



First Chronicles - Chapter Twenty Eight

II 1 Chronicles 10:1-2 Chronicles 9:31 - The United Kingdom of David and Solomon (continues)

II.e 1 Chronicles 21:1-29:30 - David's Census and Preparation for the Temple (continues)

Summary of Chapter Twenty Eight

David calls together his government, advisors and military leaders and announces to them that although he had wished to build the temple for God, the Lord had forbidden him to do so because of the bloodshed during his reign. However, the Lord had chosen Judah as the lead tribe and David to be the king of all Israel with a promise that his line would rule forever. Furthermore, it was the Lord who had chosen Solomon to reign after him and it was he who would build the temple that David had planned and provided for.

David then gave instruction to Solomon that he should follow the ways of God; if he did so then he would prosper, if not then the Lord would take the kingdom away from him. David then gave Solomon the plan for the temple and its contents. He encouraged Solomon to be courageous in building the temple and that God would be with him.

II.e.xv 1 Chronicles 28:1-21 - Solomon Instructed to Build the Temple

This section resumes in a public setting the charge and exhortation given in private by David in Chapter 22. The audience consists of the military and tribal leaders and the royal overseers listed in Chapter 27, along with David's leading soldiers.

¹ David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of the thousands, the commanders of the hundreds, the stewards of all the property and cattle of the king and his sons,

together with the palace officials, the mighty warriors, and all the warriors.

1 Chronicles 28:1

David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel. This was David's public 'passing of the torch' ceremony to Solomon, with an emphasis on the responsibility to build the temple. Despite this, another son of David, Adonijah in 1 Kings Chapters 1-2, tried to take the throne even before David died.

All the officials of Israel. It is most likely that this was the group of people collectively mentioned in the previous chapters.

² Then King David rose to his feet and said: 'Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had planned to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, for the footstool of our God; and I made preparations for building. ³ But God said to me, "You shall not build a house for my name, for you are a warrior and have shed blood."

1 Chronicles 28:2-3

Then King David rose to his feet. Since this happened towards the end of David's life, he was in declining health as described in 1 Kings 1:1-4. The Chronicler noted David's standing posture because, considering his age and the setting, it was a dramatic scene.

You shall not build a house for my name. David explains that his failure to build a temple was due to the Lord's disqualification of him from that task on account of his preoccupation in warfare; refer to 1 Chronicles 22:8-9. David's description of the temple as a house of rest for the ark of the covenant for the footstool of our God, a theme picked up in Psalm 132, indicates that the temple will signify not only the land at peace and thus a fitting project for the man of peace: <<*See, a son shall be born to you; he shall be a man of peace. I will give him peace from all his enemies on every side; for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days*>> (1 Chronicles 22:9), but also God's own rest among his people, and thus the completion of his work: <<*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation*>> (Genesis 2:1-3).

Although David wanted to build God a house, God politely refused David's offer and proposed to build him a house instead, in the sense of a lasting royal dynasty; refer to 2 Samuel Chapter 7. Significantly, David calls the temple a house of peace or rest. As in the case of God's Sabbath rest at creation, God's

rest represents the completion of his work. The idea of rest was so significant for the temple that even though David's role as a man of war was a vital part of the temple preparations in creating the necessary conditions for the work, it disqualified him from building the temple himself. Only Solomon, the man of peace, was sufficiently fitted for the task.

Although Jesus died an agonising death on the Cross it could also be argued that he died in peace, knowing that his work of redemption was done: <<*When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.'* Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit>> (John 19:30).

⁴ Yet the Lord God of Israel chose me from all my ancestral house to be king over Israel for ever; for he chose Judah as leader, and in the house of Judah my father's house, and among my father's sons he took delight in making me king over all Israel. ⁵ And of all my sons, for the Lord has given me many, he has chosen my son Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.

1 Chronicles 28:4-5

For he chose Judah as leader. A dying Jacob had prophesied this over the descendants of his son Judah: <<*The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and the obedience of the peoples is his*>> (Genesis 49:10). Ultimately, this tribute will come to Jesus: <<*Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*>> (Philippians 2:9-11).

He has chosen my son Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. This was a significant event because there had never been a hereditary monarchy in Israel before. Saul, the previous king of Israel, was not legitimately succeeded by any son of his. The project of temple building is a matter of God's choice, not David's. After David, Solomon is the only king in the OT said to be chosen by God, another factor that unifies the reign of these two kings in the Chronicler's presentation. Solomon is chosen to sit on Yahweh's throne, to be his adopted son (v.6), and to build God's temple (v.10).

