

(Through the Bible) 2 Chronicles 1-9

by Chuck Smith

Solomon's request for wisdom and knowledge is granted by God, and he uses this wisdom to build a temple on Mount Moriah, but he also begins to focus on wealth and power, leading to the deterioration of his kingdom.

Duration: 1:27:45

Scripture: Exodus 40:34, 2 Samuel 7:25, 1 Kings 8:27, 2 Chronicles 7:1, Psalm 89:20, John 16:24, Romans 8:32

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being motivated by the love of Jesus Christ. He references the apostle Paul's statement that the love of Christ constrains him to preach the gospel. The preacher also mentions the example of King David, who desired to build a house for the Lord but was not allowed to do so. Instead, his son Solomon built the temple, which testifies to God's faithfulness. The sermon concludes with the reminder that God loves us and is willing to bless us abundantly, as demonstrated by the sacrifice of His own Son.

Transcript

Let's turn to 2nd Chronicles chapter 1. 1st Chronicles brought us up unto the death of David. And 2nd Chronicles begins with the reign of Saul. And it covers the remaining history of the kings of Judah.

Now, this is the chronicles of the kings of Judah. It does not really deal with the kings of Israel, but concentrates upon the southern kingdom, the kingdom of Judah. There were perhaps chronicles of the kings of Israel, those we do not have.

But these are the chronicles of the kings of Judah. And the 1st Chronicles occupies itself primarily with the kingdom of David. For it was under David that the kingdom was brought to the zenith, the apex of its glory and power.

And Solomon stepped in, following his father who had laid a beautiful foundation and enjoyed really the benefits of his father's reign. Under Solomon, the kingdom began to deteriorate. And just so quickly, the kingdom fell apart.

At the death of Solomon, when his son Rehoboam took over, the kingdom became divided. And what was once a mighty, powerful kingdom soon became such a weakened state that the glorious treasures that had been amassed by David and by Solomon were soon taken by Shishak, the king of Egypt. And the

glory and the power and the wealth of the kingdom were soon destroyed.

So as we get into the 2nd book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah, Solomon, the son of David, was strengthened in his kingdom and the Lord his God was with him and magnified him exceedingly. Solomon began his reign with great power, power that was handed to him really from his father David, but also power from the Lord, because in the beginning Solomon's heart was right before God. And Solomon gathered the people together at Gibeon for the tabernacle of the Lord at that time was in Gibeon.

Now there were two tabernacles at this time. David had erected a tent in Jerusalem for the Ark of the Covenant when they brought the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. David made a tent for the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem.

But the real worship center of the nation was still at Gibeon, where the tabernacle modeled after the tabernacle in the wilderness existed and the altar where they would go up to sacrifice unto God was at Gibeon. And so Solomon gathered the people together to the high place that was at Gibeon for there was the tabernacle of the congregation similar to the one that they had in the wilderness. And the Ark of God, David had brought from Kirgath-Jerim to Jerusalem and had built a tent for that.

And Solomon went up there to this brass altar before the Lord which was at the tabernacle of the congregation and he offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it. Now Solomon was an extravagant fellow. A thousand burnt offerings.

And he was extravagant in all that he did. In that night did God appear unto Solomon and said unto him, ask what I shall give thee. That's almost like some of the plots of the fairy tales that you read, you know, the fairy goddess or the genie or whatever.

Ask whatever you want. I've sometimes wondered myself if God should come to me and say, ask what you want me to give to you. I've wondered what would I ask God for? What would be my request? And I've often thought, as I mused on this, I think I would turn it right around and say, God, you give me whatever you want to give me.

Because you see, I may be thinking of much less than what God wants to give. He loves me so much that He desires to just give to me. And I might be saying, Lord, I'd like to have a thousand dollars.

But He may want to lay a million dollars on me. And why should I, you know, cut Him short? I think that we fail to realize how much God really loves us. And what God is willing to do for us.

For if God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how much more then shall He not freely give us all things? Look what God has already given for you. Consider it. He spared not His own Son.

And if He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for you, how much more will He freely give you all things? Jesus said, henceforth you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and in the Greek it's in the intensive, which translated more literally would be, Please ask that ye may receive, that your joy may be full. God is wanting to bless you.

God is wanting to bless your life. Because God wants your life to be an instrument through which the world around you might know the joy and the blessing of serving the Lord. And so God desires, God delights in giving good things to His children.

Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, You have showed great mercy unto David my father. And you have made me to reign in his place.

Now O Lord God, let Thy promise unto David my father be established. For you have made me the king over a people that are like the dust of the earth as far as number. Give me now wisdom and knowledge that I may go out and come in before this people.

For who can judge this Thy people that is so great? So Solomon's request, wisdom and knowledge God, that I may know how to go in and out before these people, because the task that has been laid upon me, reigning over Your people is greater than I can actually handle. And so Father grant me the wisdom and the knowledge really to do Your business. Grant me Lord that which I need to do the things that You want me to do.

What a beautiful request. Now a little further on when we get into our reading next week, we're going to find the prophet coming to Asa the king and declaring for the eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the entire earth to show himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect towards him. Now here's Solomon expressing a heart that's really sort of completely towards God.

Ask whatever you want, Solomon. Lord, I'd like to be famous. Lord, I like my footprint in Grumman's Chinese.

Lord, I'd like to be rich. No, Lord, You've placed a big heavy responsibility upon me. You've made me the king in the place of my father over Your people.

