

II CHRONICLES

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to II Chronicles chapter 4 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we have seen in our studies so far, the reign of David is over and now his son Solomon is the king in Israel. And things are going well. There is peace and prosperity in the land and when I say prosperity, when you look at what they used to build the Temple, they were very prosperous.

Also keep in mind that the first 9 chapters of II Chronicles deals with the reign of Solomon and what is interesting to me is that of those 9 chapters, Solomon is the focus in only 3 of them. What or who is the focus of the other 6 chapters during the reign of Solomon? It is the construction and the dedication of the Temple! Why does the Holy Spirit use 6 chapters speaking of the Temple, why is that important to us since that structure has passed off the scene long ago?

Because, like the Tabernacle, the Temple and the things in the Temple were a picture of Christ and we will see that as we look at the Temple this evening. Obviously the Tabernacle was an awesome representation of Christ, the Temple is a little more elaborate but it too will give us a picture of Christ and the work He has done for us. With that said, let's begin reading in II Chronicles chapter 4, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study His Word!

II CHRONICLES 4

VERSE 1

1. As you entered the Temple area the first piece of furniture you would see was this bronze altar or literally “killing place” or “slaughter place” in Hebrew, (MIZBEACH). In the Tabernacle this structure was only 7½ feet square and 4½ feet high but in the Temple it will be 30 feet long, 30 feet wide and some 15 feet high. This would stand in the courtyard directly in front of the Temple. And this altar is the place where the animals would be sacrificed to the Lord and it is much larger than the one in the Tabernacle and it was high up so all could see the cost of sin. You see, there needed to be the shedding of blood to atone for our sins! It is as Payne wrote, “Just as in the tabernacle, the altar was the first main object to be met as one entered the sanctuary court. It demonstrates that God may be approached only through sacrifices.”

Even today this is where it all begins, at the altar, with the sacrifice as ***THE LAMB of GOD*** has come to take away the sins of the world with the shedding of His blood. Think about other religions, they tell you how to live but there is nothing to deal with our failure, with our sin. Only Christ can do that as Paul tells us in Hebrews 9:22, **“And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.”**

Now in saying that, please understand that these animal sacrifices could never take away our sins. Paul again tells us in Hebrews 10:4, **“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.”** If that is true, and it is, then what can be done? Notice what Paul tells us beginning in verse 9 of Hebrews chapter 10, **“then He said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.’ He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, ‘This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,’ then He adds, ‘Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’ Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.”** Hebrews 10:9-18.

So before you can approach God you must appropriate the sacrifice for sin into your life, you must receive Jesus or you can go no further. The altar of sacrifice!

VERSES 2-5

1. Next, as you went into the Temple you would come to the sea of cast bronze or this laver, which was 15 feet across, 45 feet in circumference, and 7½ feet deep. It was able to hold between 12,000 and 15,000 gallons of water. It was like a swimming pool! And this laver was used by the priests for ceremonial cleansing and was located to the south side of the Temple or on the left as you walked in. It was also used to fill the other 10 smaller lavers that we will read about in a minute.

Again we see a picture of Christ here. This laver is not speaking of salvation for we are saved and cleansed by the shed blood of Christ; we are as white as snow. Then what is this representing? It represents the daily cleansing we need as we walk through this dirty world and that as we read the Word of God and apply it to our lives the Holy Spirit or the water flows over our lives and removes that dirt from us! It is as Jesus said in John 15:3, **“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”**
The brazen laver!

VERSE 6

1. There were also these 10 portable lavers that were used to wash the animals that were to be sacrificed. Each laver was able to hold some 230 gallons of water and they were mobile, placed on carts. These were located on the sides of the temple, 5 on each side and most likely filled from the larger laver.

What does this mean to us? This may be speaking of what the Lord does with the sacrifices we make, that He cleans them up, that He takes those things we have been praying about, and, as our Intercessor, makes those prayers the heart of the Father!