⁶ He said to me, "It is your son Solomon who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be a son to me, and I will be a father to him. ⁷ I will establish his kingdom for ever if he continues resolute in keeping my commandments and my ordinances, as he is today." ⁸ Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the

Lord, and in the hearing of our God, observe and search out all the commandments of the Lord your God; that you may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you for ever.

1 Chronicles 28:6-8

It is your son Solomon who shall build my house. This was part of the Lord's promise to David: <<*When your days are fulfilled to go to be with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne for ever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you, but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom for ever, and his throne shall be established for ever*>> (1 Chronicles 17:11-14).

I will establish his kingdom for ever. God promised that if the royal descendents of David remained obedient, the Lord would protect their throne and the kingdom of Israel, and there would always be a descendent of David reigning over Israel. Ultimately, this would come to pass with the Messiah Jesus: <<*In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed*>> (Daniel 7:13-14 NIV).

If he continues resolute in keeping my commandments and my ordinances, as he is today. This was an important and well chosen exhortation to the people of Israel:

- They were exhorted to be careful, in the sense that they had to regard this responsibility as important and worthy of attention.
- They were exhorted to seek out the commandments of God, searching the Scriptures diligently.
- They were exhorted to seek out all the commandments, and not compromise by focusing on a few favoured commandments.

⁹ 'And you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve him with single mind and willing heart; for the Lord searches every mind, and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will abandon you for ever.

¹⁰ Take heed now, for the Lord has chosen you to build a house as the sanctuary; be strong, and act.'

1 Chronicles 28:9-10

And you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father. David's exhortation to Solomon begins with the most important aspect - emphasising a genuine commitment to a real relationship with the living God. David essentially told Solomon, "The secret of my success has been my relationship with God. You need to pursue the same relationship."

It is noted that the command 'to know' came before the command 'to serve'. To know God is to serve him. All failure in service is the result of loss of vision of God, misapprehension of him, due to being some distance from him.

David also exhorted Solomon to serve God with both his heart and mind. Some people are all heart and no mind in their service to God; others are all mind and no heart. Both of these are important to truly serve him. The establishment of Solomon's kingdom is dependent on his obedience to the Lord's commands. Solomon will prove obedient in the task of temple building, but will fail to serve God with single mind and willing heart throughout his reign: <<*For when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David*>> (1 Kings 11:4), and: <<*I said to myself, 'I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.' And I applied my mind to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a chasing after wind. For in much wisdom is much vexation, and those who increase knowledge increase sorrow*>> (Ecclesiastes 1:16-18).

David gave Solomon a reason to commit his heart and mind to God: for the Lord searches every mind, and understands every plan and thought. When someone properly understands God and his omniscience they will much more naturally serve him as they should.

If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will abandon you for ever. Both of these proved true in the life of Solomon. When Solomon sought the Lord at Gibeon, he definitely found him; refer to 1 Kings 3:1-15. When Solomon forsook God, he was in some sense cast off as seen in 1 Kings 11:1-13. Solomon's response, typical of humanity, was inconsistent. Although he did seek God as noted in 2 Chronicles 1:5, it was not with a whole heart and his divided devotion led ultimately to a divided kingdom.

Take heed now, for the Lord has chosen you to build a house as the sanctuary; be strong, and act. David concluded his exhortation to Solomon with the single most urgent command - to build the temple. All of David's exhaustive preparations would be for nothing if Solomon did not complete the job that David had started. The purpose of this sanctuary is to house the Ark of the Covenant and also to be a central location where people can come to worship the Lord God.

¹¹ Then David gave his son Solomon the plan of the vestibule of the temple, and of its houses, its treasuries, its upper rooms, and its inner chambers, and of the room for the mercy-seat; ¹² and the plan of all that he had in mind: for the courts of the house of the Lord, all the surrounding chambers, the treasuries of the house of God, and the treasuries for dedicated gifts; ¹³ for the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, and all the work of the service in the house of the Lord; for all the vessels for the service in the house of the Lord, ¹⁴ the weight of gold for all golden vessels for each service, the weight of silver vessels for each service, ¹⁵ the weight of the golden lampstands and their lamps, the weight of gold for each lampstand and its lamps, the weight of silver for a lampstand and its lamps, according to the use of each in the service, ¹⁶ the weight of gold for each table for the rows of bread, the silver for the silver tables, ¹⁷ and pure gold for the forks, the basins, and the cups; for the golden bowls and the weight of each; for the silver bowls and the weight of each; ¹⁸ for the altar of incense made of refined gold, and its weight; also his plan for the golden chariot of the cherubim that spread their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

1 Chronicles 28:11-18

Then David gave his son Solomon the plan of the vestibule of the temple. David passes on to Solomon the temple plan that he received as a revelation from God (v.19), just as Moses received the plan or pattern for the tabernacle from God; refer to Exodus 25:9.