And God, I need wisdom and I need knowledge and just knowing how to do the work that You want done. And God said to Solomon, because this was in your heart and you did not ask for riches, wealth or honor or you didn't ask for the life of your enemies, neither did you ask long life for yourself. But you've asked for wisdom and knowledge for yourself that you may judge my people over whom I have made you king.

Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto you. And I will give you riches and wealth and honor such as none of the kings have had that have been before you. Neither shall there be any after you that will have the like.

Then Solomon came from his journey to the high place that was at Gibeon to Jerusalem from before the tabernacle of the congregation and he reigned over Israel. And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen and he had 1,400 chariots, 12,000 horsemen and he placed in the chariot cities the king of Jerusalem. And the king made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones and cedar trees he made as common as the sycamore trees that grow in the valley abundantly.

And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt and linen yarn and the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price and they brought up from Egypt the chariots for 600 shekels of silver, horses for 150. And so brought they out horses for all of the kings of the Hittites and for the kings of Syria by their means. In other words, they began to be horse traders.

They began to sell them to the nations around, the Hittites and the Syrians and so forth. Now, it is interesting that Solomon began this horse trading with Egypt it would appear very early in his career. And in so doing, he was beginning to plant the seeds of destruction and deterioration of his kingdom.

For in Deuteronomy, the Lord gave the law concerning the kings of Israel. And in the 17th chapter, in the 14th verse, the Lord said to Moses, when the people come into the land and they possess it, and they will say, we want a king like the other nations that are about us. Then God gives the requirements for the one that they should set forth as a king.

But in verse 16, he said, but he shall not multiply horses to himself nor cause the people to return to Egypt to the end that they should multiply horses. Now, what does God have against horses? Nothing. He created them.

But, in those days, the horse was a definite, decisive kind of weapon in battle. And they began to measure the strength of an army by the number of the horses. A man on horseback had a definite advantage.

And a chariot was a fearsome, awesome weapon of war. Sort of like tanks against infantry today. And so, God did not want them trusting in horses.

And in Psalms, it says, a horse is a vain thing as far as something to trust in. As it speaks about the contrasting, trusting in the Lord. Now, some men trust in horses and some in chariots.

But we will trust in the Lord our God. And so many of the Psalms are addressed to the fact that people were putting trust in horses. Now, the fact that Solomon began to amass this great number of horses, and for a time, Bible critics sort of assailed the biblical account because of the numbers of horses that Solomon had.

And it tells how he built these cities and put stables in these cities and so forth. And now in the excavations, in many of these cities that Solomon had fortified, they have found actually the horse stables. In the city of Megiddo at the level of excavation that was at Solomon's time, you can see these stone troughs that they had carved out for the water for the horses, and the feeding troughs and all.

They are there today and in vast numbers. And it all verifies really the biblical account of the vast numbers of horses that Solomon gathered. And the tendency though was then to trust in the fact that you have in your army a certain number of horsemen and all.

So, it's amazing to me that so soon Solomon would forsake the law of the Lord and would begin to sow the seeds that ultimately were to deteriorate the kingdom. Now Solomon determined to build a house for the name of the Lord and a house for his kingdom. And Solomon told out or counted out 70,000 men to bear burdens and 80,000 men to cut trees out of the forest.

And 3,600 men to oversee them. And so the tremendous number of people that were just involved in the labor to the gathering of the materials for his own palace and for the temple that they were to build. Solomon sent to Hiram, who is also called Hiram, the king of Tyre.

And he said, As you dealt with David my father and you sent him cedars to build his own palace, even I ask you to deal so with me. Behold, I'm going to build a house in the name of the Lord my God to dedicate it to him and to burn before him the sweet incense and to place the continual showbread for the burnt offerings morning and evening and on the Sabbath, the new moons and the solemn feast of the Lord our God. For this is an ordinance forever to Israel.

And the house which I build is great for great is our God above all gods. And who is able to build him a house seeing the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him. Who am I then that I should

build him a house save only to burn sacrifice before him? In other words, the idea is that I'm not building a house for God to dwell in.

The heavens and heaven of heavens cannot contain God. Thus, I only build a house that we might at this house burn sacrifice before God. There are often times attempts by men to localize God.

They are always wrong. To think of God as being in one place more than in another place. You cannot localize God.

The heaven of heavens cannot contain him. David said, Whether shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend into heaven, thou art there. If I descend into hell, thou art there.

Can't escape from God. Nor can God be localized. And yet so often we think of God, Lord, we're so happy to gather tonight in your presence to worship you.

Oh yes, it's nice to be here in the presence of God this evening. Hey, you were in the presence of God when you were yelling at your wife on the way to church. You know, it isn't that when we get into this place, we suddenly come into the presence of God.

The presence of God is everywhere. You can't escape the presence of God. And it is always wrong when we try to think of God in a localized place.

And yet it is so often a part of our limited understanding that we always seem to think of God in a locality. I'm gonna go to church so I can be near God tonight. I feel so near to God.

When I'm walking through the woods. I feel so near to God when I am walking across the desert at night. I feel so near to God.

Well, it may be that you have a greater awareness of God's presence in certain localities, but that isn't an actuality in truth. God is with you wherever you are. It isn't that we need to come into the presence of God.

It's that we need to become more aware of the presence of God wherever we may be. I think that one of the greatest needs of the Christian experience and in the Christian life is to become more conscious of God's all-pervading presence. And at the times when you least feel like it, He is there.

In the time when you're feeling the rottenness, He is there. In the time you're feeling most desolate, He is there. The most forsaken, He is there.