VERSES 7-8

1. In the Tabernacle there was only one Lampstand and only one Table of Showbread, but Solomon has ten of each. And we know what Jesus said in John 8:12, “**... ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.’**” And in regards to the Table of Showbread, Jesus said in John 6:35, “**... ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.’**” And these one hundred bowls I believe are speaking of those containers that would catch the blood of the sacrifice so that the blood can be sprinkled. In fact, the word for “**bowls**” that is used here is derived from the Hebrew verb that means, “to sprinkle.” And the blood of Christ has been shed; it has been sprinkled over our lives cleansing us from our sins!

VERSES 9-17

1. First of all we see that there is a separation here, two different courts. There was the court of the priests, also known as the inner court and this was only for the priests, the common person could not go into this inner court. Then there was the outer court and this was for all Israel.

But here is the problem. The people could not approach a holy and righteous God, nor could the priest, they were only allowed in so far. It was only the High Priest and only once a year, on the Day of Atonement that he could enter the Holy of Holies, the presence of God and this was not for fellowship, it was for atonement! But in Christ we can boldly come into the Holy of Holies, the presence of God. Paul again tells us in Hebrews 4:16, **“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”**

And listen to what Paul tells us in Hebrews 10:19-23, **“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”** You see, it is through Jesus Christ that we can boldly come before the Father because now our sins have been removed by Jesus, we can stand before the Father not in our own righteousness that are like filthy rags but in the righteousness of Christ that has been imputed into our lives by faith!

2. We also see here that Hiram, a half Jew and half Gentile, is the one who makes the bronze casts for the Temple articles and these casts were obtained in the plain of Jordan, about 35 miles north of the Dead Sea, according to what archeologists have discovered!

VERSE 18

1. They used so much bronze in the Temple that they did not even bother to count it, there was just too much being used! What does that mean? There are two points here. First of all bronze or brass is a metal of judgment. Thus, the judgment that Jesus endured on the cross of Calvary for our sins cannot be measured. I don't think we will ever fully understand what He has done for us this side of Heaven!

Secondly, there was no accurate account of what was given to the Lord in service by the people and that should be true in our own lives. "Hey, I did this and that, let someone else do something!" mentality! Meyer puts it into perspective for us as he wrote, "The weight could not be found out. This was as it should be. There was no attempt to keep an accurate account of what was given to the service of God. Even Solomon's left hand did not know what his right hand did. There is a tendency in all of us to keep a strict account of what we give to God . . . but the loftiest form of devotion overleaps such calculation." May we not lose sight of what we are about, serving the Lord and it is not how much we have done for Him, but more, what we didn't do because of whatever reason we may have! And, it is about what He has done for us!

VERSES 19-22

1. Yes, the bronze or brass spoke of judgment, but also note the gold that was used, for it speaks of deity! Jesus did endure the cross but when it was done, Paul tells us in Hebrews 12:2, **“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”** The work is finished; He is now seated on the throne! He endured the cross, despised the shame and is now seated in Heaven with God the Father!

II CHRONICLES 5VERSE 1

1. So we see that Solomon completes the work on the temple, which was a 7 year building project, and what a sight it must have been. We are going to move into the dedication of the Temple next but let me make one point here before we move on.

When we ask God to work in our lives we want it done now! But many times, like the building of this Temple, He is working on our Temple, our bodies and it takes time. God is chipping away at things in our lives, He is making us beautiful, He is helping us to grow and it takes time. May we not forget that fact! May we not let the Devil condemn us but let the Lord build us into His glorious Temple where He dwells!

VERSES 2-5

1. Now keep in mind that the Tabernacle was located in Gibeon, that is where the sacrifices were made and the Ark of the Covenant was located in the city of David. David brought the Ark of the Covenant up and placed it in a tent and now it was time to move this Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle furnishings, what was left of them, into the Temple. And keep in mind that during the time of David the city of David was very small, only some ½ city block wide and 2 city blocks long and it was built upon a lower ridge of mountains, Mount Moriah. But Solomon has built this area up, this area known as Ornan's threshing floor and he has built upon it this massive Temple. And so, as you came to Jerusalem, you were always going up and what a sight to behold!

