



First Chronicles - Chapter Twenty Nine

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/concludes)

Summary of Chapter Twenty Nine

In addition to the provision that David had made for the Temple, he also announces that he is donating a significant amount of his own personal wealth to the project. Inspired by his generosity, the other leaders present also gave freewill-offerings to the Lord from their own wealth.

David then gave a heartfelt and rousing blessing to the Lord, acknowledging his greatness and the fact that everything they had to offer him had been given to them by him in the first place. He acknowledges also that his people are but transient and insignificant in comparison to his awesome presence. He asks for the Lord's blessing and guidance for Solomon in undertaking the building project of the Lord's temple. The following day there were many sacrifices to the Lord and a joyous festival for all those present.

Solomon was then anointed as the king of all Israel, acknowledged as such by all the elders and leaders that were present. The Book of First Chronicles concludes with a brief summary of David's mostly successful reign as king.

II.e.xvi 1 Chronicles 29:1-9 - Offerings for Building the Temple

David exhorts the entire assembly to support Solomon in his task by contributing to the temple fund, just as he has himself given generously from his own personal property. The temple is designated a palace, indicating that it is God's kingly residence among his people. The freewill-offerings of the people that David calls for signify that they are consecrating themselves to God, using the same

expression for the ordination of priests in Exodus 28:41. The people's response calls to mind the gifts made by the Israelites for the Tabernacle in Moses' day; refer to Exodus 35:20-29. The writer stresses his wholehearted and joyful devotion to the task.

¹ King David said to the whole assembly, 'My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great; for the temple will not be for mortals but for the Lord God.

1 Chronicles 29:1

My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced. David said this to ensure that other leaders would step up in support of Solomon in his decision making. Solomon himself acknowledged to the Lord that he needed his guidance to become a good king of God's people: <<*And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?*>> (1 Kings 3:7-9).

The work is great; for the temple will not be for mortals but for the Lord God. One reason David did so much to prepare for the building of the temple was because he knew that the work was great and required significant resources - more than a young and inexperienced king like Solomon could be expected to gather on his own.

The work was great because it was for God. Before a great God there are no small works; everything should be done for the glory of God: <<*Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything, not only while being watched and in order to please them, but wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ*>> (Colossians 3:22-24).

² So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood, besides great quantities of onyx and stones for setting, antimony, coloured stones, all sorts of precious stones, and marble in abundance. ³ Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it

to the house of my God: ⁴ three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for overlaying the walls of the house, ⁵ and for all the work to be done by artisans, gold for the things of gold and silver for the things of silver. Who then will offer willingly, consecrating themselves today to the Lord?’

1 Chronicles 29:2-5

So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able. This was certainly true. When the reader considers all that David did to provide security, a location, the land, money, materials, supervisory staff, workers, plans, and an organised team to run the temple, it is evident that David gave this work of preparation all of his might, to the fullness of his human ability.

David specifically used the phrase the house of my God to emphasise the personal connection; this was more personal than saying merely the house of God. Because God was David’s God in a personal sense, David loved the house of God even though he would never see it for himself.

Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver. David gave all he gave because he loved the house of God. People naturally give to and support that which they love: <<*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*>> (Matthew 6:21).

Because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house of my God. David loved the house of his God so much that he gave over and above what he had already given. David did an enormous amount of preparation and resource gathering in order to ensure that the temple could be built; but now he gave even more from his personal resources, not those of state.

Three thousand talents of gold; and seven thousand talents of refined silver. These were vast quantities of precious metals equivalent of 100 and 235 tonnes respectively.

The gold of Ophir was legendary for its fine quality. The location of this seaport remains unknown but favoured opinion places it in India, in the regions between one of the tributaries of the Indus River and China. This would seem a possibility because the ships sailed from Ezion-Geber at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqaba and return journeys it seems took up to three years: <<*Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which carried gold from Ophir, brought from Ophir a great quantity of almug wood and precious stones*>> (1 Kings 10:11), with: <<*For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks*>> (1 Kings 10:22).

Who then will offer willingly, consecrating themselves today to the Lord? David raised the issue of his own giving, especially the additional giving, in order to use it as an occasion to challenge his fellow Israelites to also consecrate themselves to the Lord. The king's appeal for each giver to 'consecrate himself' reads literally 'to fill his hand.' This was a technical phrase used to describe ordination to the priesthood; and Scripture, significantly, places the act of giving on this same level of devotion.

Given the massive amount that David gathered for the building of the temple, it might be argued that the gifts of the people were unnecessary. Yet David knew that it was important to give the people an opportunity to give, for their sake more than for the sake of the building project itself. Their giving was a legitimate and important way to consecrate themselves to God.