We need to become aware of His presence. But that's an attitude of my own heart. I can become aware of God's presence no matter where I am if I'll just turn my heart towards the Lord to consciously seek to be aware of His presence with me.

Now, if we could only become more aware of the presence of God, we wouldn't need any preaching on holiness or on righteous living or things of this nature because if I was just aware of God's presence, for in Him, Paul said, we live and move and have our being when I become aware of that, then I want to always live in a way that is pleasing unto Him. Knowing that nothing I do is hidden. Knowing that nothing I do is secret.

Knowing that my life is just an open book and that consciousness of God's presence is such an important thing for my own personal life. So Solomon recognized, hey, we're not building you a house, God, that you

can come and live in this house and we can come and visit you at your house. Who am I to build a house? As he's writing to Hiram asking for these cedars to be sent from Lebanon and all, he said, I want to build a house that we might offer our sacrifices and all.

Not that it's a place for God to dwell, the heavens of heaven can't contain Him, but just a place where we can come and offer our sacrifices before Him. So, he is requesting that a skilled man be sent who can more or less oversee all of the building. A man who is a clever artificer in the carvings and in all of the various types of arts and in castings and the whole thing because the temple that he wanted to build unto God was to be a glorious monument unto the Lord.

And so he contracted to give unto the men, the servants that would cut the wood out of the forest and all 20,000 measures of beaten wheat, which would be a flower. Now, a measure is 10 bushels. So, this is the amount of flour, the beaten wheat he was to send unto them.

20,000 measures of barley and 20,000 baths and a bath is about 8 gallons of wine and 20,000 baths of oil. So, this was quite a vast annual fee that he was willing to pay for these skilled men. Then Hiram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon and he said, Because the Lord hath loved His people, He hath made you king over them.

Hiram also said, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son and endued him with prudence and understanding that he might build a house for the Lord and a house for His kingdom. Now I have sent a cunning man endued with understanding of Hiram's my father. The son of a woman of the daughter of Dan and his father was a man of Tyre.

He's skillful to work in gold and silver and brass and iron and stone and timbers and the purple and the blue and the fine linen, crimson. He can carve out any manner of carving and he can figure out every kind of device and he's just a cunning man. Now therefore, the wheat and the barley, the oil, the wine, which my Lord had spoken of, let him send it unto his servants.

So, the deal was made and we will cut the wood out of Lebanon as much as you shall need and we'll bring it to thee by floats by the sea to Joppa and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem. So, they cut these cedars out of Lebanon and they made these great rafts, the floats of these cedar logs and they floated them down the Mediterranean Sea to the only port at that time in Israel which was the port of Joppa. And then from Joppa, they carried them overland to Jerusalem which is a distance of about 30 miles, maybe 40 miles.

So, it was quite a task and no wonder they needed 70,000 men to help move these logs. Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah where the Lord appeared unto David his father in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornon the Jebusite and he began to build on the second day of the second month in the fourth year of his reign. He began to build on Mount Moriah.

Where in the world did we hear of Mount Moriah before? As we go back to the book of Genesis, and God did tempt Abraham and said unto him, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice on a mountain that I will show thee. And Abraham took Isaac and the servants and they saddled the donkeys and they journeyed. And after three days Abraham left the servants and the donkeys and he said, You wait here, I and the lad will go and worship God and we will come again.

And as Abraham and Isaac were journeying together, Isaac said unto Abraham, Here is the wood, here is the fire, where is the sacrifice? And Abraham said, God will provide himself a sacrifice. And they journeyed together to Mount Moriah and there Abraham built an altar and he placed Isaac upon it and he raised his knife and God said, Abraham, stop. I see now that you are obedient and will withhold nothing from me.

Behold, the ram caught by its horns in the thicket. Take and offer it. And Abraham took the ram and offered it as a sacrifice unto the Lord.

And Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-Jireh. The Lord will provide. And he prophesied.

He said, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. Earlier he said, The Lord will provide. Father, where is the sacrifice? The Lord will provide himself a sacrifice.

What a prophetic statement. God's going to provide himself as the sacrifice. And he called the name of the place Jehovah-Jireh and then referring to the previous prophecy, he said, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

So the place of worship and the place of sacrifice for the nation of Israel was moved from Gibeon to Jerusalem. And there the temple was built on Mount Moriah. The same mount that God showed to Abraham where he offered his son Isaac with the prophecy, The Lord will provide himself a sacrifice in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

Now the temple was actually built on the side of Mount Moriah not on the top. Which is interesting in itself because among all of the pagan religions they always built their altars and their places of worship at the tops of the mountains. You go to Athens and at the top of each mountain in Athens there are the ruins of the pagan temples of the past.

Always on the top. The Acropolis. Right at the top of the mountain.

There in Corinth. The top of the mountain above Corinth. The temple of Aphrodite.

And so it is interesting, number one, that the temple was not built on the top of Mount Moriah but on the side of the mount. For Mount Moriah continues up, slopes upwards from the temple site and the top of Mount Moriah is actually Mount Calvary or Golgotha. And you can look at the whole topography of that area and you can see how Mount Moriah gently slopes from the temple mount right on up to the top which would be Calvary, Golgotha and the skull is formed there in the cliff because of the quarries where they excavated out that portion of the mount and you look back towards the city of Jerusalem and you can see where they've actually cut away the mount and built the wall of the city right up over the bedrock which continues from there or did continue at the time of Abraham and crested on the top.