2. We are also given the time of year this took place and that it was during one of the Feasts in Israel. This time frame corresponded with the Feast of Tabernacles, which took place on the 15th day of the 7th month (Sept. - Oct.), and lasted some 8 days. And the whole celebration ended with a 7 day Feast as the Temple was dedicated, thus, this was a 15 day celebration in all.

3. And I think Solomon learned his lesson from his father David in regards to the way the Ark of the Covenant was to be transported. He knew that the Levites and the priests were to carry the Ark of the Covenant. In the Tabernacle, that portable worship structure that Moses built in the wilderness, when it was time for the children of Israel to move, the Tabernacle was to be dismantled and the Kohathites had the responsibility of caring for the Ark and the other Tabernacle implements.

The priests would walk into the Holy of Holies backwards, carrying a covering for the Ark, place that covering over the Ark and then the Kohathites would lift the Ark by two poles that were inserted through the 4 rings located on the sides of the Ark, and the poles were then placed upon the shoulders of the Kohathites. This was how the Ark was transported. Now Solomon will transport the Ark of the Covenant according to what God has said and he will place this Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies with a 4 to 18 inch curtain or veil that would separate the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies because sinful man could not just enter into the presence of God! And again, keep in mind that at this time the Ark is in a tent that David had built for it.

VERSES 6-10

1. Look at all the sacrifices that were made by Solomon, but why? Because he wanted to honor God and he knew that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin and Solomon recognized how sinful man is and he wanted to be covered by the blood and so do we, the blood of Jesus!
2. We are told here that the Ark of the Covenant only contained the Law and yet, earlier on, the Ark contained not only the two tablets of stone in which the covenant was written on, but also the rod of Aaron which budded, and the jar of manna. But now only the two tablets of stone remained in the Ark, we are not sure what happened with the rod of Aaron that budded or the jar of Manna.

3. One more point here and that is found in verse 9 and I think a better translation of this verse is given in The King James Version of the Bible and also in The Amplified Bible and this is from The Amplified, **“And they drew out the poles of the ark, so that the ends of the poles protruding from the ark were visible from the front of the Holy of Holies, but were not visible from without. It is there to this day.”** In other words, the poles were removed but why? Because the Temple was a permanent place for the Ark while the Tabernacle was not, they moved during their forty years of wandering in the wilderness!

Listen to what J. Vernon McGee has to say regarding this verse. He wrote,

You will remember that the ark speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ, of His person. Above the ark was the mercy seat which speaks of His work of redemption, His shedding of blood, the fact that He is now our propitiation. All of that is permanent. “. . . but now once in the end of the world [lit., the end of the age] hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Heb. 9:26). It is permanent, it is basic, it is established. Let me use the figure of speech here: the staves have been pulled out. There will be no other way of salvation. Peter could say to his people, “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). My friend, the staves have been pulled out. The ark is not on the move any more.

Also the withdrawing of the staves indicates rest. The Lord Jesus gives rest to those who come to Him. Also there is to be a *place* of rest. Our Lord spoke of that place when He said to His own men in the Upper Room, “. . . I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:2–3). The place is prepared, and one of these days we will go to that place.

One of the characteristics of that place is its permanence, the fact that it is a place of eternity. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Rev. 21:4). This is the city of God. It is permanent, and “. . . the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it” (Rev. 21:22). My friend, the staves are already pulled out. How wonderful that we are not going to be on the march. We don’t have to go looking for God. As Paul said to the Romans, we don’t have to go to heaven to bring Christ down, nor do we have to go down to hell to bring Him up. He is right there for us. This is permanent; it is eternal. It will not be changed. He drew out the staves.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru The Bible Vol. II, p. 414

VERSES 11-14

1. Here we are told in verse 11 that the priests did not keep to their own divisions. What is that about? Remember that David had divided the priests into 24 divisions, each serving 2 weeks, and after their work was done, they would return to their city until the time of their next service. They had 48 Levitical cities spread throughout the land of Israel in which these priests were living in. Here, for the dedication of the Temple, all were present during this time of celebration and to assist in the sacrifices. They all were there to place the Ark of the Covenant into the Holy of Holies but then it was just the High Priest who could enter in and just one time a year!

