

2nd Chronicles 1-2

As we enter into 2nd Chronicles we begin to crest upward into the apex of Jewish history. During Solomon's reign they will enjoy a time of unparalleled peace and prosperity, the nation standing in unbroken unity, everyone being blessed bountifully. And in that respect we see a foreshadowing of the substance to be found in Christ when *He* rules and reigns upon the earth. As you know Solomon's name means "Peace," or "Peaceful" and the nation would enjoy peace under the reign of the king of peace. Of course Jesus is known as the "Prince of Peace." and When He rules and reigns upon the earth for 1,000 yrs during the millennial kingdom it will be a time of unparalleled peace and prosperity upon the earth such as the world has never known. Perfect unity, everyone will be blessed bountifully; but we also realize that the foundation that made for the peace that Solomon would enjoy was wrought by the blood and the battles of David as he secured victory over his enemies, going before Solomon previously. And in that we have a foreshadowing as well, in the 1st coming of Christ He came as the suffering Savior, He obtained victory over the enemy through His blood, the battle fought and won at the cross. So when He comes again there's no more battles He needs to secure, no more blood He needs to spill, He'll walk in victory and reign in peace.

Well, the stage has been set for Solomon; David had done his due diligence in rallying the troops *behind* Solomon, preparing all the materials *for* Solomon, now all he has to do is follow through.

Vs 1

So right off the bat we're given the "secret" (if you will) to Solomon's success as it pertained to where he was at and what God had called him to do. We read that he was "strengthened" in his kingdom, meaning that he firmly established himself. No doubt this has in view the insurrection that Adonijah sought to insight, with Joab and Abiathar at his side. And so Solomon had Adonijah executed, Joab was executed, and Abiathar was exiled, Solomon also had Shimei executed for violating an agreement that they'd made. Shimei was a man of the tribe of Benjamin that gave David all kinds of grief. And when Solomon came in to power he called Shimei to himself and said, "Listen, you know you don't deserve to be alive but here's what I'm going to do, I'm going to allow you to live as long as you don't violate these certain parameters and go outside of these boundaries, fair enough?" Shimei said, "Fair enough." But it didn't take too long before he was outside those boundaries really showing not much respect for Solomon's authority and so Solomon had him struck down and he was killed. And so he was strengthened in his kingdom, firmed up, everyone knew he was the real deal, God was giving him favor. And that is in reality what we need to see here (notice) "...the Lord his God was with him and exalted him exceedingly." God was blessing Solomon. Remember we were told of David, "*So David went on and became great, and the LORD of hosts was with him.*" 1 Chron 11:9 The Lord was with David and he became great. The Lord was with Solomon and he was exalted exceedingly. Hey, if God be for you, then who can be against you? and That's the beautiful promise that Jesus made to each and every one of us as His disciples, as children of our heavenly Father, "...*I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" Matt 28:20 and So what's the result, victory, exalted exceedingly, already seated in the heavenly places in Christ

Jesus (that's what the bible says). It doesn't mean that there won't be days of difficulty, in this world you're going to have tribulation.

But remember what Paul said there in Rom Ch 8 right after he spoke of all the trials, all the turbulence, all the tough times that we're going to encounter as believers? He said, "*Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*" Rom 8:37 You've heard it before, you don't fight *for* victory, you fight *from* victory, you're more than a conqueror (not because of who you are) the secret of any victory that I experience doesn't lie in me, it's in Him. We're more than conquerors through Him who loved us, Jesus is with us, will never leave nor forsake us, therefore if He's begun the work, He's going to finish it. Solomon was strengthened in his position and exalted exceedingly, why? "The Lord his God was with him." So God honored him and the nation itself honored him, now we'll see how he honored both God and the nation as well.

Vs2-4

The question comes up, why did David bring the ark to Jerusalem but leave the tabernacle at Gibeon? The answer is that no one really knows; it could be that he thought that if he'd have brought the tabernacle to Jerusalem the people may've lost their passion for seeing a temple built being satisfied with the tabernacle. Perhaps because the tabernacle was so old they only moved it when absolutely necessary. Or it could simply be that David was so focused on the temple project that he didn't really consider it a priority, maybe a combination of those things, or maybe none of those things but for whatever reason he didn't see it as something he needed to do.

