

1 Chronicles 17-20 - Chapter Study

I. Genealogies (1 Chr. 1:1-9:44)

II. The Reign of David (10-29)

A. Background: the Death of Saul (10:1-14)

B. David's Rise (11:1-20:8)

1. David established in Jerusalem; his heroes (11:1-12:40)
2. Recovering the ark I • Ch. 13
3. Victory over the Philistines • Ch. 14
4. Recovering the ark II • Ch. 15-16
5. God's promise to David • Ch. 17

¹Now it came to pass, when David was dwelling in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under tent curtains."

Cedar was a prized wood. A house made of cedar was a mansion.

Remember that earlier we read the King of Tyre sent both cedar & craftsmen to assist David in building the main buildings of Jerusalem.

They made an ornate palace for the King of Israel.

So David's sitting here in the midst of massive blessing & as he meditates on the goodness of God, it bugs that the ark sits in a tent. The incongruity is too much.

So Dave shares his concern with the prophet Nathan, a man who speaks for God.

Nathan is one of David's most important counselors.

²Then Nathan said to David, "Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you."

Implied in David's complaint was the conviction he ought to *do something* for the ark.

The tabernacle was a fitting home for the ark when Israel was making the exodus & moving from place to place.

But now that they are safely settled in their land with a secure capital, a permanent home would be better.

Nathan well knew David's devotion to God, his extensive wealth & power, & his skills as an administrator & architect. Whatever Dave had planned would be grand.

The idea jived perfectly with Nathan's own ideas so he gave Dave a "thumbs up."

Now – as we saw in ch. 14 with the whole fiasco of moving the ark, David understood the importance of seeking God about *everything*; of not just doing something because it seemed like duty, a good idea, or was common sense.

He mentioned it to Nathan *precisely to see* if his plan to build a temple was God's will.

He *trusted Nathan* would consult God – but Nathan didn't.

He made the very error David sought to avoid – he *presumed* without seeking God.

How could God **NOT** want a temple built to His name? It seemed obvious to Nathan. SO he gave the go-ahead.

³ But it happened that night that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, ⁴ "Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: "You shall not build Me a house to dwell in. ⁵ For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought up Israel, even to this day, but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another. ⁶ Wherever I have moved

about with all Israel, have I ever spoken a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?' ” ’

What's missing in our English translation from the Hebrew is the *delight* in God's response to David's initiative to build a temple.

While God had given clear instructions to Moses about building the tent of meeting, He'd never told anyone to build a permanent building; He'd never even *hinted* at it.

And as honored as God was – David was *not* to build the temple. *Why* becomes clear in a moment.

David is such a marvelous picture of devotion to God here.

He was at a place in life where he'd done all God wanted him to; now he wants to do **MORE!**

He wants to go beyond the basics & *excel in his zeal* for God.

Many of God's people have the mindset of doing only what's necessary.

They want to make sure they have all their bases covered, the minimum of what's required by God.

Oh for the heart of David who wants to excel for God – to surpass the requirements & lay hold of all that's possible.

God told David he was NOT to build the temple but that his son would.

So David did everything he could to assist; he amassed the materials & drew up the plans.

He got everything ready so that when the time came, there would be no delay.

And so it is with us.

Some of us are David, and others are Solomon. Some prepare, others build.

He must not be of the mindset that says, "If I can't be in the limelight, then I'm not interested."

Andrea Bocelli has an amazing voice!

But without the composer, *what* would he sing?

Without the conductor & orchestra, *how* could he sing?

Without the carpenters who constructed the stage, *where* would he sing?

Right now in America, there is a desperate need for revival – a culture-rending, values-shifting spiritual upheaval that will turn us back to God.

To bring about that revival, God will raise up key men & women who will with prophetic voice speak for Him. Their names will be identified with the move of God's Spirit.

But revival will only come when all of us *first* pray for it.

As David stored up the materials for building – *we* must store up a multitude of prayers & tears.

They must pile up like flood-waters behind a levee.

