

2 Chronicles 1-2 – Thursday, October 20th, 2016

2 Chronicles 1 – 1 Now Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and the LORD his God was with him and exalted him exceedingly. 2 And Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, to the judges, and to every leader in all Israel, the heads of the fathers' houses.

- The chapter begins with how strong Solomon's kingdom was, and we're told God was with him and exalted him exceedingly.
- This was due in large measure to his father David providing everything he needed in order to hit the ground running, as it were.
- This speaks to the importance of fathers creating an environment that's conducive their child's success in heeding God's call.

3 Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for the tabernacle of meeting with God was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness. 4 But David had brought up the ark of God from Kirjath Jearim to the place David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem. 5 Now the bronze altar that Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put before the tabernacle of the LORD; Solomon and the assembly sought Him there. 6 And Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the LORD, which was at the tabernacle of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.

- Here we're told that Solomon went to Gibeon where the tabernacle of meeting was still located, and apparently still remained.
- The question becomes one of why the tabernacle was not relocated to Jerusalem at the time that David brought the ark of God.
- One thought is David's focus was exclusively on the Temple being built, and as such, the Tabernacle had served its purpose.

7 On that night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, "Ask! What shall I give you?" 8 And Solomon said to God: "You have shown great mercy to David my father, and have made me king in his place. 9 Now, O LORD God, let Your promise to David my father be established, for You have made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. 10 Now give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours?"

- Couple of thoughts here on what would be deemed a well-known account in scripture, the first of which has to do with dreams.
- God still speaks to us in dreams today; however, those dreams have to be first and foremost in accordance with God's word.
- We must both possess and use spiritual discernment when it comes to dreams or we can be in danger of misinterpreting them.

- The second thought on this has to do with Solomon's humility as evidenced by what he says concerning his own inadequacies.
- In other words, Solomon knows that in and of himself he is unable to do that which God has called him to, namely, be the king.
- To me this is a quintessential component when it comes to humility, which is the catalyst for wisdom that comes from above.

Proverbs 11:2 (NKJV) — 2 When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

James 3:13–18 (NIV) — 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. 17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

- A third thought on this has to do with how that Solomon simply asked for wisdom, which to me indicates he had some wisdom.
- By that I mean it would stand to reason that he had to possess a degree of wisdom, to see the wisdom, of asking for wisdom.
- More specifically, Solomon had the wisdom to know he lacked the wisdom he needed, which is why he would ask God for it.

James 1:5–8 (NIV) — 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. 6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

- A final thought on this is concerning the fact that of all the things he could have asked God for, he would seek first His wisdom.
- To me, this speaks to the paramount importance of seeking first God's kingdom, God's righteousness, and God's wisdom too.
- We err greatly when we first seek other things instead of seeking God. Consider what Jesus said in his sermon on the mount.

Matthew 6:33 (NIV) — 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

11 Then God said to Solomon: "Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked riches or wealth or honor or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked long life—but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may judge My people over whom I have made you king—12 wisdom and knowledge are granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings have had who were before you, nor shall any after you have the like."

- This is certainly a grand and glorious example of how God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.
- However, in spite of all this, we know from Solomon's life, especially at the end of his life, that he had in effect, wasted all of it.
- Sadly, his wealth and his wisdom, which exceeded that of anyone before him or after him, would be of no real benefit to him.

Adam Clarke of Solomon wrote, "Instead of being the wisest of men, did he not become more brutish than any man? Did he not even lose the knowledge of his Creator, and worship the abominations of the Moabites, Zidonians, and [so forth]? And was not such idolatry a proof of the grossest stupidity? How few proofs does his life give that the gracious purpose of God was fulfilled in him! He received much; but he would have received much more, had he been faithful to the grace given. No character in the sacred writings disappoints us more than the character of Solomon."