Golgotha. The place of the skull where God provided Himself a sacrifice and the prophecy of Abraham was fulfilled. In the death of Jesus Christ.

So, Mount Moriah. It is interesting that the Bible locates it for us for all time that we would know so that God can tie together the interesting types and shadows from the Old Testament with their fulfillment in the New. Thus, the place of Isaac's sacrifice was the place where God provided.

He began to build the temple there in Mount Moriah there at the threshing floor. Now, these are the things that Solomon instructed for the building of the house of God. The building was to be 90 feet by 30 feet the

very building itself.

The porch was in the front of it and the length was according to the breadth of the house. 30 feet was the height. The height of it was rather 120.

And he overlaid it within with pure gold. So, a building this size and now inside is just overlaid completely with pure gold. The greater house he sealed with fir trees and he overlaid those with fine gold.

And he set there on palm trees and chains and he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty. And the gold was the gold of Parvahim. He overlaid also the house with the beams and the posts and the walls thereof and the doors thereof with gold.

And he carved cherubims on the walls and he made the most holy place. The length according to the breadth of the house was 30 feet and the breadth of it 30 feet and he overlaid it with fine gold which came to 600 talents or at the \$30 an ounce price about \$18 million what it would be today of course with gold at 500 and something an ounce you can figure out yourself. But this was just for the holy of holies within.

So the amount of the value of this whole temple that was built by Solomon is valued at somewhere in the billions of dollars. The estimates of course range. Now the weight of the nails was 50 shekels of gold and he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

In the most holy house he made two cherubims and he overlaid them with gold and the wings of the cherubim were 30 feet long and one wing of the one cherub was 7 1/2 cubits reaching to the wall of the house and the other wing was likewise 7 1/2 cubits reaching to the wing of the other cherub. So that is the total wingspan of the cherubs the two cherubs were 20 feet there was cherubs their wings would touch in the middle and this remember is all a little model of heaven. The holy of holies is a model of heaven and the throne of God.

And so the cherubim about the throne of God that John saw in the book of Revelation and that Ezekiel saw. And he made the veil of blue and purple and crimson and fine linen and he wrought the cherubims they wove cherubims into this veil of the temple. And also he made before the house two pillars of 30 and 5 cubits so to be about 47 1/2 50 feet tall and there was this ornamental work on the top of each of them of 7 1/2 feet and he made chains as in the Oracle and he put them on the heads of the pillars and made a hundred pomegranates and put them on the chains.

And he reared up the pillars before the temple one on the right hand and the other on the left and he called the name on the right hand Jachin and the name on the left Boaz. Moreover he made an altar of brass that was 30 feet long and 30 feet wide and it was 15 feet high this brazen altar for the offering of the sacrifices. And he made this molten they cast this huge brass bath for the priest to bathe in.

The sea of 15 feet from brim to brim a rounding compass 7 1/2 feet high and it was of course 45 feet around it and under it was the likeness of oxen 12 oxen that they carved of brass and 3 pointing towards the north 3 facing towards the south 3 facing towards the east and 3 facing towards the west all facing outward and this big brass pool on top of it. Now the thickness of the brass pool was the thickness of your hand breath if you can picture it and it held about 24,000 gallons of water. Now to cast something like this today would be near impossible.

A brass swimming pool 7 1/2 feet deep 15 feet across and the width of it about 6 to 8 inches thick and this was for the priest to bathe in and then around the top of it all kinds of fancy work flowers and lilies and so

forth carved in it and then he made 10 other basins so that they could wash the instruments of course with the sacrifices there was a lot of blood and all and thus it was necessary that the priest bathe and get this blood off of them and of course the knives and the instruments and all that they used would all be bloody after the offering of these sacrifices and so 10 of these lavers to wash the various instruments in and the big pool for the priest to wash in and then he made the 10 candlesticks of gold and 10 tables that he placed in the temple 5 on the right side 5 on

the left and he made 100 basins of gold and then he made the court of the priest the doors of the court he overlaid them with brass and this big basin was on the right side at the east end and Hiram made the pots and the shovels and the basins and Hiram finished the work that he was to make for King Solomon for the house of God that is the 2 pillars and the pomols and the chapters which were on the top of the 2 pillars the 2 wreaths to cover the 2 pomols and the 400 pomegranates and so forth and the basins and the lavers and the oxen and Solomon made all of these vessels in great abundance they cast them actually down in the Jordan River in the clay area down there and then carried them on up to Jerusalem moreover the candlesticks and their lamps they made for the holy place out of pure

gold and the flowers and the lamps the tongs they made of gold perfect gold the snuffers and the basins the spoons and so all of the instruments for the worship made of pure gold and all of the work that Solomon made for the house of the Lord was finished and Solomon brought in all of the things that David his father had dedicated the silver the gold the instruments and he put them among the treasures of the house of God and then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes the chief fathers to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David which is Zion wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king in the feast which is in the seventh month which would be then the feast of trumpets and the elders of Israel came and the

