

1 Chronicles 13-15

We left off at the great celebration of the coronation of King David. It's been a long and laborious, troublesome and tiresome journey, but God in His faithfulness has fulfilled His Word to David and set him upon the throne over all Israel. You recall there was a significant period of time whereby he'd been rejected by his own (though God had proclaimed him king) and it was during that time that so many began to defect to David, realizing and recognizing God's work in his life and that he was indeed the rightful king. and It's kind of a neat parallel because in that David becomes a type of Christ who has been proclaimed of God to be the rightful King, the Heir of all things. He's to sit on the throne of David and rule over all the earth. He's been anointed of God, He's been ordained of God, and there's nothing that's going to get in the way of the plan or purpose of God. Yet we live in an age whereby He's been rejected by His own, and it's during these days of rejection that people have been as it were "defecting" to Him, recognizing and realizing that He is the rightful King and Ruler over all things. and The day is coming soon when He'll be established upon the throne of David, over not only all of Israel but over all the earth; and great will be the celebration.

But as we noted last week there's personal application in there for you and me as well. Because God has made certain promises to you, not only generally in His Word but perhaps very specifically for your life, yet it seems like it's been a long/laborious, tiresome and troublesome journey and that promise, those promises are yet to be fulfilled. Oh, God's begun the work, but you're wondering if it's *ever* going to be completed. Be patient; let God have His perfect way in your life, as He's preparing you for what He has in store *for* you. The bible is clear, and the exhortation is there not to *question* God, but rather resolve your *confidence* towards God. Why? Because, "...*He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*" Phil 1:6

Now that David is on the throne we begin to get a glimmer into his heart regarding his personal priorities. Because his 1st move as the king of collective Israel wasn't a political one, he could've been all, "We've taken a heavy hit from the Philistines we need to see what we can do to patch things up." Or, "We need to recruit some allies to help us in our fight to remain a sovereign nation." He could've focused on foreign relations, or perhaps the economic stability of the nation, I have no doubt that there were any # of political pressures that he could've prioritized. But he didn't do that, his priority wasn't political, or really even personal, but spiritual. He wanted to bring back a collective national consciousness of God as the center of their nation. Notice.

Vs1-4

Now you recall what exactly the ark of the covenant was, it was a box that was 3'9" long by 2'3" wide, and 2'3" high. It was made of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold, in the box was a jar of manna, Aaron's rod that miraculously budded, and the 2 tables of stone that had the 10 commandments inscribed upon them. and On top of the box was a lid cast of pure gold, there were 2 Cherubim of gold that had been fashioned and placed on either end of the lid facing each other with their wings outstretched above covering over the lid. and That lid was called the, "Mercy Seat." and The ark rested in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle (all of which had been built in the days of Moses) and only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and at that only 1 day a year on the Day of Atonement. and Of course the blood of the sacrifice would be sprinkled upon the mercy seat, (pointing ultimately to the blood of Jesus Christ who is our mercy seat, He is where we find atonement).

But God had said that it was there at the mercy seat that He would meet with them, and He would speak to them from above the mercy seat. His glory would abide there. Just like God meets with us in Christ. Now obviously this wasn't "God in a box," God is omnipresent, but the idea is that the national collective consciousness of God being in the center of the nation has been lost. and David says, "We need to bring that back, we need to get the ark and bring it back to Jerusalem." It had been captured by the Philistines in the days of Eli the priest when Samuel was still young in his ministry. Of course it wreaked havoc in their captivity, so they put it on a cart with 2 milk cows and the cows began lowing and headed straight for Israel of their own accord. When the men of Beth Shemesh saw it, they freaked out, rejoiced, sacrificed the cows and had a great time. Then they got curious, looked in the ark and God struck 50,070 men dead. Now that was a real damper for them and so they said, "Who can stand before this holy Lord God?" So they sent to the people of Kirjath Jearim who then came and took the ark and brought it into the house of Abinadab. and That's where it has seemed to remain up to this point, but now that David is on the throne the 1st thing he wants to do is restore Israel's focus upon God as being the center of their nation.

