

1 Chronicles 16-18

The blinding power of bitterness brings us up to speed with where we last left off. Things were going great for all Israel; David in his 1st act over the collective kingdom had opted *not* to focus on foreign relations, or the current state of the economy in the nation. But rather he realized that the national consciousness of God as the center of their nation had been lost. and So he said, “Hey, let’s get the ark (not that God was in a box, but that the ark represented for them the power, the presence and the protection of God, it was where God said that He would meet with them from above the mercy seat) and let’s bring it to Jerusalem, the heart of the nation. Placing (as it were) God back in that place of being in the center of the nation; and man, everyone *loved* the idea. Now, David made a vital mistake initially. Because though he consulted all his leaders, he didn’t consult the Lord, he didn’t look to the Word of God with respect to how it is that He required the nation of Israel to interact with Him as it pertained to the transporting of the ark. and So even though there was a powerful production, and massive worship service that accompanied the procession, God was not pleased. You recall they’d placed the ark on a cart; it was being led by oxen, Uzza and Ahio driving the oxen, and when they came to a particular threshing floor the oxen stumbled, Uzza reached out to steady the ark and God immediately struck him dead. Let’s just say, “the party” was over. David was devastated, he asked the question, “How can I bring the ark of God to me?”

What we find is that after a few months went by David had done his homework, he began to research the Word of God. Find out what went wrong, what was it that God desired; how *did* God desire the ark to be moved? and Having discovered those things, realizing the ark was to be carried, not carted, and that God had been very specific with regard to His instructions. David did those things and we read in Vs 28 of Ch 15, (read).

But there was one in Israel who wasn’t rejoicing, David’s wife (Saul’s daughter). She was looking down through a window, watching the procession, seeing David out of his kingly robes, whirling and dancing about before the Lord. and The bible tells us that she “despised him in her heart.” She couldn’t believe that a king would be so undignified, and she became bitter. What was the result? She completely missed out on what God was doing, she didn’t even see the ark, all she could see was what she didn’t agree with, that is, the way David was demonstrating his love *for* the Lord, and his joy *in* the Lord. and Though we don’t read of it here we find in 2nd Samuel that this bore ramifications for her that lasted the rest of her life. Be very careful when it comes to that root of bitterness, when you begin to *despise* your brother or your sister in the Lord, in your heart. We need to be an encouragement to those who are seeking to serve the Lord, give the fullness of their lives *to* the Lord, don’t let bitterness blind you to something that God may be doing right before you.

Vs1-3

So God is blessing, the people are rejoicing, and the ark (that emblem of God's power, and glory) is finally there in the center of the nation, the collective consciousness of the nation has God at its center. and They began to offer burnt offerings, and peace offerings before God. This was just a huge celebration, offerings of consecration *before* God and communion *with* God being offered up. That's what the burnt offering and the peace offering stood to represent. The burnt offering was one that was totally consumed upon the altar, having passed through the fire, given totally to God. and It spoke of the believer's complete consecration unto the Lord.

That there's no part of me that doesn't belong to You, I'm Your's completely, You consume me. This of course the picture that Paul paints there in Rom 12: 1-2 where he says, "... *present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*" Consecrate yourselves entirely to God as a living "burnt offering" a living sacrifice having passed through the refining fires of God, being as it were purified *by* Him that you might be used to bring glory *to* Him.

Of course the peace offering spoke of fellowship, or communion with God. After you'd consecrated yourself to the Lord, you'd enter into communion *with* the Lord. Part of this offering would be offered upon the altar, part of it would be given to the priest, and part of it would be given back to the worshipper. and The worshipper would then eat that remaining portion with his family and the idea was that of sitting down to dine with God, to enter into communion with God. and So this was just a great day of consecration *before* God and communion *with* God.

I want you to notice in Vs 2 that after David had finished offering the burnt offerings, and the peace offerings, that he blessed the people in the name of the Lord. Often times we hear people say that their worship of God is a personal thing. Which is code for saying, "It's something that I just want to keep low profile between me and God." and Though it's true that our worship of the Lord is incredibly personal, it really isn't to end there, it's not something we do, it's something that we are, it's a lifestyle, our worship of God should be spilling out through us and impacting people around us. and David's blessing wasn't just words; he ministered to the people in a very practical way, distributing to their needs in the form of a loaf of bread, a piece of meat (no doubt the portion of the peace offerings that went to him) and a cake of raisins. But what we need to notice is that 1st he worships God, then he blesses the people, when his vertical relationship is in line, the horizontal falls in its proper place. When his life is where it needs to be with the Lord, he becomes a blessing to the Lord's people.