But we like what we're seeing here so far with Solomon. He begins strong, he's doing well, he assembles all the leaders and he says in essence, "Hey, we're going to seek the Lord from the very inception of this thing." and So he takes them to the tabernacle of meeting, and we read where clarifies the intent of the tabernacle. It's not the tabernacle of meeting with other people, it's the tabernacle of meeting with God; it's where the people would go to worship and meet with God. Today we don't relate to God in that way. Jesus said, "*...the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*" John 4:23-24 So it's not about going to a certain place, or meeting with God in a particular location, we come together as a body to worship the Lord and study His Word together because God's Word tells us to do that (for several healthy reasons). But not because we can't meet up with God apart from being here, you can't *not* be in the presence of God; He's as much with you when you and your spouse are spitting venom back and forth at each other as He is when you're here and we're seeking to be all spiritual. So we can't sort of clean up our act and then come to church as though we're going there to meet with God, God is always with you and His presence is always around you. Now obviously God has always been omnipresent, it wasn't any different in OT times, but God had ordained for them a prescribed approach in their worship. And so Solomon sets the standard right from the get go, "We're going to seek the Lord." and So they set out for Gibeon to the tabernacle of meeting.

Vs5-6

You see Solomon begins so well, he makes it known from the start that he's going to seek the Lord and that he's going to lead the people to do the same thing. And the fact that he offers

1,000 burnt offerings speaks of both his incredible wealth (which at this point is only a drop in the bucket compared to what's on the horizon for him) but also his heart to use the resources that God had entrusted to him to glorify the Lord. I think more than not if we were to be honest we're primarily concerned with how we're going to bless ourselves with the resources God entrusts to us, that's common to man.

But we love the demonstration of Solomon's heart here, he wants to bless the Lord. So he offered 1,000 burnt offerings before the Lord upon the altar. Now you know that the burnt offering was the sin offering, it was an offering of consecration, of dedication and commitment to the Lord. It's an "all in" kind of offering, totally 100% committed. You look at a plate of ham and eggs and you could say that the chicken was involved with that meal, but the pig was committed, all in, totally given over. That's the burnt offering. You're familiar with the NT counterpart, "*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*" Rom 12:1 Paul says, "Man give yourself totally, completely in dedication and consecration to the Lord bodily, the whole of who you are; both the inner and outer man." That's what the burnt offering spoke of.

And we note that he made these sacrifices, he sought the Lord at the place of atoning sacrifice, the bronze altar. The very altar that was originally constructed after the Exodus upon which the children of Israel was offer sacrifices to the Lord, this altar was at least 500 yrs old by this time, there was a lot of history that revolved around this altar. But by coming here, to meet with the Lord and seek the Lord at the place of atoning sacrifice, it's like the NT believer seeking to meet God at the foot of the cross, coming to the place of atoning sacrifice just looking to meet up with God.

Vs7

Can you imagine that? The account in the book of Kings tells us that God appeared to Solomon in a dream. But have you ever stopped to consider how you would respond if God came to you and said, "Here's a blank check, fill in the amount." "Ask of Me whatever you wish, what is it that you want?" Immeasurable wealth, a long fruitful and healthy life, to end world hunger or pestilence and disease, a cure for cancer; what's your hearts desire? Of course having read of the way God responded to Solomon when he asked for wisdom a lot of us say, "I'd ask for wisdom." But underneath all of that is so often fact of wanting everything that Solomon got as a result of his request, wisdom, riches, knowledge and honor. But a lot is revealed about a man by his choice, it's a revealing question isn't it? What's in your heart? Perhaps the best thing to do would be to turn it back into God's hands and say, "I want whatever it is that You deem is best for me." Because God knows what we need, what will make us the most fruitful and productive on this earth as it pertains to His will, His purpose/His plan for our lives. It could be that whatever you ask for would fall radically short of what God wanted to do. Could be that you'd ask for the very thing that would destroy your life. God appears to Solomon and says, "Ask! What shall I give you?"

And it's worth noting that God appeared to him at Gibeon even though the Ark was back in Jerusalem. God demonstrating that He's not bound to a box, or that His presence isn't superstitiously restricted to an association with the Ark. That got Israel in trouble once before back in the days of Eli the priest, remember they were going to fight against the Philistines and

they lost. So they thought, “Hey, if we send the ark before us in battle we can’t lose, we’ll have God in a box right there in the midst of the fight.” and Not only did they lose but they lost horribly and the ark was taken from them. God isn’t tied to an emblem, or a particular trinket. Many Christians today wear crosses like good luck charms, they think God is a little closer to them because a cross is around their neck, not so. God isn’t superstitiously restricted to an association with some emblem, and so He appeared to Solomon here even though the ark was back in Jerusalem.