So he consulted with all his leadership and says, "What do you guys think?" and They said, "We think it sounds great." Now, I don't think that it's ever wrong to have a multitude of godly individuals from whom we seek counsel or whom we may consult. and Hey, it's a great idea, who can argue that? But you might note whom the text doesn't say he consulted. The Lord, David didn't seek the Lord in the matter, he just spoke to his leadership. and His leadership didn't seek the Lord, they just gave him their opinion. Joshua did that once, and it served as a snare to him. What's the point? That even in seemingly "no brainer" type situations we need to be careful that we're in line with the Word of God, because we may have great intentions, yet be out of line with the way we go about bringing them about. God's not only concerned about *what* we do, but the *way* we do it as well, and He has prescribed in His Word the way He's to be approached, the way He's to be worshipped. and The *best* of intentions won't circumvent His prescribed approach.

Vs5-8

It was a powerful and moving time of praise and worship. People literally gathered from all over the nation, and David put on this huge production, just wanting people to be alive with a sense of the near presence and glory of God. and It was no doubt enthralling, exciting, and engaging, the problem is that none of it pleased God. Why? Because none of it was according to the instruction of His Word. What is it that makes a “successful” worship service? I think most people judge a worship service based upon the way it makes them feel. If they had a great experience personally, or were really moved emotionally they’ll say, “Man, that service was great,” “Man, the worship was powerful today.” The problem with that is that I can’t find anywhere in the scriptures where the worship service has *anything* to do with me or how it is that *I feel*. You see worship isn’t about me, it’s about the Lord, the giving of ourselves to *Him*, being pleasing to *Him*. and If I’m going to be pleasing to Him, I need to know what *pleases* Him. Thereby we need to be driven to the Word that we might know how it is that He wants to be worshipped. You’ll never find anywhere in there that says, “As long as you’re emotionally moved *personally*, then everything is good *spiritually*.” Now God has created us to a certain extent as emotional beings, I’m not trying to belittle that fact. But worship isn’t about me and how I feel, I’m not the focus, the focus is the Lord. and Whether I *feel* a certain way or not is irrelevant, what’s relevant is me giving the fullness of who I am to Him in spirit and truth.

Now, God had said in His Word that when the ark was to be moved, that it was to have the poles made for it slid through the hoops that were on it and it was to be carried on the shoulders of the Levites, specifically from the family of Kohath. Now what did David do? He had a new cart built, and a couple of oxen pulling it. Gee, where have I heard of that before? That was what the Philistines did all those years ago. So what’s happening here? David’s intentions are good, but his methods are mimicking the ways of the world. He didn’t do research and find out what God’s Word said, he just modified the world’s ways and went for it. and God has a real problem with that. You see the cause of God is to be carried through the world on the shoulders of consecrated men, not carted about by the ways of the world. I’m sure they were stoked about their *new* cart, *strong* oxen, nothing but the best for God. The problem is that God didn’t desire any of that, I’m sure a lot of people sacrificed a lot of things to make this come together, but remember *obedience* is what God desires. To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams, Jesus said that if we love Him we’ll keep His commandments.

But I fear that much of the service of the Lord is done just like this. Big time productions, lost of effort and energy going into it, “Uzzah” and “Ahio” driving out front (Strength, and brotherly) yet out of sync with the will and ways of God. Great intentions, with no regard for God’s instructions.

Vs9-12

You know it would be perfectly natural to be afraid of God at this point, but was that really necessary? No, God was simply acting in perfect harmony with His Word, if you obey God's Word there's nothing to fear. He asks the question, "How can I bring the ark of God to me?" The answer is, "In obedience to the written instruction of God's Word." Good intentions don't justify unbiblical actions, it was their sin that was the problem, not God's righteousness.