Perhaps you have a problem with someone in the body of Christ, may I suggest that you look into this area, allow the Lord to search your heart and see if you're where you need to be in your relationship to Him. Oh I'm not in reference to salvation, but what about consecration and communion? I know that when I'm not where I need to be in those areas, things can go south for me real quick, I don't see things like I should, I can have a tendency to pull away from people as opposed to being available to be a blessing to people. People can get on my nerves, but here's the deal, none of that is on them, it's on me, because I'm not where I need to be with respect to these things. So if it's my heart to be a blessing to people, than I need to safeguard my consecration *to* God, and time spent in communion *with* God. Because if I'm a true worshipper of God, if I'm giving myself wholly *to* Him, spending time in communion *with* Him, my life is going to serve as a blessing to His people, that's going to be part of the overflow of my life.

Vs4-6

So David appointed these men to carry on an enduring institution of worship before the ark of the Lord even after this day of celebration/consecration and communion with God had come to an end. The idea obviously being that our worship of God shouldn't simply be hit and miss, but our lives should be a continual service of worship before Him. and In their service to the Lord they specifically were entrusted with 3 things to do. They were to #1 Commemorate, #2 Thank, and #3 Praise the Lord God of Israel. 1 Aspect of their worship before the Lord simply involved remembrance, how healthy it can be for us to remember awesome works of God, what He's done *for* us, things He's done *through* us, that from which He's *delivered* us.

Over and over again the bible exhorts us to "remember." For Israel, they were to remember how God had delivered them from Egypt, taken them from bondage, led them through the wilderness, brought them into the Promised Land. They were to remember God's Law. You and I are exhorted throughout the scriptures to remember that a servant is not greater than his master. A lot of people treated Jesus with radical contempt, sometimes we wonder why people treat us like they do, or look at us like we're idiots. Well, remember they did the same thing to Jesus. We're to remember the Lord in partaking of communion. The bible says, "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead..." 2 Tim 2:8 We're exhorted to remember the *words* of the Lord Jesus. The book of Hebrews tells us, "Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct." Heb 13:7 The Lord in the book of Revelation exhorts the backslider, "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works," Rev 2:5 Commemorating, remembering what God *has* done is always a healthy thing to do, it has this way of stirring our hearts towards worship.

Also they were to give thanks. You've thought about what God has done, thank Him for it, let your heart well up in gratitude towards him *for* it. The bible tells us, "...*in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*" 1 Thess 5:18 and Just like with the exhortation to remember we're told throughout the scriptures to give thanks to the Lord. Every good and perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. We're to thank God for His goodness, His grace, His mercy which endures forever, His loving kindness, and in exhaustible compassion.

Of course you can't remember Him and all He's done in snatching us out of the miry clay, forgiving our sin and setting us free, with out having a heart of thanksgiving and the natural overflow of thanksgiving is what? Praise, we're to praise the Lord from whom all blessing flow. and We could give all kinds of scriptures that exhort us to praise the Lord, but I think you get the idea. They were to continually worship there before the Lord

We do well to remember that when we worship, we're worshipping before the Lord. In a church setting like this it can be a bit misleading. Because we have the microphones up here, the lights, a stage and all; and so it can seem like you come to church and the worship band performs for you. and Sometimes worship leaders can get confused on this point to. The truth is that you *aren't* the audience, the fact is that you're part of the performance, part of the presentation, there's really only 1 in the audience and we all corporately, collectively come before *Him* (that is the Lord) and present our hearts, and our lives, and our worship in song to *Him*.

Now we see there in Vs 5 that Asaph was the chief musician, so when you're reading a Psalm of David and it says, "To the chief musician," you know that it was a Psalm delivered to Asaph.

What we have before us here in Ch 16 is really a compilation of 3 psalms that David apparently put together for this special occasion. But you'll find the words of this psalm broken up in Ps 105, 96, and 106. Vs 7 says,

Vs7-13

Now we're obviously not going to take the time to fully ingest all of this but right here in these 6 Vs we're given at least 10 ways in which to praise, glorify, and exalt the Lord. Some of these ways involve speaking to the Lord, some of them involve speaking to others *about* the Lord, and some are a personal recalling of the goodness *of* the Lord. He says, Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name (cry out to Him), make known His deeds among the peoples, (share the gospel of Jesus Christ) Sing to Him, talk of His wondrous works, glory in His name (that is, praise Him, ascribe worth to His name)

Let your heart rejoice in Him, seek Him, remember His works, and His Word, or the judgments of His mouth.