The gold and silver temple vessels, which Solomon's craftsmen fashioned in 2 Chronicles 4:6-22, were removed by the Babylonians at the fall of Jerusalem as recorded in 2 Chronicles 36:18, then returned by the Persians at the restoration after the exile; refer to Ezra 1:7-11. They signified the continuity of the Chronicler's generation with the pre-exilic temple worship, and God's covenant faithfulness to his people.

Considered together, David did almost everything for the building of the temple except actually build it. He gave Solomon security, a location, the land, money, materials, supervisory staff, workers, and an organised team to run the temple. Here it is noted that David also gave his son Solomon the detailed plans.

Even as with the organisation of the temple servants in 2 Chronicles 29:25, these practical details were inspired by the Holy Spirit, not by human ingenuity. Charles Spurgeon comments, "Moreover, the temple was for God's

own dwelling. Should not the Most High have a house after his own mind? If he was to be the Tenant, should it not be built to suit him? And who knows what God requires in a habitation but God himself?”

These six verses mention **gold** eleven times. David amassed an amazing amount of gold for the furnishings of the temple. This was to be a building that was worthy of an Almighty God, yet what he really wants is the devotion of his people.

The weight of silver for a lampstand and its lamps. Silver lampstands are not mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, and it is not clear what function they served in comparison to the golden lampstands. In fact, it is recorded that: *<<All King Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver – it was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon>>* (1 Kings 10:21).

The weight of gold for each table for the rows of bread, the silver for the silver tables. The gold tables were for the stacks of showbread. As with the silver lampstands, the silver tables are not mentioned elsewhere. However, RaDak identifies them with the tables mentioned in Ezekiel 40:39-41 on which the offerings were to be slaughtered.

Also his plan for the golden chariot of the cherubim that spread their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord. So called, because God sat between them (Psalm 99:1), rode upon them (Psalm 18:10); the angels - represent by those cherubims - are called the chariots of God (Psalm 68:17); and the Hebrews have a saying, ‘that such as saw God of old saw only *Merchavah velo harocheb*, the chariot in which God rode, but not the rider in it.’ It is a good note also that is given here by some commentators - that by this chariot of the cherubims God gave his people to understand that his presence in the ark was not fixed among them, but that he would leave them and ride away from them, if they should continue to provoke him to do so by their sins.

¹⁹ ‘All this, in writing at the Lord’s direction, he made clear to me – the plan of all the works.’

1 Chronicles 28:19

All this, in writing at the Lord’s direction. One interpretation is that David is claiming prophetic inspiration for his writing of the temple plans he has just described for ‘at the Lord’s direction’ is literally ‘by the hand of the Lord’), and thus divine authorisation for the plans. It is possible, however, that David is making a stronger claim, namely, that the temple plans were given to him in written form by God in a similar way that Moses received the Ten Commandments: *<<The Lord said to Moses, ‘Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction’>>* (Exodus 24:12).

²⁰ David said further to his son Solomon, ‘Be strong and of good courage, and act. Do not be afraid or dismayed; for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the Lord is finished. ²¹ Here are the divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of God; and with you in all the work will be every volunteer who has skill for any kind of service; also the officers and all the people will be wholly at your command.’

1 Chronicles 28:20-21

David said further to his son Solomon. David commissions Solomon in public, just as he had previously done in private in 1 Chronicles 22:11-13.

Be strong and of good courage. David here echoes God’s exhortation to Joshua before he led the people of God into the Promised Land: <<*No one shall be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous; for you shall put this people in possession of the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go*>> (Joshua 1:5-7). This was appropriate, because Moses was a great leader who could only lead the people of Israel to a certain point - the rest was up to Joshua. The same pattern applied to David and his successor Solomon. In describing David’s plans for building the temple, the Chronicler has paid special attention to portray David as a second Moses and Solomon as a second Joshua.

And act. It is easy to see how important this was for David. He had spent enormous effort to prepare the temple but it would all be for nothing unless Solomon did in fact do it. Again Spurgeon comments, “Do not talk about it; do not sit down, and dream over the plans, and think how admirable they are, and then roll them up; but, ‘Be strong and of good courage, and do it.’”

Here are the divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of God. Everything is now in place. David hands Solomon the scrolls with the plans for building the temple and organising its service. The job was now in the hands of David’s son Solomon.