The day will come when the weight of our prayers for revival will overwhelm what holds them back – then what glory will come forth to renew the land!

⁷ Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel.

David's beginnings were humble.

But because he'd been faithful in the small things of his beginning, God had made him ruler over much. Just as is promised us as we follow Christ.

⁸ And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a name like the name of the great men who are on the earth.

Remember that during David's reign, Israel became the predominant nation throughout the Ancient World. His name & fame spread to every corner, every court.

⁹ Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness

oppress them anymore, as previously, ¹⁰ since the time that I commanded judges *to be over My people Israel. Also I will subdue all your enemies. Furthermore I tell you that the LORD will build you a house.*

God knows David's concern is not for himself but for the nation – so He begins by affirming that Israel is now settled.

The troubles she had during the period of the Judges, were a thing of the past.

Then God turns to speak directly to David.

Though David would not be allowed to build God a house, God is so pleased by his desire, He's going to build David one.

David understood God's promise of a "house" to be referring to a *dynasty*.

¹¹ And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled, when you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom.

This was always the issue of greatest concern to kings; that their line would continue.

Throughout the history of the entire world, wars have been fought, conspiracies waged, & intrigues fostered over the succession of the throne.

God's promise to David that the throne would pass from him to his son was a huge relief.

¹² He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever.

It would be David's son who would build the temple, & David's dynasty would never end!

Since we know David had studied the entire Bible and showed an amazing perception of it's content, we can safely assume when God said, he understood this to mean the Messiah would be his descendant.

¹³ I will be his Father, and he shall be My son; and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him who was before you.

Saul had been anointed & appointed to be the first king of Israel.

But his repeated disobedience to God had resulted in his being rejected and David being installed in his place.

Now God promised David that He would *never* revoke his dynasty.

¹⁴ And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever." ' "

God looks beyond David's son Solomon now to a later son who will occupy the throne forever.

While the throne of Israel *forever belonged* to David's descendants – one day one of those descendants would *occupy it forever*.

¹⁵ According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David. ¹⁶ Then King David went in and sat before the LORD; and he said: "Who am I, O LORD God? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? ¹⁷ And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O God; and You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come, and have regarded me according to the rank of a man of high degree, O LORD God. ¹⁸ What more can David say to You for the honor of Your servant? For You know Your servant. ¹⁹ O LORD, for Your servant's sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all this greatness, in making known all these great things. ²⁰ O LORD, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears. ²¹ And who is like Your people Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people—to make for Yourself a name by great and awesome deeds, by driving out nations from before Your people whom You

redeemed from Egypt? ²² For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, LORD, have become their God.

David is blown away & humbled by the immensity of God's promise to him.

²³ "And now, O LORD, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, *let it* be established forever, and do as You have said. ²⁴ So let it be established, that Your name may be magnified forever, saying, 'The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, *is* Israel's God.' And let the house of Your servant David be established before You. ²⁵ For You, O my God, have revealed to Your servant that You will build him a house. Therefore Your servant has found it *in his heart* to pray before You. ²⁶ And now, LORD, You are God, and have promised this goodness to Your servant. ²⁷ Now You have been pleased to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue before You forever; for You have blessed it, O LORD, and *it shall be blessed forever.*"

In essence, David says "Amen!" to the promise of God. So be it!

It isn't until ch. 22 that we find out *why* David couldn't build the temple.

In vs. 8-10 David was told he couldn't build the temple because he'd been a man of war & had shed a lot of blood.

It would be his son, a man of peace, who would build the temple.

"Solomon" has its roots in the word '*shalom*' = peace.

There are a couple things to glean from this . . .

1) Ch. 22 & God's revealing to David WHY he couldn't build the temple were disclosed years *after* ch. 17.

Why? Because if when God first said "no" He'd have said it was because David had blood on his hands, it would have *seemed unjust*.

After all, the wars David engaged in were all part of taking possession of the territory God had called Israel to possess.

None of his fighting was of his own initiative; it was always defensive & at the direction of God.

So why should he be *docked* for doing what God said?

