas. Over time, they realized those fleas kept the Nazi guards from coming into their quarters where they regularly shared the gospel.

One day, Betsy realized they had never thanked God for the fleas. This was not the realization at which many would arrive, yet it was powerfully evident. What God had allowed deserved thanks.

When Solomon dedicated the Temple, God manifested His glory with great power. While most would have trembled in fear or run away, His people declared, “He is good and his mercy endures forever” (7:3). A God with that kind of power who called a people to be His own was a God worthy of love, devotion, and worship.

When God spoke to Solomon, He said the Temple would be a place of prayer. When drought or pestilence struck the land, the people were to come to Him. Rather than asking Him to reverse the situation (the expected request), the people were to come to Him in repentance (7:14). Their humility and changed lifestyle would bring His blessing.

As Solomon finished dedicating the Temple and its surroundings, he realized his wife, a non-believer, could not live in any place dedicated to God (8:11). The expectation would be for a husband to be accommodating to his wife, yet Solomon had higher regard for Yahweh than for her.

Pray for a life which responds appropriately to the glory of God.

## **Wednesday, September 1, 2021—2 Chronicles 4-6**

People, by nature, play the comparison game. They look to others to decide whether they are rich enough, nice enough, pretty enough, smart enough, and more. The comparison is endless . . . and pointless. There will always be someone better and someone worse.

The key to humility and to self-fulfillment is to compare oneself to Christ. Seeing His holiness, no one can think he is “holy enough.” Everyone falls short. Seeing His love and grace, no one can think he is “not good enough.” Jesus offers grace and mercy to the lowest.

Solomon built the Temple and its furnishings according to God’s standards. He built 10 small basins for washing the animals brought as sacrifices, but he built one, massive basin in which the priests would wash (4:1-6). The innocent offerings required a much smaller amount of water than the very men God had chosen to stand between Himself and His people. Every sacrifice was a reminder of the need for God’s grace.

When the Temple was complete, God’s glory filled the Temple, and the priests could not stand (5:14). God once again demonstrated to His people His greatness and their inability to compare to Him. Solomon celebrated the majesty of God (6:4). He was not One from whom to flee but One to revere and to approach in order to worship and receive grace.

Thank God for Jesus’ being the true way to Him. Pray for humility to compare yourself to

Him and discipline to grow in His character.

### **Tuesday, August 31, 2021—2 Chronicles 1-3**

Stories are numerous of those who come into fortune and then squander it. History tells the tales of powerful people who wrested control but could not keep it. Fame and fortune are fleeting without wisdom.

Solomon became king after his father, and he knew at the beginning the role God had played in his position. He magnified God greatly (1:1) and offered 1,000 burnt offerings to Him (1:6) as the people worshiped with him. When God told Solomon he could ask for anything, Solomon prayed for wisdom to lead the people (1:10). God affirmed Solomon and said He would give this most important gift for leaders as well as the riches and honor he could have asked for.

Then, Solomon set out to build the Temple his father had longed to build. This would be a house to the name of Yahweh, and it would be great because He was great, the God above all gods (2:5-6). He knew the house could not contain a God so great, but he wanted the place to honor Him nonetheless, so Solomon sought one who was skilled to shape such a spectacular place. He organized the work and set the men to it.

The exiles who returned from Babylon would need to rebuild the Temple by the dimensions He described (3:1-17). They would need God's wisdom like never before. What He had done for Solomon and through Solomon He could do again with their faith and His grace.

Pray for God's wisdom and power to work through you.

### **Monday, August 30, 2021—1 Chronicles 27-29**

An automobile is made of thousands of parts. Each one plays a specific role in the overall function of the vehicle. When one breaks down, a mechanic can fix it or change it. The goal is having a useful vehicle.

David had thousands of people who served him as king. They functioned in the Temple, in the army, or at his palace. They served according to their tribe and the king's assignment. Their vast numbers may have made it seem as if their role were not important, yet they brought glory to God and flourishing to the nation. Each role was vital, but eventually each person—including the king—handed his role to another.