Levites took up the ark and they brought up the ark and the tabernacle of the congregation and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle did the priest and the Levites bring up and King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark sacrificed sheep and oxen which could not be counted because of the number of them the multitude of them and the priest brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place into the holy of holies of the house under the wings of the cherubim the cherubim spread forth their wings over the place of the ark and the cherubim covered the ark with the staves thereof above and they drew out the staves from the ark and there was nothing in the ark except the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb when the Lord

made the covenant with the children of Israel in the calendar of Egypt now originally when Moses set up this little ark of the covenant they put not only the two tables of stone upon which God had inscribed the ten commandments but they also had the rod of Aaron that budded and they also had a jar of manna but at this point of course the ark of the covenant was taken to by the Philistines and passed around and so at this point all that was in the ark of the covenant according to the record was just the two tables of stone I have often thought how exciting it would be if they could discover again the ark of the covenant some ways this little box made of acacia wood overlaid with gold and if the two tables of stone upon which God inscribed the law were still in there what an archaeological

find that would be I'm sure that God has kept it lost because what a relic this would become and people would soon be worshipping it and so God I'm sure has deliberately just kept this thing hidden and uncovered by man lest man would make some kind of a idol out of it now it came to pass when the priests were come out of the holy place for all of the priests that were present were sanctified and they were they

were not at that time waiting for their courses and the Levites which were the singers all of them of Asaph and of Heman and Jedithan with their sons and their brothers being arrayed in white linen and having the cymbals and the psalteries and the harps stood at the east end of the altar and with them a hundred and twenty priests who were sounding with trumpets and it came to pass

as the trumpeters and the singers were as one to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and the cymbals and the instruments of music and praised the Lord saying for he is good for his mercy endureth forever that then the house was filled with a cloud even the house of the Lord so that the priest could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God what a momentous occasion this must have been the people of Israel gathered here is this fabulously beautiful temple overlaid with gold it's now complete beautiful work of carvings and all and so they bring the Ark of the Covenant from the tent into the Holy of Holies within this temple and they pull out the staves and they

set it in its place between the chair of them and then the priest some of them with the instruments of psalteries others with harps a hundred and twenty of them with trumpets plus David had appointed a couple thousand as singers and they all began to just worship God in the song in the music and as it came to this great crescendo as the sound of the trumpets and the voices blended as one voice of praise and thanksgiving unto God the cloud of God's glory that was the sign of God's presence among the children of Israel in the wilderness came down and it filled the temple and the priest because of the glory of God's presence couldn't even stand but just lay there in the glory of God's presence what a beautiful sight bunch of fanatics then said Solomon the Lord hath said that he would dwell

in the thick darkness now Solomon at this point preached a sermon to the people all of Israel you remember all the chief people had gathered and out in the courtyard he had built this little brass platform seven and a half feet square and it was about four and a half feet high and so he stood up on this little platform so that he could address all of the congregation of Israel and his sermon to them is a sermon on the faithfulness of God and the very fact that here is the temple it is completed it is built it testifies to the faithfulness of God's promise for it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of Jehovah God of Israel and Jehovah said unto David my father for as much as it was in your heart to build a house for my name you did well in that it was in your

heart notwithstanding you shall not build it now this to me is very interesting God said David in as much as it was in your heart to do it you did well that's fine that's good God reckons the things of man's heart now it is interesting a lot of people have a real heart to give to God but they have nothing to give in as much as it is in their heart to give God counts that some people have a lot to give to God but they don't give with their hearts God doesn't count that God is interested in your heart what is in your heart to do for God now you may not always be able to accomplish that which is in your heart to do but God takes the consideration of the fact that it's in your heart to do it for the Lord now within a lot of you it is within your heart to serve God in some capacity it's in

your heart to be in the ministry and in as much as it is in your heart to serve the Lord God acknowledges it that's good it may be that you will never be actively engaged in a pulpit kind of a ministry I cannot believe that you'll never be engaged in a ministry I believe that all of us have a ministry and some of us have the misfortune of having a pulpit ministry and I really feel that the rewards for the ministries that are done more or less in a secret or a quiet way are greater than those public kind of ministries where you get so much feedback and all from the actual ministry itself it is interesting how so many pray that God will give them

sort of a pulpit ministry or a public ministry and I've prayed for years that God would give me some quiet ministry for years I've prayed that God

would help me and call me just to be a Christian businessman I wanted to prove that you could be gung-ho for Jesus Christ and be involved in business I've heard people say oh it's so hard to be a businessman and be a Christian I don't believe that and I've always wanted God to call me to be a businessman so I could prove that you can be a sold out gung-ho Christian working in the business world what is in your heart to do for God?

God sees your heart, God knows your heart and not only that, God accounts what's in your heart to do and when God finally measures the things that have done we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the reward for the things that we've done in our body whether they be good or evil and all of our works are going to be judged by fire what manner or sort they are and if your works for the Lord endure this fiery judgment you'll receive a reward but many of the works are as wood, hay and stubble and will be consumed in that day of judgment and you come and offer all your works before God and is tested by God's fire and poof, there went all your works but Lord, where's my reward?

You had it! you were doing your works in such an ostensible way that everybody recognized and knew what you were doing when you pray, don't sound a trumpet before you and all or don't go out on the street corners and don't make a big fanfare go in your closet, shut the door your father which sees in secret will reward you when you give, don't make a big to-do over the amount you're giving and a big parade over the thing but just don't even let your right hand know what your left hand does give to the father in secret and your father which seeth in secret will reward you when you fast, don't make a big deal over your fasting and go around with a long face and a hungry look so that everybody knows you're fasting but wash and anoint your face, look happy and fast in your father in secret and

your father which sees in secret will reward you the works will be tested, what was the motivation? was I desiring to appear righteous before people? was I desiring feedback from people? was I taking the position that I had to feed my own egoistic needs? if so, those works will all go up in the smoke of the fire by which my works are to be judged and I will lose the reward for any work that I may have done for vain glory sake God is going to judge the things of the heart what was the motivation? and that is why it is so important that we be motivated by that constraining love of Jesus Christ as Paul said, for the love of Christ constrains me for I thus judge if one died for all, then are all dead and it's important that I get out the message of life to those who are dead God, pressure on