The Word of God was clear that should anyone touch the ark...they would surely die. It wasn't an idle cautionary statement, God means what He says. "Well, what was Uzzah to do?" He was to be obedient to the Word of God. Now this at all indicate his salvation was jeopardized, but it does make the point that God means he says. and This tells us a couple things. #1 Again, emotionalism is no substitute for a lack of knowledge when it comes to the Word and ways of God. Being excited about God is great (I'm certain Uzzah was just that, excited) but that doesn't excuse ignorance and /or disobedience. #2 (and This is really sobering) The split decisions we make in a moments time...they matter to God. Living, "in the moment" "not having time to think about it" is irrelevant, we're accountable for the decisions we make. Uzzah saw the oxen stumble, he feared for the ark and made a split decision to try and stabilize it, and God held him accountable for his actions. How many times I've heard, "Well I wasn't really thinking about it, it just sort of happened." Well, that might drum up some sympathy from a parent, or a good friend, but with God that's irrelevant. We're accountable for what we do, when we do it, regardless of how much, or how little thought we put into it. The bottom line is that had he been obedient to God's Word in the 1st place he wouldn't have found himself in a compromising situation. and I find it interesting that all this took place at a threshing floor, the place where the wheat is separated from the chaff, God made it real clear that what was going on was chaff, and it was done away with right then. The music stopped, the moment became somber, and the party was over.

Vs13-14

You see, the problem wasn't with God, He's good, His blessing was upon this guy. The problem comes when we err.

Ch 14

Vs1-2

Few things here real quick. #1 Notice that David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel. David knew that he was where he was as a result of the grace and calling of God upon his life, it wasn't because he was so great, but because God was so great. Paul in speaking about his apostleship said it like this, "...by the grace of God I am what I am," 1 Cor 15:10 David was the least in his father's house, a little shepherd boy out in the fields of obscurity, and anonymity. But God anointed him, and called him to be king over Israel, David knew that it was the Lord who had established him. Something that we all should be readily aware of, God doesn't use us *because* of who we are, but *despite* who we are, it's the Lord who establishes us.

The 2nd thing David realized is why he was established and highly exalted. It was for the sake of *His* (that is God's) people, Israel. God raised David up so that he might be a channel through which God could bless His people. It wasn't for David's sake that David was raised up, but for the sake of God's people that he was raised up, so to with you, so to with me. When God raises you up, or raises me up, it's not for my sake, but for the sake of His people that we might be a channel through which He can bless His own. If God has gifted you, anointed you for some capacity, or has raised you up in a certain way, hey, don't misinterpret that to think that He's simply blessing you for the isolated benefit of yourself. Sure He loves you, He's blessing you, but the blessing you get is peripheral, primarily He wants to bless others *through* you. Don't be a dam that barricades God's blessing, allows them to come into you, but not to pour out *through* you. Or else God will simply cease pouring out those blessings *on* you, and He'll turn to one He can flow *through* to bless the lives of others. David realized God blessed him so tremendously for the sake of *His* people, Israel.

The 3rd thing I'd have you see is that Hiram (who was a non-believer) sent supplies and laborers to David in order to build him a palace. Now David didn't seek to solicit from the unbeliever, but neither did he prohibit them from giving to God's work should they so desire. David was able to build important political allies, other kings would honor him with materials and the finest craftsmen available to get in there and get some work done. and This speaks to the mentality that says, "I'm only going to give my business to Christians, or let Christians do my work." Not that it's not good to bless a bro, or a sister, but it's no more biblical to simply let the best builder do the work or get the bid, regardless if they're believers or not. and Who knows, building bridges such as this just may lend itself to an opportunity to share the gospel.

So God is blessing, David is building, things are going well.