With this in mind, David himself lived with humility and wisdom. He praised God for the calling on his life, and he made preparations for the future. He organized resources for the Temple. He aligned advisors and partners for Solomon to be successful. He readied Solomon to be king. David knew the future depended on Yahweh, not him.

Followers of Christ are to have the same attitude and practice. Each person is to find his place to serve the body and glorify Christ. Each person is to shape others and make disciples who can lead in the future, and the whole community is to live in humble worship of the King who is their Head. Everyone functions at His command and for His honor.

Thank God for His call on your life. Walk in His power, encourage those around you, and plan for the future.

### **Sunday, August 29, 2021—1 Chronicles 24-26**

Rick Warren says every believer in Christ has a SHAPE for serving Christ and His

people. Each one has at least one Spiritual gift, a Heart-felt passion for helping others, Ability, Personality, and Experience. All of these combine to shape believers for glorifying Christ and shaping others.

The exiles were coming back to the Promised Land and would need to arrange for worshiping and serving Yahweh at the Temple. The previous generations had relied on casting lots (24:5, 31; 25:8, 26:13) to allow God to make clear who was to serve in each position. Today, believers have the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to guide them in prayer.

Some of the returning exiles would serve as priests because they were of the tribe of Levi (24:1-31). Some would lead in song and instruction (25:1-7), giving thanks and praise to God and speaking His truth. Today, God calls some to lead and to teach the Body so the church can glorify Him and grow in strength and knowledge.

Others were called to be gatekeepers (26:1) and to serve in other capacities around the Temple (26:12). They were not called to be in front of others like the priests and prophets but they were nonetheless important to proper function and obedience as they served. Today, God gifts every follower of Christ to serve others in some capacity for the glory of Jesus.

Thank God for the gifting and calling He has given to you in Christ with His Spirit. Serve Him and bless others for the sake of Christ.

### **Saturday, August 28, 2021—1 Chronicles 20-23**

Everyone is fighting a battle of some kind. For some, the battle is visible—health issues, lean finances, dysfunctional family. For others, the battle is internal yet equally if not more intense and exhausting.

The Chronicler described the battles David and his men fought with the surrounding peoples (. . . the time that kings go to battle . . .), but he also subtly mentioned the temptation David fought (. . . but David tarried at Jerusalem . . . (20:10 . . . Satan stood up against Israel . . . (21:1)). To lead well on their return to Israel, God's people would need to align their hearts in holiness with Him and be ready to stave off the external forces that sought their demise or compromise.

When sin becomes apparent, repentance is necessary. The consequences of sin are costly, and God's people may have to endure them despite their repentance. Without repentance, the consequences will be even more destructive. David recognized the weight of his pride, and he bought a place to sacrifice to Yahweh (21:24). At that site, Solomon would build the Temple, so David began to make preparations for it.

From David's sin, God brought good. God gave the people a king of peace and a place of worship. This does not mean His people should sin so He can work His miracles. It does mean God is able to work in all things for the good of those who love Him.

Pray for faith to walk in holiness and to see God at work.

### **Friday, August 27, 2021—1 Chronicles 17-19**

God calls each person into a personal relationship with Him, but that personal relationship is not to remain private. He calls those in relationship with Him into relationship with other believers. The Body of Christ works together to honor Christ, the head, and bless each other.

God laid the groundwork for this community in the nation of Israel. They needed one another to fulfill their call from God. As the exiles prepared to return to their homeland, the

Chronicler helped them look back at their ancestors to see how they obeyed and flourished.

David wanted to honor God with a Temple, a permanent home for His presence. David needed the wisdom of Nathan to know this was a noble pursuit but one David was not to complete. The people returning to Israel would need to rebuild the Temple, so they would need to find the right people and the right timing for its success.

David also needed his troops, and they needed godly wisdom and strategy to defeat the enemies which surrounded them. In times of victory and honor or in times of shame and defeat, God's people trust Him and rally around one another. The exiles, too, would face enemies, so they would need to fight with wisdom and courage.

Thank God for the community of faith in which He has placed you. Pray for wisdom to fill your mind each day. Pray for patience as you wait on His wisdom and direction. Pray for obedience and courage to honor Him and to become and do all He desires.