me, woe is me if I preach not the gospel of Jesus Christ that burning within to do the work of God with that great compassion I could wish myself a curse from Christ for my brethren sake, according to the flesh, the Jews so, it was in my father's heart, David, to build a house in the Lord and the Lord said, in as much as it is in your heart, that's good but you can't do it it's good that it's in your heart to do it, I'll account that but David, you can't do it but, your son which shall come forth out of your loins he shall build the house for my name and so God's promise to David is, you can't build a house but your son that will come out of your loins he will build a house and so Solomon is now preaching a sermon, the faithfulness of God's word and he said, the Lord therefore hath

performed his word that he has spoken for I am risen up in the place of my father David and I'm set upon the throne of Israel as the Lord promised and I have built the house for the name of the Lord God of Israel and in it I have put the ark wherein is the covenant of the Lord that he made with the children of Israel and

so the message of Solomon to the people was a message of the faithfulness of God now, he then knelt on this little brass altar or platform that he had built in the presence of the congregation of Israel and he spread forth his hands toward heaven and he said, O Lord God of Israel there is no God like thee in heaven or in earth which keeps your covenant and shows the mercy to your servants that walk before you with all your heart no God in all the world that keeps his

promises and shows mercy as you do which have kept with thy servant David my father that which you have promised him you have fulfilled even as we can see today now therefore, O Lord God of Israel keep with thy servant David my father that which you have promised him saying there shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel yet so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law as you have walked before me now then, O Lord God of Israel let your word be verified which you have spoken unto thy servant David but will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth behold, the heaven of heavens can't contain you how much less this house which I have built have respect therefore to the prayer of your servant and to his supplications, O Lord my God to hearken

to the cry of the prayer which your servant prays before thee that your eyes now Lord I know that it isn't a place for you to dwell in I know that it can't hold you but let your eyes be open upon this house day and night in other words, just watch it and on the place where you have said that you would put your name there to hearken to the prayer which your servant prays towards this place so Lord, this isn't a place for you to dwell heavens can't contain you but this is a place where men can come and meet you so Lord, watch this place and keep your ear open to the prayers that come forth to you from this place hearken to the supplications of thy servant and of the people Israel which they shall make toward this place and hear thou from thy dwelling place even from heaven and when you

hear, forgive so Lord, not a place for you to live you dwell in heaven but when we offer our prayers here hear the prayers, hearken to the prayers of your servants and hear from your dwelling place in heaven and when you hear, oh God, forgive and now he foresees situations that may arise the broken covenants of a man's sins against his neighbor and an oath be laid upon him to make him swear and the oath come before thine altar in this house then hear from heaven and do and judge your servants by requiting the wicked by recompensing his ways upon his own head and by justifying the righteous let there be, Lord, righteous judgment proceeding if thy people Israel be put to the worst before their enemies because they have sinned against thee and he now foresees these things that would

transpire to the nation for sinning against God that he sees that they would be put to the worst before their enemies but if they shall return and confess your name and pray and make supplication in this house then hear thou from heaven forgive thy people Israel bring them again into the land which you gave to their fathers now when heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against thee yet if they pray toward this place and confess thy name, then hear from heaven if there be a dearth in the land if there be a pestilence if there be a blasting or mildew or locusts or caterpillars or if their enemies besiege their cities or whatsoever sore or sickness there may be whatever plague might go through then what prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man or

of all thy people of Israel when every one shall know his own sore and his own grief and shall spread forth his hands in this house then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place and forgive and render to every man according to all his ways whose heart thou knowest for thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men how many times we think we know what's in the heart of the children but we really don't we are so guilty of misjudging people's motives some people are very gifted and talented in discerning the motives of

others they think and they often times read wrong motivation into a person's actions and they are always looking for some ulterior kind of motive I had a lady in one of the churches I pastored if you would say good morning how are you today she'd say just what did you

mean good morning you know and what are you really trying to say and you know always looking for some kind of an ulterior motive or a hidden message or something thinking that you are trying to talk in double entendres or something using innuendos and all and I've never been sophisticated enough to use double entendres so it's one of those things that only God really knows the heart and what's in the heart of the children of men if the strangers come in and they come into this place and they stretch out their arms and pray then hear from heaven if your people go out to war against their enemies and they shall pray towards this city then hear from heaven and answer their supplications maintain their cause if they sin against thee and then he said for there is no man which sinneth not the

bible says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God there is none righteous no not one and in Solomon a wise man said for there is no man that sinneth not and you be angry with them and deliver them before their enemies and they are carried away as hostages into a land that is far off or near yet if they bethink themselves in the land whether they are carried captive and they turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity saying we have sinned we have done wrong we have dealt wickedly and they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity whether they have been carried captives and they pray towards this land that you gave to their fathers and towards this city which you have chosen and toward the house which I have built from

thy name hear thou from heaven even thy dwelling place their prayer and their supplications and maintain their cause and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee now in this being carried away captive and turning towards Jerusalem and praying who does this remind you of?