Vs3-7

Now perhaps you're thinking, "Hey, I thought God was against polygamy, that they weren't to multiply wives to themselves." and You'd be right, the law stated clearly with regard to kings in Israel, "*Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away;*" Deut 17:17 and Of course Solomon (David's son) was out of control in this regard and that's exactly what happened, his heart turned away. But he saw multiple wives modeled in his dad. and Undoubtedly the biggest majority of David's problems resulted from this right here, he multiplied wives unto himself, he had as a result of that scores of children related but not really feeling like family. It promoted strife, scandal, rape and murder in his family, all of which would've been avoided by simple obedience to God's direction for his life. So just because God permitted it, doesn't mean that God approved it.

There's all kinds of things that God *permits* us to do, that He doesn't approve of nor does He condone. and As with David so much heartache, stress and strife could be avoided if we'd be careful to honor what God approves as opposed to what He permits. So don't think that just because we're reading here of what David did that that places God in approval of his actions. Such is not the case, David (like many of us) seemed to handle his trials better than he did his successes. and Often times it's during those days of prosperity or success that we seem to sow seeds that lead to future problems, such was the case with David.

Vs8-10

Did David inquire of the Lord about taking more wives to himself? No, and it'll make for his days of distress, and turmoil. But here David inquired of the Lord, and the Lord communicated His heart to David, David obeyed and victory was wrought. How many times we have not, simply because we ask not, we seek not, we knock not..? Earlier David didn't ask, so God didn't instruct, here when David simply inquires, God is well pleased to lead him. What's the application? We need to inquire of the Lord regarding every situation that enters into the equation of our lives. Run the details of your life past the Lord, ask for His instruction, His will and His way in the matter. He'll be glad to give it to you, and if you miss it His grace is sufficient for you, but you don't want to be guilty of not even seeking the Lord, or inquiring of the heart of God in a given matter.

What else do we note here? God anointed David, raised David up, and is blessing His life, now what happens? The enemy comes against him directly, you can expect that when God moves in your life, the enemy will counterstrike. It seems at times as if God's blessing is like an alarm that brings the enemy to battle. Such was the case here, but notice that as David drew near to God, sought instruction *from* God, God delivered him and worked victory in and through him.

Vs11-12

There's just something about the phrase, "they left their gods there" that strikes me funny. It's like, "What part of having a god that you carry around with you and can throw in the dirt and run when you feel as though it's doing you no good just doesn't seem right?" If I can fit my god in my pocket, or hang him around my neck, carry him with me or leave him behind when it's convenient for me, how can I even consider it a god? Men don't make gods, how can a god be made from the hands of man? The very notion is absurd, yet people do. David finding these little trinkets all over the ground from where they'd fled had them burned.

Vs13-16

Here we commend David again, because how easy it would be to say, “Well last time the enemy came against us God said, ‘Do this,’ and it worked so let’s just do that again.” But doesn’t always do the same thing the same way every time. and I think that this is another thing that ensnares us as believers. It’s the, “Well, in the past we’ve always done it like *this*,” mentality. and Perhaps God has led us in certain ways in the past, but what does God want to do presently? “Well I don’t know I haven’t inquired, I’m just doing it like we’ve always done it.” Hey, God may have a different plan this go around. Joshua fell prey to that snare after Jericho. He didn’t inquire of the Lord about Ai and they suffered a loss, when he inquired God told him what to do and they secured a victory. David inquired again, “Should we go up after them?” God said, “No, I don’t want to do that this time, this time circle around behind them and when you hear the sound of the wind blowing in the tops of the trees, ambush them for I’ll have gone before you to do the work.” God told David He’d give him a signal. David did as the Lord commanded, and God blessed.

David didn’t ask what someone else’s opinion was of the matter, he wanted God’s heart. People will always pressure us in different ways, you get caught up in that it’ll be a snare to you. We’re to seek the heart of God and be obedient to *His* direction, then He’ll bless. God will bless your obedience to Him, notice.