⁶ Then the leaders of ancestral houses made their freewill-offerings, as did also the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, and the officers over the king's work. ⁷ They gave for the service of the house of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. ⁸ Whoever had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the Lord, into the care of Jehiel the Gershonite. ⁹ Then the people rejoiced because these had given willingly, for with single mind they had offered freely to the Lord; King David also rejoiced greatly.

1 Chronicles 29:6-9

Then the leaders of ancestral houses made their freewill-offerings. The people found it easy to give when they saw the greatness and the value of the project and when they had good examples of generous giving by King David.

After their return from exile Jews everywhere were invited to give again to the rebuilding of the Temple: <<Any of those among you who are of his people – may their God be with them! – are now permitted to go up to Jerusalem in Judah, and rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel – he is the God who is in Jerusalem; and let all survivors, in whatever place they reside, be assisted by the people of their place with silver and gold, with goods and with animals, besides freewill-offerings for the house of God in Jerusalem>> (Ezra 1:3-4). This they did: <<Now some of the heads of ancestral houses contributed to the work. The governor gave to the treasury one thousand darics of gold, fifty basins, and five hundred and thirty priestly robes. And some of the heads of ancestral houses gave into the building fund twenty

thousand darics of gold and two thousand two hundred minas of silver>> (Nehemiah 7:70-71).

The leaders of ancestral houses were the elders representing each tribe, whereas the leaders of the tribes represented the clans within those tribes. The commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds were the military men and the officers over the king's work were the civil servants and other government officials serving in the administration.

Ten thousand darics of gold. The daric was a Persian coin first minted under Darius I (522-486 BC) and therefore not around in David's day but would have been well known to those who had just returned from Babylonian exile. The Chronicler uses this contemporary loanword to convey to his readers the value of what was given, and to indicate a



Image of a Persian Daric

sense of the leaders' generosity. The example of the people in David's day was intended to speak to the Chronicler's own generation, encouraging them in their commitment to the upkeep of the temple, its services, and its personnel. Refer also to 2 Chronicles 31:4-10.

Then the people rejoiced because these had given willingly, for with single mind they had offered freely to the Lord; King David also rejoiced greatly. The people found that it was a joyful thing to give so generously to God. They fulfilled the later NT idea of Paul's cheerful giving in 2 Corinthians 9:7.

II.e.xvii 1 Chronicles 29:10-22a - David's Praise to God

David's great prayer of praise and supplication marks the climax of his reign. Israel's king praises God for his universal kingdom and recognises him as the source of all wealth and strength. Indeed, even the generosity of David and the people in providing for the temple comes from God himself. They depend entirely on God for their security and wellbeing, and even in the Promised Land they are strangers and sojourners before God.

David then reflects that God examines the human heart for uprightness and integrity, a further indication that the Chronicler cares above all for the inner reality of faith. David concludes by praying that God will keep the people in the same purpose and mind as they have shown this day, and will give to Solomon a whole heart in obedience to God's commandments.

¹⁰ Then David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly; David said: 'Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our ancestor Israel, for ever and ever. ¹¹ Yours, O Lord, are the greatness, the power, the

glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. ¹² Riches and honour come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. ¹³ And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name.

1 Chronicles 29:10-13

Then David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. The generous giving made David rejoice and praise God. It was not for the sake of the wealth itself, but because it demonstrated that the hearts of the people were really interested in God and in his house.

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our ancestor Israel, for ever and ever. Israel or Jacob rather than Abraham is acknowledged as the founding father of the nation for it was from his twelve sons that the tribes descended from. In Matthew 6:9-13 Jesus taught his disciples to pray beginning with the phrase 'our Father'. Much of the remaining blessing here has similar connotations to that prayer ending in yours is the kingdom. Jesus may have had this passage in mind when teaching his disciples about prayer.

For all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours. David had referred to this in one of his psalms: <<*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it*>> (Psalm 24:1), and Ethan the Ezrahite does also in his praise for the Davidic covenant : <<*The heavens are yours, the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it – you have founded them*>> (Psalm 89:11).

O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. This is a song that will be sung throughout all eternity: <<*Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, singing with full voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing!' Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing, 'To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever!'*>> (Revelation 5:11-13).

Riches and honour come from you. David could say this as a man who had a life full of both riches and honour. He knew that those things came from God and not from David himself.

¹⁴ ‘But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to make this freewill-offering? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. ¹⁵ For we are aliens and transients before you, as were all our ancestors; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.