Daniel you remember when he was in captivity in Babylon that he prayed three times daily he would open the windows towards Jerusalem and pray and even the prayer of Daniel was what? the confession of sin and it's following really the pattern that he was praying according to the pattern that Solomon had given here if they confess their sins and say we have done amiss we have dealt wickedly and you read the prayer of Daniel in captivity and you know that he was familiar with this prayer of Solomon because he was doing exactly what Solomon had foreseen them doing in the future when carried into captivity and so Daniel followed the pattern in his prayer now my God I beseech thee let thine eyes be open thy ears be attent to the prayer that is made in this place now therefore arise O Lord God

unto thy resting place thou in the ark of thy strength and let the priest O Lord God be clothed with salvation and let thy saints rejoice with goodness what a beautiful sight the priest clothed with salvation and the saints of God rejoicing in the goodness of God O Lord God turn not away the face of thine anointed remember the mercies of David thy servant and when Solomon had made an end of praying the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices and the glory of the Lord filled the house it's a reminder of the dedication of the tabernacle in the wilderness where the fire of God came down and kindled the coals upon the altar and consumed the sacrifices and the glory of God filled the tabernacle in the wilderness and now the same thing happens as God's

glory fills the temple and the priest could not enter into the house of the Lord because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house and all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down and the glory of the Lord upon the house and they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement and

they worshipped and praised the Lord saying for he is good and his mercy endureth forever and then the people for seven days offered sacrifices unto the Lord they sacrificed 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep so all of the people in the kingdom dedicated the house what a barbecue they had and the priest waited on their offices and the Levites also with the instruments of music to the Lord which David the king had made to praise the Lord because his mercy endures forever when David

praised by their ministry and the priest sounded the trumpets before them and all of Israel stood and moreover Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord for there he offered burnt offerings and the fat of peace offerings because of the brass altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt offerings and the meal offerings and the fat and so they just made a place out to do it in the yard there also the same time Solomon kept the feast for seven days and all of Israel with him the great congregation and the eighth day they made a solemn assembly for they kept the dedication of the altar for seven days and the feast seven days and on the 23rd day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their tents glad and merry in heart for the

goodness that the Lord had shown unto David and to Solomon and to Israel's people so that should be the way the way people leave the fellowship glad and merry in heart for the goodness of God and Solomon finished the house of the Lord and the king's house and all that came to Solomon's heart to make in the house of the Lord and to his own house he prosperously effected now the Lord appeared after the whole celebration and the thing had died down the Lord then appeared to Solomon by night and said unto him I have heard your prayer and I have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice and if I shut up heaven that there is no rain or if I command the locusts to devour the land or if I send a pestilence among my people if my people which are called by my name will humble themselves

and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land this promise of God is an answer to Solomon's prayer as Solomon foresaw the calamities that might befall the nation in their sinning against God and if they turn and repent and pray then hear thou from thy dwelling place in heaven God is now answering the prayer of Solomon saying if these things come and if my people who are called by my name will just humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then will I hear from heaven and I will forgive their sin and I will heal their land I believe that this scripture today is perhaps one of the most important scriptures to be brought before the people of our nation a people who

have been called by his name United States has been considered as a Christian nation I didn't say it was a Christian nation I said it's been considered as a Christian nation but how far we have moved from true Christianity how far we have moved from God in our national life in our local life and we see the plagues that Solomon could foresee the judgments of God it is time for God's people to humble themselves and pray and to seek his face and to turn from their wicked ways because God will hear God will forgive and God will heal the land that's his promise now my eyes will be open my ears will be attentive unto the prayers that are made in this place for I have chosen and sanctified this house that my name may be there forever and my eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually and as for

you if you will walk before me as David your father walked and do according to all that I commanded you and shall observe my statutes and my judgments then will I establish the throne of thy kingdom according as I have covenanted with David thy father saying there shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel but if you turn away and forsake my statutes, my commandments which I have set before you and you shall go and serve other gods and worship them then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have

given them and this house which I have sanctified for my name will I cast out of my sight and I will make it to be a proverb and a byword among the nations and this house which is high shall be an astonishment to everyone that passes by it so you shall say why has the Lord

done this to the land and this house and it shall be answered because they forsook the Lord God of their fathers which brought them out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them now God's warning to Solomon the warning is hey it's first of all a promise Solomon if you'll just walk in my ways and I'll keep the covenant of David and I'll prosper you on the throne but if you forsake me Solomon then I'm going to forsake you you're going to be cut off and these calamities are going to come this beautiful house that you've built is going to be ruined people are going to say how in the world did God allow such desolation to come and people say because they forsook God now many times when God warns us of

something possible danger we say oh God that's alright you know I'd never be troubled there Lord you know why don't you save your breath God that's a situation I would never forsake you Lord now the Lord is warning Solomon about forsaking him I have learned to heed every warning God gives because I have found that I have never fallen but what I wasn't warned of God beforehand and many times when the warning came I felt that they were totally unnecessary I thought that's an area where I could never trip or be tripped up but in the scriptures it is interesting that God seemed to warn people of the very thing that later became their stumbling block of the very thing that later on happened and here is Solomon now still fresh with this glorious experience of the power of God demonstrated the

fire of God kindling the altar and the sacrifice the glory of God filling the house the cloud of God and all of this glorious experience and God is saying now Solomon don't forsake me and I'm sure Solomon in his heart was thinking oh God I could never forsake you I could never worship other gods there is no God like unto thee who keeps coming and who shows mercy Lord I could never forsake you but what happened to Solomon he forsook the Lord and began to worship and serve other gods tragic the very thing that God warned him about was the very thing that he did and that is so often true thus we need to take heed to every warning that God gives us now it came to pass at the end of 20 years that Solomon had built both the house of the Lord and his own palace he spent 7 years building the