Vs17

Ch 15

Vs1-2

What does this tell you? Remember David’s question about the ark? “How can I bring the ark of God to me?” He searched it out didn’t he? Notice in Vs 2, he’s read the Word. He says, “No one may carry the ark but he Levites, because God has chosen them to *carry* it and to minister before Him forever.” Translation, “Now I realize it’s not to be carted, it’s to be carried, specifically by the Levites, even more so by the family of Kohath.” David has sought out the matter. and He’s found his answers in the Word of God.

Which makes for a quick little sub-point. When David asked, “How can I bring the ark of God to me?” God didn’t respond to him? Why? Because God had already given those instructions in His word. Often times we’re asking God a question and are confused when He doesn’t seem to magically place His answer in our mind, or speak to us through a vision or dream. But often times He’s *already* spoken the answer to our dilemma through His written Word, it’s just a matter of us searching the matter out. If you’re confronted with a dilemma, don’t be intimidated to simply pick up your bible and dig around for God’s answer to the matter. and If you’re *not* seeking resolve in God’s Word; you can’t hardly be upset if you don’t hear from the Lord on it. Odds are He’s already spoken to it, we just need to be responsible to search it out.

Vs3-4

and You can read of the men he gathered through Vs 11

Vs12-13

You see there it is. God desires proper order as established in His Word, the fanfare doesn't impress Him, obedience to His word is what He honors.

Vs14-16

Vs 17-24 names the guys the Levites appointed and what they did, you see Asaph there in Vs 17 (and of course you can read some of his psalms in the book of Psalms, as well as Heman), but David is delegating here. Notice Vs 22

Vs22

The bible tells those who are musicians in the service of the Lord that we're to play "Skillful" before the Lord. and That's a principle that goes across the board to any area of service, we're to do our utmost to serve Him with all that we are. Being able to strum a few chords doesn't qualify someone as a worship leader. You're looking for instructors, overseers, and leaders who are skillful at what God has called them to do, they in turn can teach others and facilitate a healthy work ethic in others as unto the Lord. You see, he was the leader, but he was also an instructor, he didn't just say, "You guys are a bunch of hacks, step out of my way." It wasn't a solo show, he helped others along, instructed them, that they might be skillful in what God had called them to do as well.

Vs25-27

He wore the basic attire of the priest, (though he wasn't acting as a priest) but we see another type of Christ here as our King and priest. But the idea here is that he took off his kingly garb and just enjoyed the Lord along with everybody else.

Vs28-29

Now she was David's wife, and just like her dad she had a wrong perspective of that which was important to God. She couldn't believe that David would become as a common man among the people, she thought that was unbecoming for a king. She was bitter in her heart against him, became blind to what God was doing. Or to understand another way, she allowed her bitterness and misunderstanding to cause her to completely miss out on what God was doing. God was doing an awesome work right there before her eyes, but she was bitter, and rather than choosing to be apart of it, or engage in it, she turned a blind eye to it and missed out altogether on what the Lord was doing.

Bitterness is such an ugly thing, don't let that root of bitterness blind you to what God may be doing right before your eyes. Engage in it, rather than sitting on the side lines speaking slander about it. It's amazing how many people won't put their hand to the plow but they'll gripe about the furrows. Michal missed out, and we don't read it here but you find out in 2nd Samuel that her attitude about this bore ramifications that lasted the rest of her life. Be careful when you're tempted to come against those people who are just seeking to serve the Lord, humble themselves before the Lord and be a blessing *to* the Lord. We want to stand behind those people, seek to build them up, not tear them down. We can be like David, or we can be like Michal, humble before God, blessing the heart of God. Or embittered, missing out on the privilege of being used *by* God.

Prayer Points:

God we want to be humble before You, a blessing *to* You, not a source of bitterness or grief be it to You, or Your body. and Father help us that we might be diligent about studying Your Word, and like David not only hearing it, but being a doer of it as well. and Lord we ask that You work in our lives so as to make us a channel of blessing to Your people, that You might be magnified, and glorified in our lives. We thank You for Your grace, for Your mercy, and Your love.