2. Notice what this worship was like here in the dedication of this Temple. The people came together to worship the Lord and it was not some big free-for-all, it was not a chaotic mess where everyone did whatever they wanted to do. They sang in one accord, with one voice, to the Lord, the focus was the Lord!

Remember what Paul said in I Corinthians 14:33, **“For God is not the author of confusion [or disorder] but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”** There are two points I would like to bring out here. First of all we know that worship can become so chaotic that there is no unity in our worship. That is not what God wants. You see, in a corporate setting, and in our own lives, worship refreshes us and fills us with the presence of God. It was after this time of worship and praise that the Shekinah glory, the presence of God, filled the Temple. God truly inhabits the praises of His people!

The second point is this. When we come to worship the Lord we must let our problems, our divisions, our issues melt away because the focus is not us, it is the Lord. And in a church, in a family, in our own lives, if we let issues get in the way of our worship of the Lord, it will be ugly. We need to let our problems melt away in His love and as we gather together as a body of believers, as we gather together as a family, as we gather together even as individuals, there is that fulfillment, that joy as we worship the One who created us. The Shekinah glory appears in our lives, the presence of God, like I have said, He inhabits the praises of His people!

It is as Spurgeon wrote, “We can never expect to have God in this house, or in our own houses, or in our own hearts, until we begin to praise him. Unless as a people we unanimously, with one heart, though with many tongues, extol the King of kings, farewell to the hope that he will give us his presence in the future.”

3. Now as the glory of God filled the Temple, what happened to the priests? They could no longer minister, the work they were doing ended. What was the focus? It was the Lord and that is what should take place. No longer focusing on the work of man but on the Lord because it truly is all about Him! Once again we see Spurgeon nail the point here as he wrote, “The glory of God had filled the house, and *the priests were set aside*. Where God is, man is forgotten. You will think little of the minister save for his work’s sake – you will talk the less of the man when you shall see the Master.” That is what should happen in our lives, because it is not about us, but about the Lord, may we not lose sight of that when God begins working. He gets the glory, not man!

II CHRONICLES 6

VERSES 1-2

1. Now what is this thing about God dwelling in a dark cloud? Think of it like this. Man cannot behold the glory of the Lord; it would consume us as sinners. Remember back in Exodus chapter 33, Moses asked to see God's glory, and God said to him, "**... 'You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.'**" Exodus 33:20. In fact, God said to Moses to hide his face in the cleft of this mountain and after the Lord passed by him he would see the Lord's afterglow, His glory as he passed by. And remember what Moses looked like when he returned from the mountain, his face lit up like a Christmas tree, it just radiated the glory of God.

What does that mean to us as Christians today? We see God through a veil, like looking through dark glasses. But one day we will see Him face to face, in all His glory, as we go to be with Him. Now, what happens to us when we see God, get a glimpse of God because in these bodies of flesh we will not see God? When people get a glimpse of God they see themselves as they really are, unclean, sinners. You see, as we stand before a holy and righteous God, even though positionally we are clean, practically speaking we still sin, it should cause us to see ourselves as we really are. When Isaiah saw the Lord he said, "**... 'Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts.'**" Isaiah 6:5. You see, that is the proper response when a holy and righteous God is compared to our own sinful life.

Yes, one day we will see Him face-to-face, but until we get our new bodies, He protects us so we will not get blown away at His glory! It is as Paul said in Philippians 3:20-21, **“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”** And John reminds us in I John 3:1-3, **“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”**

VERSES 3-9

1. Notice what Solomon is saying here. He is telling the people that this land, this Temple was not done because of man’s desires, not David or even Solomon, but this came from the heart of God. David and Solomon were both instruments that God used to do His Work! And what God did back then He is doing even today! We are just His instruments that He will work through to fulfill His plans! Our heart desire becomes His!