Vs 8-10

Solomon’s heart revealed, he didn’t ask for something to benefit himself, but to benefit the kingdom. And notice before he requested of God what he wanted Him to *do*, he took the time to acknowledge and reflect on the things that God had already *done*. That would be a good practice for you and me to develop, “God You’ve already shown great mercy to my father David, and You’ve made me king in his place.” “You’ve been good to my father, You’ve been good to our family, to me personally, You’ve shown Yourself faithful in the past, You’ve given my dad a promise for the future, and you’ve established me, exalted me exceedingly here in the present.” I mean yeah Solomon is going to place a request before God regarding what he wants him to do, but 1st he reflects on what He’s done. You’ve heard the old hymn, “Count your many blessings name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.”

Then Solomon says, “Give me wisdom and knowledge.” He wanted God’s wisdom to reside in his heart, why? So that he could lead the people of God in a manner that was befitting to the call God had placed on his life. It was an awesome request, was it the best request? That’s debatable, it didn’t keep him close the Lord all his days. Perhaps he could’ve asked to lead a life in close communion with God all the days of his life, or again maybe he’d have done better to relinquish that back into the hands of the Lord. But be that as it may this is what he does, and I don’t want to be overly negative because God doesn’t reprimand him, He commends him, notice.

Vs 11-12

Couple of things here briefly. #1 If any passage in the bible pictures the principle James issues this is certainly the one. Remember James said, “*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*” James 1:5 Perhaps James would’ve sighted this passage as a proof text with regards to his statement. Solomon asked, and God gave liberally and with out reproach. So if you find yourself in a situation whereby you’re uncertain how to handle it (which if you’re anything like me you find yourself there almost commonly) then you can ask of God for wisdom and He’ll give it to you. What gave Solomon the notion to ask for wisdom anyway? I believe it came from his dad when David told him that he need wisdom from the Lord back in Ch 22 of 1st Chronicles. He basically said, “Son, you’ve got a giant task set before you, now may the Lord grant you wisdom.” and Solomon realizing the enormity of what’s been handed to him, when God asked him what he wanted, he agreed with his dad, “I need wisdom.”

And 2^{ndly} we see here sort of a precursor to the promise that Jesus would make when He said, “*Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all*

these things shall be added to you.” Matt 6:31-33 In other words don’t place priority on yourself, on myself, but rather place priority on the Lord and the things that pertain to the Kingdom of God and He’ll meet your personal, practical needs as well. Solomon here sought after the things that pertained to the kingdom, and God honored that by adding to him above and beyond all of his other needs as well.

Vs13-15

Which is a way of saying that everyone prospered under his reign, the economy was booming and business was good for the nation of Israel. I mentioned that God honored him, the people honored him and now we’ve seen him honor the Lord (by coming to Gibeon) and the nation by causing gold and silver to become a common thing in Jerusalem.

But we shouldn’t glean from this that if we just had more money all our problems would be over. How often we think, “Man, if I hit the lottery...*then* I’d be happy.” If anyone’s life testifies to the fact that riches don’t satisfy, it’s Solomon’s.

It’s just another temporary fix to a permanent problem, Christ is truly the only place genuine satisfaction and fulfillment is found. And God had warned the king’s of Israel not to multiply riches to themselves. They were warned against multiplying gold, horses and wives. Solomon erred in all 3.

And we think, “How could someone so wise so something so foolish?” Have you ever known what God’s word says to do and still done otherwise? You bet you have, we all have, do you suppose Solomon was any different in his humanity? You see wisdom unapplied doesn’t do you any good does it? That’s taking the position that only fools do foolish things, the fact is that the flesh is a powerful foe. We might understand those warnings to say, don’t let money, power, or your sex drive lead you astray. We’re to trust in the Lord, not in money, we’re to realize that victory is given through the Lord, not military might (horses, chariots) and again we’re to understand that the only relationship that can truly meet the deep need of the human heart is the relationship we build with the Lord. Solomon wound up out of control in every area that the Lord warned against, and though the kingdom experienced unparalleled peace and prosperity under Solomon’s reign, Solomon himself suffered tremendously because of riches, power and women. By the time his reign ended idolatry was not a strange thing in Israel, why? Because he’d marry a pagan wife and then build a temple to the god she worshipped, his heart was led astray by his wives. And we don’t have time to hit it hard but suffice it to say that’s why we’re to only yoke up with other like minded believers as it pertains to a marriage relationship. Otherwise it can serve to destroy your walk and relationship with the Lord.

Vs16-17

He had a prosperous foreign relations policy, made lots of money buying and selling goods, horses/chariots and all.