That's the way David probably would have seen it if God had said so here in ch. 17.

But with the passage of a few years & David's growth in the things of God, he was able to receive it by the time ch. 22 comes.

The lesson is this: We all have much to learn & God knows what we're able to endure.

He only reveals what His grace has enabled us to grasp.

That means you don't have to worry about some trial being too great to endure.

God would never allow it to descend on you if He didn't also give you the capacity to not just endure it, but to *prevail* in it.

2 Corinthians 2:14 - Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, . . .

1 Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.

Romans 8:37 - Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

2) The truth David came to see is that God has different roles for different people & some roles preclude others.

His role as the 2nd king of Israel was to secure Israel's borders and that required war, not diplomacy.

Because David was faithful in His calling, His son was free to pursue diplomacy.

There's a great story from the Life of John Adams when he was serving as an ambassador in France.

Adams found the debauchery of French society disturbing.

Americans were in the midst of war with Britain & it bothered him to no end that while his country & family were suffering he was sitting in the midst of such easy among men & women who were so immoral.

At a sumptuous dinner with some of the French nobility, he was asked if he was a student of opera.

Adams paused, then replied – “No. I must study politics & war – so that my sons may study economics, agriculture, & industry. And if we succeed, then *their* sons can study opera.”

Friends, our task, our calling is to busy ourselves with the task of spiritual battle, to prevail in prayer for revival.

We must wage that battle in prayer so that others will reap the benefits of it.

6. Conquests & administration (18:1-17)

Ch. 18 gives us a summary of David's military conquests . . .

¹After this it came to pass that David attacked the Philistines, subdued them, and took Gath and its towns from the hand of the Philistines.

Gath was one of the 5 main city-states of the Philistines. It lay close to the border with Israel & had long been a staging post for raids against Israel, so David conquered it.

That he was able to do so shows the time of Philistine oppression of Israel has finally come to an end.

²Then he defeated Moab, and the Moabites became David's servants, and brought tribute.

These were located on the eastern border of Israel.

³And David defeated Hadadezer king of Zobah as far as Hamath, as he went to establish his power by the River Euphrates.

The Syrians were divided among 2 great city-states; Zobah & Damascus. They formed an alliance against David. He defeated & subdued them.

⁴David took from him 1000 chariots, 7000 horsemen, and 20,000 foot soldiers. Also David hamstrung all the chariot horses, except that he spared enough of them for 100 chariots.

⁵When the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed 22,000 of the Syrians. ⁶Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought tribute. So the LORD preserved David wherever he went.

Couple quick things here . . .

1) Note that David didn't turn the chariots into his own military equipment.

He'd read God's prohibition against the king amassing horses.

He kept only 100, probably not for battle but for helping to administrate the kingdom.

They would make a great platform for carrying messengers.

2) Note the phrase in v. 6 “Syria of Damascus” instead of what we'd expect, “Damascus of Syria.”

It marks the difference between a nation & a city-state set up.

“Syria of Damascus” refers to the region over which the central city-state of Damascus ruled.

David's power over this area was so great he was able to establish military outposts there to ensure the raids the Syrians had made on Israel's northern region for years would end.

Interesting in a news report I read yesterday that the Assad, the president of Syria said there will be no peace with Israel until they return the Galilee to Syria! The Galilee?? Syria has never occupied this region.

The debate has been over the Golan Heights that overlook Galilee, but not Galilee itself.

Well, now that there IS talk about turning over the Golan Heights, the Syrians are pressing for MORE.

That's the point – land for peace will *never* work because what the Muslims want is ALL OF IT.

7 And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

Hadadezer had an elite body guard whose shields were covered with gold.

8 Also from Tibhath and from Chun, cities of Hadadezer, David brought a large amount of bronze, with which Solomon made the bronze Sea, the pillars, and the articles of bronze.

9 Now when Tou king of Hamath

This was a small kingdom neighboring Zobah.

heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer king of Zobah, ¹⁰ he sent Hadoram his son to King David, to greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him (for Hadadezer had been at war with Tou); and Hadoram brought with him all kinds of articles of gold, silver, and bronze.