house of the Lord and 13 years building his own palace that the cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon he then built them up and caused the children of Israel to dwell there and it gives you the names of some of the cities where he had his storehouses and he built fortresses and some of the cities that he had fortified and all and then in verse 11 Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David to the house that he had built for her for he said my wife shall not dwell in the house of David the king of Israel because the palaces are holy where unto the ark of the Lord hath come so he realized that she wasn't so pure or holy and so he built another place for her so that she wouldn't dwell in now he ought to know that that's not the kind of a wife he should have if he

has to build a separate place for her because she is not you know worthy to dwell in the places that were holy then Solomon offered burnt offerings unto the Lord on the altar of the Lord which he had built before the porch even after a certain rate every day according to the commandment of Moses on the Sabbath days the new moons the solemn feasts three times in the year and even the feast of the unleavened bread the feast of weeks and the feast of tabernacles and he appointed according to the order of David his father the courses for the priests in all and they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests of the Levites concerning any matter concerning the treasures and the work of Solomon was prepared

unto the day of the foundation of the house of the Lord until it was

finished so the house of the Lord was completed and then Solomon went to Ezeon Giver and to Eloth by the seaside of Edom and he sent out ships to offer to gather gold and when the queen of Sheba heard the fame of Solomon she came to prove Solomon with difficult questions at Jerusalem and with a very great company camels that bear spices gold in abundance precious stones when she was come to Solomon she communed with him all that was in her heart and Solomon told her all of her questions there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not and when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon and the house that he had built and the meat of his table and the sitting of his servants and the attendance of his servants and their apparel and his cupbearers and their apparel and his

assent by which he went into the house of the Lord there was no more spirit in her she was wiped out this is more than she had ever heard she said man they told me and I couldn't believe what they told me but they didn't tell me half the truth you know the glory of this whole thing now she observed the meat of his table if you go back to 1st Kings chapter 4 it tells you the meat of Solomon's table his daily provision one day was 30 measures of fine flour about 300 bushels of fine flour for the pancakes every day three score measures of meal or 600 bushels 10 fat oxen every day 20 oxen commercial grade out of the pastures 100 sheep beside the hearts and the roebucks and the fallow deer and the fatted fowl those were the daily provisions man think of that about 100 sheep every day 30 oxen

so when the Queen of Sheba saw this and the way his servants were attired and the way the cup bearers and the way he would go up to the temple of God and the whole thing is just too much she said it's a true report that I heard in my own land of your acts and of your wisdom however I didn't believe their words until I came and now my eyes have seen it and behold one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me for you exceed even the fame that I heard happy are thy men and happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom blessed be the Lord thy God which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne to be king for the Lord thy God because he loved Israel to establish them forever therefore he made thee to be king over them and to do judgment and

justice now first of all she blessed his servants happy are they that serve you happy are they that can stand here daily and hear your wisdom he talked of all kinds of things flowers, shrubs, animals and he wrote books on these subjects and so happy are these men that can just stand here daily and listen to thy wisdom and blessed be the Lord thy God who is delighted in thee and put you on the throne so she gave him 120 talents of gold spices, great abundance precious stones and the servants also of Hiram and the king and the servants of Solomon which brought the gold from Ophir brought the algum trees and precious stones and she returned back to her land with all of her desire whatsoever she asked Solomon gave to her now Solomon's annual revenue in gold was 666 talents of gold an

interesting number beside that which the Chapman and merchants brought and all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon Solomon made 200 targets of beaten gold 600 shekels each 300 shields of gold that were 300 shekels each and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon and he made a great throne of ivory and he overlaid it with gold and there were 6 steps up to the throne with a footstool of gold which were fastened to the throne stays on either side of the sitting place and 2 lions standing by the stays 12 lions stood there on the one side and on the other 6 each and there was not like made anything to this in all of the kingdoms and the drinking vessels of Solomon were all of gold and the vessels of the forest of Lebanon were

pure gold none were of silver because that was accounted sort of you know, Lagosh in those days and the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram every 3 years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, silver, ivory apes and peacocks and king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom and the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom that God had put in his heart and they brought every man his present vessels of silver, vessels of gold raiment and harness and spices horses, mules at a rate year by year and Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots and 12,000 horsemen and he bestowed in the chariots that he bestowed in the chariot cities with the king of Jerusalem and he reigned over all the kings from the river even

to the land of the Philistines to the border of Egypt and the king made silver in Jerusalem as common as stones and cedar trees as common as the sycamores that are in the low plains and they brought to Solomon horses out of Egypt and out of all of the lands now the rest of the acts of Solomon first and last are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet and the prophecy of Ahijah the Shalanite and in the visions of Edu the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat and Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all of Israel for 40 years and he slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead so we find now the reign of Solomon 9 chapters devoted to it and for the remainder of 2nd Chronicles they will give shorter accounts because

here the kingdom came to its zenith but it is amazing how quickly you can go from the top to the bottom how quickly this deteriorated all of the gold that he had amassed vastness of his treasures these shields and targets of pure gold all of these cups gold and all of these things soon were to be taken soon were to be sacked by Shishak the king of Egypt and so the glory of the kingdom faded so very rapidly they went from the very apex of their glory down so rapidly at his death just immediately the glory of the kingdom faded it didn't even pass on to his son it didn't really continue past Solomon's death the kingdom immediately began to deteriorate and before his son was really established in the throne the kingdom became divided weakened

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