1 Chronicles 29:14-15

But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to make this freewill-offering? David knew that both the ability and the heart to give were themselves gifts from God. He was actually humbled by having such a heart to give, both in himself and in the people of Israel as a group. David knew this was true because he knew that all things come from God, and whatever they gave to God was his own to begin with: <<*The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts*>> (Haggai 2:8).

Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope. By emphasising the weakness of man, David recognises the greatness of God. He can take hopeless, alien pilgrims and shadows and use them to build a great house unto a great God.

David also provides a reminder that life on earth is fleeting in comparison to eternity: <<*For inquire now of bygone generations, and consider what their ancestors have found; for we are but of yesterday, and we know nothing, for our days on earth are but a shadow*>> (Job 8:8-9), <<*O Lord, what are human beings that you regard them, or mortals that you think of them? They are like a breath; their days are like a passing shadow*>> (Psalm 144:3-4), and: <<*For who knows what is good for mortals while they live the few days of their vain life, which they pass like a shadow? For who can tell them what will be after them under the sun?*>> (Ecclesiastes 6:12).

¹⁶ O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own. ¹⁷ I know, my God, that you search the heart, and take pleasure in uprightness; in the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things, and now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering freely and joyously to you. ¹⁸ O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our ancestors, keep for ever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts towards you. ¹⁹ Grant to my son Solomon that with single mind he may keep your commandments, your decrees, and your statutes,

performing all of them, and that he may build the temple for which I have made provision.'

1 Chronicles 29:16-19

I know, my God, that you search the heart. This is something to be remembered. The outward appearance means nothing to God; it is the inner person that he seeks and he knows those who are genuine in seeking him and those who do it for show: <<*But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart'*>> (1 Samuel 16:7), and: <<*We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart*>> (2 Corinthians 5:12).

Jesus provides an important lesson in the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax-Collector: <<*He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income." But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted'*>> (Luke 18:9-14).

In the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things. David knew that it was important to emphasise that his offering had been made willingly. He gave because he wanted to, not merely as a demonstration to induce the people to give. David therefore also knew that the people made their offerings willingly to the Lord.

Keep for ever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts towards you. David knew that the people of Israel were in a godly, wonderful place on this day of offering to the temple. Praise then merged into prayer that the state of mind in which they had given might be maintained; and for Solomon, that he might be kept with a perfect heart to complete the work of temple building. It was a fitting and glorious ending to a great reign.

Grant to my son Solomon that with single mind he may keep your commandments. David knew that this was the key to the lasting health of the kingdom of Israel and the security of his dynasty.

²⁰ Then David said to the whole assembly, ‘Bless the Lord your God.’ And all the assembly blessed the Lord, the God of their ancestors, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the Lord and the king. ²¹ On the next day they offered sacrifices and burnt-offerings to the Lord, a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their libations, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel; ^{22a} and they ate and drank before the Lord on that day with great joy.

1 Chronicles 29:20-22a

Bless the Lord your God. When it came time to bless the Lord, it was not enough for the people to feel a feeling in their heart. They had to do something to demonstrate their heart towards God, and they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the Lord.

A thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their libations, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. This was a special day, probably celebrated after the death of David when Solomon formally took the throne. These sacrifices were used to feed the people of Israel, and they ate and drank before the Lord in a great feast of communion with God and one another.

This scene of great sacrificial offering will be repeated and surpassed when the temple is complete and being dedicated: <<Then the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the Lord. Solomon offered as sacrifices of well-being to the Lord twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord. The same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that was in front of the house of the Lord; for there he offered the burnt-offerings and the grain-offerings and the fat pieces of the sacrifices of well-being, because the bronze altar that was before the Lord was too small to receive the burnt-offerings and the grain-offerings and the fat pieces of the sacrifices of well-being. So Solomon held the festival at that time, and all Israel with him – a great assembly, people from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt – before the Lord our God, for seven days. On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their tents, joyful and in good spirits because of all the goodness that the Lord had shown to his servant David and to his people Israel>> (1 Kings 8:62-66).

II.e.xviii 1 Chronicles 29:22b-25 - Solomon Anointed King

Solomon had earlier been anointed king to thwart the attempt by Adonijah to seize the throne for himself. Now, with all the leaders of the whole country gathered, Solomon is formally anointed in what was essentially his coronation.

^{22b} They made David's son Solomon king a second time; they anointed him as the Lord's prince, and Zadok as priest.