Not all of Israel's neighbors were at odds with her.

Here's another kingdom along with Hiram in Tyre that wanted peace with Israel.

They sent a hefty gift to make sure David understood their goodwill toward Israel.

11 King David also dedicated these to the LORD, along with the silver and gold that he had brought from all these nations—from Edom, from Moab, from the people of Ammon, from the Philistines, and from Amalek.

David didn't take the wealth plundered in battle for himself.

He set it aside in the treasury of Jerusalem for the building of the temple & to ensure the priests would be provided for so they could contrite in the service of God.

12 Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah killed 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

Not single-handedly! He was the general who led some of the army of Israel on this SE campaign.

Zeruiah was David's sister, the mother of Joab, the commander of the army under David.

So Abishai was David's nephew, the brother of Joab.

He led this campaign against the Edomites because David & Joab were busy up north with the Syrians.

13 He also put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David wherever he went. ¹⁴ So David reigned over all Israel, and administered judgment and justice to all his people. ¹⁵ Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; ¹⁶ Zadok the son of Ahitub and Abimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests; Shavsha was the scribe; ¹⁷ Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites [royal bodyguards]; and David's sons were chief ministers at the king's side.

David reorganized Israel, turning it away from its previous tribal form into a more centralized kingdom.

His sons became officials, assigned to represent different territories; governors, in effect.

7. Victories over Ammon (19:1-20:3)

¹ It happened after this that Nahash the king of the people of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his place.

This took place in the later middle years of David's reign.

A typical royal succession took place among the Ammonites who lived on the eastern border.

King Nahash died & his son, Prince Hanun replaced him.

² Then David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me." So David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. And David's servants came to Hanun in the land of the people of Ammon to comfort him.

Some scholars believe that just as David had hidden out from Saul among the Philistines, he'd also taken refuge for a short time with Nahash, a fierce enemy of Saul's.

In fact, it had been Saul's victory over Nahash & the Ammonites that had propelled him to the national attention.

In any case, David takes the diplomatic step of sending condolences & congratulations to the new king.

³ And the princes of the people of Ammon said to Hanun, "Do you think that David really honors your father because he has sent comforters to you? Did his servants not come to you to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land?"

Hanun's advisors see nothing but ulterior motive in these representatives of Israel; they're spies, they say.

These guys spin Israel's recent campaigns against the Moabites, Edomites to the south & the Syrians to the north as nothing but warmongering & a grab for territory.

That is not at all what Israel has done but they're able to present it that way to Hanun.

⁴ Therefore Hanun took David's servants, shaved them, and cut off their garments in the middle, at their buttocks, and sent them away.

In that culture, the length of one's beard showed age & so dignity. Cutting off their beard was a serious insult.

Diplomats wore long robes that covered their feet because the foot was considered the humblest part of the body and so unfitting to reveal to a king.

Long robes also marked someone was not being engaged in physical labor.

Their work was intellectual & relational.

Nakedness in public was also the epitome of shame.

When Hanun cut these diplomats' robes at their waist, he was stripping them of their dignity as diplomats & embarrassing them greatly.

This was an unmistakable insult – a diplomatic poke in David's eye.

⁵ Then some went and told David about the men; and he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, "Wait at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return."

A messenger came to David with the news of what had happened to his diplomats.

He told them to hide out in Jericho until their beards had grown back.

⁶ When the people of Ammon saw that they had made themselves repulsive to David, Hanun and the people of Ammon sent a 1000 talents of silver to . . .

David, saying how very foolish & sorry they were for being such idiots.

That's what they ought to have done.

Instead, they appealed to some people David had already defeated.

The Ammonites thought these people would be looking for pay back.

Hanun and the people of Ammon sent a 1000 talents of silver to – hire for themselves chariots and horsemen from Mesopotamia, from Syrian Maacah, and from Zobah.

It was a common practice of the ancient world when facing an enemy more powerful than yourself to hire mercenaries to come help.