13 So Solomon came to Jerusalem from the high place that was at Gibeon, from before the tabernacle of meeting, and reigned over Israel. 14 And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. 15 Also the king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as abundant as the sycamores which are in the lowland. 16 And Solomon had horses imported from Egypt and Keveh; the king's merchants bought them in Keveh at the current price. 17 They also acquired and imported from Egypt a chariot for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred and fifty; thus, through their agents, they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.

- While the chapter ends with a description of all the wealth Solomon had amassed, there's a subtle exclusion from the narrative.
- Namely, that of how multiplying horses, wives and gold for himself would be that which ultimately led to Solomon's downfall.
- The reason I mention this is because prosperity can pose a deadly danger of sorts, to those who have been blessed of God.

G. Campbell Morgan of this wrote, "There was nothing wrong in all this, but it created a very subtle peril. Prosperity is always a more insidious danger to men of faith than adversity."

2 Chronicles 2 -- 1 Then Solomon determined to build a temple for the name of the LORD, and a royal house for himself. 2 Solomon selected seventy thousand men to bear burdens, eighty thousand to quarry stone in the mountains, and three thousand six hundred to oversee them. 3 Then Solomon sent to Hiram king of Tyre, saying: As you have dealt with David my father, and sent him cedars to build himself a house to dwell in, so deal with me. 4 Behold, I am building a temple for the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate it to Him, to burn before Him sweet incense, for the continual showbread, for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the Sabbaths, on the New Moons, and on the set feasts of the LORD our God. This is an ordinance forever to Israel. 5 And the temple which I build will be great, for our God is greater than all gods. 6 But who is able to build Him a temple, since heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him? Who am I then, that I should build Him a temple, except to burn sacrifice before Him?

- It's interesting that the Chronicler deemed it necessary to record Solomon's determination to first and foremost build the temple.
- The reason I find this interesting is because it could be argued that Solomon was known chiefly for his wisdom and his wealth.
- While the building of the temple doesn't lessen the importance of his wisdom and wealth, it is at the very least as important.

7 Therefore send me at once a man skillful to work in gold and silver, in bronze and iron, in purple and crimson and blue, who has skill to engrave with the skillful men who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom David my father provided. 8 Also send me cedar and cypress and algum logs from Lebanon, for I know that your servants have skill to cut timber in Lebanon; and indeed my servants will be with your servants, 9 to prepare timber for me in abundance, for the temple which I am about to build shall be great and wonderful. 10 And indeed I will give to your servants, the woodsmen who cut timber, twenty thousand kors of ground wheat, twenty thousand kors of barley, twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil. 11 Then Hiram king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon: Because the LORD loves His people, He has made you king over them. 12 Hiram also said: Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who made heaven and earth, for He has given King David a wise son, endowed with prudence and understanding, who will build a temple for the LORD and a royal house for himself! 13 And now I have sent a skillful man, endowed with understanding, Hiram my master craftsman 14 (the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre), skilled to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron, stone and wood, purple and blue, fine linen and crimson, and to make any engraving and to accomplish any plan which may be given to him, with your skillful men and with the skillful men of my lord David your father. 15 Now therefore, the wheat, the barley, the oil, and the wine which my lord has spoken of, let him send to his servants. 16 And we will cut wood from Lebanon, as much as you need; we will bring it to you in rafts by sea to Joppa, and you will carry it up to Jerusalem. 17 Then Solomon numbered all the aliens who were in the land of Israel, after the census in which David his father had numbered them; and there were found to be one hundred and fifty-three thousand six hundred. 18 And he made seventy thousand of them bearers of burdens, eighty thousand stonecutters in the mountain, and three thousand six hundred overseers to make the people work.

- The chapter ends with something that's not so easily seen at first read, and it has to do with Hiram and all the aliens in the land.
- I would suggest that these Gentiles were so impressed and blessed by the God of Israel that they would play a part in the work.
- This is so apropos to where we're at now after having completed the renovation of our building as it relates to the unbeliever.