Vs14

Look at that, the God of Israel? Yes, but is His word relevant only *to* Israel? No, His judgments are in all the earth.

Vs15-19

Now you have to remember that this book is written to a post exilic Israel. It was written after they returned from the 70 yr Babylonian captivity. and So this exhortation to remember the covenant is especially meaningful to them, along with other Vs that we'll see regarding gathering them together and delivering them from the Gentiles. He says there in Vs 15, "Remember the covenant forever." The way that God has dealt with man down through the ages has been based on a "covenant" relationship. He made a covenant with Ab to give him the land of Canaan. To make of him a great nation and to bring the Messiah to the world through him, he made a covenant with Israel as a nation regarding a law, sacrifice, and the choice of blessing or cursing. He made a covenant with David that the Messiah would be of *his* lineage, that his throne would be established forever via Christ. and He's made a covenant with me and you in the person of Jesus Christ Remember Jesus said there at the last supper, "*This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.*" Luke 22:20 and Even during this time of celebration, they're celebrating the arrival of what? The ark of the covenant, so the call to remember the covenant.

Vs20-22

The idea here being that God providentially protected them even when they weren't in the Promised Land. and Again having returned as a nation from a foreign land this would have a significant and deep meaning to them as they themselves were beneficiaries of God's providential protection outside the Promised Land as well.

Vs23-33

That's a pretty amazing statement isn't it? A prophetic utterance of the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ David proclaims, "He is coming to judge the earth."

Vs34-36

So again we see that the worship experience wasn't held by Asaph and the worship team, but they were all (as a nation) one before God.

Vs37-40

So though the ark was there in Jerusalem, the altar was apparently still at Gibeon, and how long it remained this way I'm not sure. But we note once again that David is having things done now, "...according to all that is written." He's seeking to subject himself to the standard of God's Word.

Vs41-43

He just had a great day in the Lord...then he went home. and Of course when he got home he face Michal his wife and she just really tore into him and brought him down. He just entered in with a spirit of blessing about him and she just tore into him with both barrels. But that's the way our enemy works, anytime God is doing awesome and exciting, renewing and refreshing things you can count on the enemy waiting for you as you come down from the Mt to bring you down and give you grief.

Now Ch 17 takes place actually after Ch 18, but for whatever reason the Chronicler felt it necessary to go ahead and include the record of it here.

Ch 17

Vs1-2

What's going on here is that David is looking around and it bothers him that he lives in a nice big house made of cedar (which was really expensive and valued) and the ark is out there in a tent. He's thinking, "It's not right that I have a nicer place than that which represents presence and glory of God. I want to build God an 'off the charts' type temple, and get the ark out of that tent." When the people of God were wandering around in the wilderness the tent was good because it was mobile, but now that they have homes and aren't moving around anymore David wants to put the ark in a nice permanent structure.

Really, that was awesome because God never asked David to do that, but David was just so filled with gratitude for all that God had done for him and for the nation that he wanted to do something spectacular for God. and I think that this is an awesome place to be, because he wants to go above and beyond that which God commanded of him. How often so many of us are stuck in that place of really only wanting to do the minimal requirements of Christianity, our frame of mind is more like, "How little can I do and still be pleasing or acceptable to the Lord?" and We definitely aren't looking to do *more* than God commands, but David here is wanting to bless the Lord, and just out of the overflow of his love for God do something special for God. So Nathan says, "Go for it David, for God is with you."

Vs3-6

So God comes to Nathan and says, "I didn't tell you to Ok David's desire." Nathan had spoken presumptuously for the Lord. Because think about it, what could possibly be wrong with wanting to do something marvelous for the glory of the Lord? and That's just it, there was nothing wrong with the intent, the intent was great (and God will honor even the desire of David's heart) but God is very particular how His name is reflected and with what it's associated.

Even though He doesn't tell David here in time David will come to realize that the reason God didn't want him to build the temple is because David was a man of war, had shed

much blood upon the earth. and God didn't want His name associated with war, devastation and destruction, but with peace. and So He'll have Solomon (David's son) build the temple. So what seems like common sense isn't always the way God reasons. It's best to seek Him 1st before we just launch out presumptuously.

What we find is that even though God told David "No" David didn't just go, "Well, ok then I guess I'll do nothing." He did what he could, maybe he couldn't build the temple, but that didn't stop him from drawing up the blueprints, and accumulating all the materials needed. Maybe you can't be a missionary, or God has called you into ministry vocationally, that doesn't mean you can't/shouldn't do anything. Get involved to the extent that you can, pray for the missionaries, help out around the fellowship, come alongside and support those whom God *has* called to that capacity. and God will bless your life tremendously, so just because God tells you, "No" that doesn't necessarily mean your desire is wrong, and it doesn't mean you can't do anything, do what you can.