Ch 2

Vs1

Of course with all the preparations and provision that David made it was only right that Solomon should determine to follow through on it. But this is where it starts, if God has placed a call upon your life you need to be *determined* to follow through on it. This is that initiative that we spoke about a couple weeks ago we noted in David, that he was a man both of vision

and initiative. Here we see initiative, determination, and resolve in Solomon's life as well. It was time to get this project off the ground. God's not going to force your hand or mine, if He places a call on your life, or places a project before you, He's not going to make nails jump into the wood, or the marble to slide out of the hillside for you. I'm going to have to put for the initiative, the determination and resolve to follow through on what God has committed to my trust. Often times the fruit of what God does through our lives comes through what we refer to as "work." Now God is the One who gives the vision, makes the provision, and then He gives us our part in the practical.

And of all the great things that Solomon accomplished in his life (unequaled prosperity, unparalleled peace, fame, great literary accomplishments) the scriptures definitely perceive the temple as the greatest of them all. 2/3 of the writing dedicated to Solomon here in 2nd Chronicles revolves in some way around the temple. And it's no wonder because it was the place that God was to dwell and meet with His people (again not in a box type mentality) but it's where they were to meet and commune with Him specifically.

So as we'll see that Solomon was concerned for the temple, what materials went *into* it, the things that made for the construction *of* it. And you can glean from those things how that as NT believers, we being the temple of the living God both personally and corporately as a body, we're to be careful, take heed how we build. Wood, hay, straw, or precious stones, gold, and silver, what are we apart of, what do we take part in, are we saturated by the pollution of the world, or are we seeking the pure milk, the meat of the Word of God, seeking to be built up so as to stand firm in the faith. Solomon took heed how he built and he followed the plan, God has given us the plans (His word) and we're to be careful not to deviate.

Vs2-6

It's kinda cool that archeologists have discovered a royal sarcophagus dating back to this time period in this region with Hiram's name on it. Which would lead one to believe that it was more than likely the Hiram with which Solomon dealt right here. But you see Solomon is not only seeking materials *from* him, but in the process he's witnessing *to* him. He says, "Our God is greater than all Gods." and He tells him that heaven and the heaven of heavens can't contain Him. He's not building a temple that he expects God to literally reside in, He's not localized in that sense, this is simply a place they'll burn incense to Him (symbolizing the ascending of the prayers of His people) and they'll burn sacrifices there before Him. But he realizes that they can in no way contain Him, various pagans built temples for their gods to live in. Solomon is saying, "That's not what we're doing, we're building a place of prayer and sacrifice, to come before Him and offer our worship *to* Him."

Vs7-8

We've noted before that when it comes to business the best man for the job is the one who gets it. It doesn't have to be believers that do business for another believer. Neither Solomon nor David adhered to any such principle, even in the building of the temple. What God is deserving of is the absolute best we can provide, and so we see the word "Skill," or "Skillful," being used 4 times in those 2 Vs. Don't do what you do ½ heartedly unto the Lord, whole heartedly, with all your might, with all your strength, with all your mind, put all that you are into it, God is worthy of it.

Vs9-11

There are those who'll see a foreshadowing of the reign of Christ in this Vs. "Because the Lord loves His people, He has made you (Jesus) king over them."

Vs12

He sees the fruit of wisdom in Solomon's life, God answers prayer and the things you do in the secret He'll reward openly. Now just because Hiram acknowledges the Lord in this way, that doesn't necessarily indicate he was a believer, (though it's possible) but it would seem more likely that he was simply being cordial toward Solomon and his God.

Vs13-16

There are those who see him agreeing to be paid and say, "The laborer is worthy of his wage." and Others who say, "The man who serves God because he gets paid doesn't serve God at all." Both are true, when it comes to serving (even in the things of God) Jesus taught that the laborer is worthy of his wage. However if his motive is money, he's a hireling, in it for the buck, not the glory and service of God.

Vs17-18

Interesting that those who bore the burdens and cut the stones that would make for the building blocks of the temple weren't Jews, they were Gentiles. Both were involved in the building of the temple. Again kind of a foreshadowing of the church if you will which would be made up of living stones, not of just of Jews but in large part of Gentiles.

Prayer points:

God we're thankful that in Your great love You didn't isolate or segregate in the building of Your temple. Jew and Gentile alike have part in Your glorious work. And Lord when it comes to Your work help us to offer You our very best. And give us the motivation, the determination and initiative to follow through and finish the work. And God help us not only the begin our walk and relationship with You on solid ground, but to finish strong as well. We want to hear "Well done." Help us to stay the course, seeking You 1st trusting You to meet our needs. Lord increase our faith.