⁷ So they hired for themselves 32,000 chariots, with the king of Maacah and his people, who came and encamped before Medeba. Also the people of Ammon gathered together from their cities, and came to battle.

The figure of 32,000 ought to be counted out as chariot-forces, meaning not a total of 32,00 individual chariots but that the total force was 32,000 supported by chariots.

Estimates range from 4 to 6 soldiers per chariot. So this force of probably had about 6,000 chariots.

The city of Medeba on the east side of the Jordan in the territory of Reuben is where the Syrians took their stand.

⁸ Now when David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army of the mighty men. ⁹ Then the people of Ammon came out and put themselves in battle array before the gate of the city, and the kings who had come were by themselves in the field.

The Syrians laid a clever trap for Joab.

They had the Ammonites occupy Medeba & line up on the field in front of the army of Israel while they hid out in the hills behind Israel.

They figured Joab would plan for a siege against Medeba and while he was setting the siege, they'd sneak up behind him and trap him between the 2 armies.

¹⁰ When Joab saw that the battle line was against him before and behind, he chose some of Israel's best, and put them in battle array against the Syrians. ¹¹ And the rest of the people he put under the command of Abishai his brother, and they set themselves in battle array against the people of Ammon.

The Syrians were by far the better troops, so Joab divided the army into 2 groups.

He took the best of Israel's soldiers & turned around to face the Syrians who had rushed up from behind.

He put the larger but less experienced troops under his brother and sent them against the Ammonites.

¹² Then he said, "If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the people of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will help you.

The commanders had agreed on a trumpet sound that would announce they enemy was getting the better of them, if they heard that sound, they were to swing around & come to the aid of the other.

¹³ Be of good courage, and let us be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD do what is good in His sight."

After making their plans, Joab committed their fate into the Lord's hands.

¹⁴ So Joab and the people who were with him drew near for the battle against the Syrians, and they fled before him.

The Syrians were counting on surprise as they set up to attack Israel's rear. When they realized their plans were unmasked. All they had left to hope for was that Israel would withdraw.

So when they saw Israel running into battle with them, they freaked and took off.

¹⁵ When the people of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fleeing, they also fled before Abishai his brother, and entered the city. So Joab went to Jerusalem.

The Ammonites knew there was no way for them to win if the Syrians fled so they retreated into Medeba.

Joab then went to Jerusalem to report to David.

¹⁶ Now when the Syrians saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they sent messengers and brought the Syrians who were beyond the River, and Shophach the commander of Hadadezer's army went before them.

Twice now, Israel has whopped Syria badly and they realize they have to pull out all the stops and attack or it means the end of their rule.

¹⁷ When it was told David, he gathered all Israel, crossed over the Jordan and came upon them, and set up in battle array against them. So when David had set up in battle array against the Syrians, they fought with him. ¹⁸ Then the Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed 7000 charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers of the Syrians, and killed Shophach the commander of the army. ¹⁹ And when the servants of Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and became his servants. So the Syrians were not willing to help the people of Ammon anymore.

When word reached Jerusalem of the mobilization of all Syria, he called in all the reserves of Israel and went out to meet them at Medeba.

It was a huge victory for Israel and broke the back of the Syrians for decades.

¹ It happened in the spring of the year, at the time kings go out to battle, that Joab led out the armed forces and ravaged the country of the people of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. And Joab defeated Rabbah and overthrew it.

What was David doing while the army was finishing off the Ammonites?

He was walking around on his roof looking into the neighbor's yard.

Note that while the author hints at that here, he doesn't tell the story of David's sin because as one writing after the Exile, he wants to *encourage* the returnees.

What I see in the absence of David's sin with Bathsheba here is the evidence of the grace & forgiveness of God.

² Then David took their king's crown from his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there were precious stones in it. And it was set on David's head. Also he brought out the spoil of the city in great abundance. ³ And he brought out the people who were in it, and put them to work with saws, with iron picks, and with axes. So David did to all the cities of the people of Ammon. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

8. Defeating giants (20:4-8)

Sunday