Vs7-15

Now you have to kinda follow this closely because there are parts of it that point to Solomon but in reality what God is doing here is saying that He's going to send the Messiah to the earth through the line of David and that He's going to establish His throne, the dynasty of David forever upon the earth *through* Christ. and David knew that's what God was telling him, and it absolutely took his breath away.

So see this, David wanted to do something great for God, go above and beyond. and I think that's awesome, it's where our hearts need to be. But what God is pointing out is that it's never been about what *we* can do for *God*. The primary priority that God wants us to have is centered around what *God has done, is doing, and will do* for us. The focus isn't on us and our great desires, it's upon God and His *overwhelming* grace poured out upon our lives, and what we do for Him spills out of the overflow of what He's already done for us. and You just can't out give God, go ahead and try. David wanted to build God a house, God says, "Thanks, but no thanks, however I'm going to build you an eternal dynasty through the Messiah that'll come through your lineage."

Vs16-27

I just love the passage of the bible; it's so awesome to see the intimacy of David's heart towards the Lord. and You can see why God exalted him like He did. This promise that God gave to David, it didn't cause David to feel like *he* was any greater, it made him feel like *God* was even greater. His attitude wasn't one of, "I'm so great that *even God* give gifts to me." But rather it was one of, "God is so great that He gives gifts *even to me*." and There's no gift of God, be it salvation, or any other thing that we shouldn't receive with the same attitude. God's giving never reflects the goodness or greatness of one receiving it, but rather the goodness and the greatness of the One who's *giving* it.

David was humbled before the Lord, 10 times in this passage David refers to himself before God as, "Your servant." Nor did David sulk, and whine and gripe when God told him,

“No,” he didn’t find it in his heart to murmur or complain, but to pray. and Notice (Vs 25) that true prayer ascends not from our head, but from our heart.

David’s prayer isn’t passive, he receives God’s promise and asks God to go ahead and establish that which He’s said by His Word, he humbly claims the promise of God. and It’s really this kind of prayer that appropriates God’s promises. Because we all know that God’s promise doesn’t always equal our possession of that promise, we have to appropriate by faith the promises of God for our lives. God has promised us peace, He promises forgiveness, He promises to guide us, to give us help in time of need. But we have to appropriate those promises by faith, if we don’t appropriate the promise for peace; we find ourselves a basket case. Oh there are times that God in His grace will simply supernaturally intervene, but often times He’ll wait on us to look *to* Him and trust *in* Him according to the promise of His Word. and That was really the foundation of David’s faith, God had made him a promise by His Word, “You have promised this goodness to your servant, You have blessed it, and (in faith, because of that) it shall be blessed *forever*.”

Ch 18

We won’t spend but a minute in Ch 18, the basic thrust being the fact that God preserved David wherever he went, cut off his enemies from before him and made his name great on the earth.

Vs1-4

Even this shows David’s trust in the Lord, he just obtained through military dominance 1,000 chariots and the horses to drive them. Yet he got rid of all but 100, why? Because God had told them not to multiply horses and chariots unto themselves, they were to be assured of the fact that God was fighting for them. They were where they were at by the grace of God, not their own military might, technological advancements or superior war strategies. As David wrote in Ps 20, “*Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.*” Ps 20:7

Vs5-11

When David was blessed by other nations, he knew it was to God’s credit and God’s glory, so he dedicated those gifts to the Lord.

Vs12-17

These guys were David's chief administration, there's no great ruler that succeeds by himself, and part of David's success as a ruler was found in his ability to assemble, train, empower, and maintain top notch guys. There's a real limit to what we can do as unto the Lord apart from order and organization, we spoke Sunday morning of the fact that we serve a God of order. and Nothing really operates successfully apart from order. So this is just a glimmer into the order of David's administration. and He administered judgment and justice to all his people and the Lord preserved David wherever he went.

Prayer Points:

God we thank You for the promise of Your word, that You'll never leave nor forsake *us*, but that You'll always be with us and never abandon us. Lord it's truly awesome to glean even the smallest insight into David's heart, and Your heart towards him. Help us God to enter in to such an intimate relationship with You, to serve You out of the overflow of Your goodness in us and towards us. and May we be a people of remembrance, thanksgiving and praise. Be magnified in our lives we pray.