1 Chronicles 29:22b

They made David's son Solomon king a second time. Solomon had been rather hurriedly anointed and installed as king in response to Adonijah's attempted coup, which is not mentioned in Chronicles but is recorded in 1 Kings 1:28-40. This second ceremony occurred when his succession was secure and widely acknowledged (v.24). David himself had been anointed king on three occasions: privately before his family in 1 Samuel 16:13, and twice in Hebron, first over Judah: <<*Then the people of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah*>> (2 Samuel 2:4a), and over all Israel: <<*So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel*>> (2 Samuel 5:3).

Zadok as priest. Zadok had been faithful to David for many years and was effectively a joint priest with Abiathar at the time of Absalom's rebellion. However, Abiathar supported the crowning of Adonijah and was subsequently dismissed, leaving Zadok as the main priest. He was chosen to be the High Priest, the senior priest serving in the temple.

²³ Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord, succeeding his father David as king; he prospered, and all Israel obeyed him. ²⁴ All the leaders and the mighty warriors, and also all the sons of King David, pledged their allegiance to King Solomon. ²⁵ The Lord highly exalted Solomon in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

1 Chronicles 29:23-25

Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord, succeeding his father David as king. On the throne of the Lord, i.e. on the throne of Israel, which is called the throne of the Lord, either more generally, as all thrones are the Lord's: <<*By me kings reign, and rulers decree what is just*>> (Proverbs 8:15), and all governments are ordained by him; refer to Romans 13:1-2.

All the leaders and the mighty warriors, and also all the sons of King David, pledged their allegiance to King Solomon. After Adonijah's death, some of the key people in Jerusalem gave allegiance to him. Here, most of them along with those who had remained faithful to David all submitted themselves to Solomon as the legitimate king.

The Lord highly exalted Solomon in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel. The Lord has done for Solomon what he had earlier done for David: <<*David then perceived that the Lord had established him as king over Israel, and that his kingdom was highly exalted for the sake of his people Israel*>> (1 Chronicles 14:2), in accordance with his promise to David: <<*The king swore, saying, ‘As the Lord lives, who has saved my life from every adversity, as I swore to you by the Lord, the God of Israel, “Your son Solomon shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit on my throne in my place”, so will I do this day’*>> (1 Kings 2:29-30). Solomon is seen here as being greater than his father David. This was true in one sense for during his reign the people only knew peace and prosperity, but the wise reader understands that this was only because David had made this possible. The majesty of Solomon was really inherited from the work, wisdom, godliness and prayers of his father. And, of course, it was all made possible by God.

II.e.xix 1 Chronicles 29:26-30 - Summary of David’s Reign

David’s life comes to an end and Solomon now rules the entire nation of Israel.

²⁶ Thus David son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. ²⁷ The period that he reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned for seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ²⁸ He died at a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour; and his son Solomon succeeded him. ²⁹ Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the records of the seer Samuel, and in the records of the prophet Nathan, and in the records of the seer Gad, ³⁰ with accounts of all his rule and his might and of the events that befell him and Israel and all the kingdoms of the earth.

1 Chronicles 29:26-30

The period that he reigned over Israel was forty years. There were other kings over Israel or Judah who had reigns longer or more secure or more prosperous than David’s reign, but none were more glorious or godly. David remains Judah’s model king, not because of his human strengths but primarily because his heart was for the Lord.

He died at a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour. David was a great king and his greatness is especially seen in his connection with the Messiah. One of the great titles of Jesus is, Son of David. David died in his old age: <<*For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, died, was laid beside his ancestors, and experienced corruption*>> (Acts 13:36); Jesus died as a young man but his body did not see decay for he rose again from death: <<*Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he*

both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, "He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption." This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses>> (Acts 2:29-32).

Eighteenth Century commentator Adam Clarke wrote, "By birth, a peasant; by merit, a prince; in youth, a hero; in manhood, a monarch; and in age, a saint. The matter of Uriah and Bath-sheba is his great but only blot! There he sinned deeply; and no man ever suffered more in his body, soul, and domestic affairs, than he did in consequence. His penitence was as deep and as extraordinary as his crime; and nothing could surpass both but that eternal mercy that took away the guilt, assuaged the sorrow, and restored this most humbled transgressor to character, holiness, and happiness. Let the God of David be exalted forever!"

The various records mentioned here probably contained much of the material that is included in the Books of Samuel and Kings, but may have included additional records as well; refer to the comment made on 1 Kings 14:19. Samuel, Nathan, and Gad all played roles in the life of David; refer to 1 Chronicles 9:22, 17:1-15 and 21:9-13.

The kingdoms of the earth most likely refers to the surrounding nations that David had subjugated and those that willingly offered peace and trade with Israel.