And Solomon wants them to remember what took place some 500 years earlier, how God delivered them from Egypt and even though their salvation looked hopeless, God had a plan and He brought it to pass, He delivered them from the bondage they were in, He set them free! Once again God has done this with us, taking us out of a hopeless situation, our Egypt or this world, and has delivered us into the Kingdom of God!

VERSES 10-11

1. Solomon wants the people to remember that God is faithful and what He has promised He has brought to pass. They are in the Promise Land! They are in the city of Jerusalem, the place the Lord has chosen to place His Name! There is the monarchy from the descendants of David! God's presence has filled the Temple! It is good to remember what God has done for the work He wants to do now because it encourages us. And the key is to remember, don't forget what God has promised to you and when it comes to pass, thank Him for what He has done.

VERSES 12-13

1. Here we see that after the Ark is placed into the Holy of Holies, Solomon is standing before the congregation on this bronze platform that was 7½ feet square and 4½ feet high. And as he finishes his words to the people, speaking on the faithfulness of God, he now kneels down to pray to the Lord. This is a prayer in regards to the dedication of this magnificent Temple!

VERSES 14-17

1. Solomon, in this prayer is telling us that the God they serve is completely unique; there is no God like the God of Israel! The false gods of the other nations could not compare with the true and living God! And to show them that the God they worshiped was unique, he wants the people to remember that God is faithful and what He has promised, He has now brought to pass. Again, like I have said, this is important for us to remember because as we remember God's faithfulness in what He has already done, it will give us confidence in the things that are before us now!

2. So as Solomon thanks God for the promises He has already brought to pass, he then calls for God to keep the promises that He has now made with them. This is not for God, He does not need to be reminded to be faithful, it is for us, to help our faith to grow, to learn to trust in Him more and more! And I think that as we meditate upon the greatness of God, as we see Him as the creator of Heaven and Earth, our problems no longer seem so big, so tough because if God can do that He can surely deal with my problems or situations! Now I wonder though, how many promises of God are unclaimed because we don't appropriate them by faith?

3. Also, please note that this was a conditional promise, that if the descendants of David followed after the Lord, they would remain on the throne. But that did not happen, and the kings became more and more evil until God brought judgment upon the nation and lead them away captive to Babylon. But God's promise that was unconditional is that through the decedents of David the Messiah would come and He did!

VERSES 18-21

1. What is the most important thing that Israel needs and we need? It is forgiveness and that is what we see Solomon praying for here. It was something that they would need and it truly is something we need and that forgiveness is only found in Jesus!

Now as Solomon starts out here he acknowledges the fact that the heavens can't contain God for His presence fills the universe. And yet he asks that God would look upon this city and this temple, that this would be a place where people can come together with God, and repent of their sin, and when they do, God would forgive them.

2. As we move into verses 22 through 39 of II Chronicles chapter 6 we see Solomon praying for three different issues. He is praying about problems with neighbors, national problems and then natural problems. So let's look at these issues that Solomon is praying about before they even come to pass!

VERSES 22-23

1. The Temple was the place where you can come to verify or authorize oaths. When there was a dispute, in some cases it would be impossible to decide if the person was guilty or not. And so they would have him make an oath at the Temple. Solomon is saying here that God is the one to judge, for He alone is a righteous judge. You see, only God knows our hearts, our motives, we can't judge people's motives, but we can respond to their actions if they are wrong. We can look at the fruit!

2. The old Puritan commentator John Trapp could not resist mentioning a fulfillment of this principle in his own day as he wrote, “Anne Averies, who, forswearing herself, A.D. 1575, February 11, at a shop of Wood Street in London, praying God she might sink where she stood if she had not paid for the wares she took, fell down presently speechless, and with horrible stink died.”

VERSES 24-25

1. We see here Solomon praying for the nation of Israel who is defeated by the enemy because she has sinned! In other words, these are the consequences of turning from the Lord. The first is that you will be defeated by your enemies. Remember Joshua’s great victory at Jericho, the next city they were to take was Ai, which was small and the scouts said only 2 to 3 thousand men were needed for this victory. But the children of Israel were defeated and 36 men died in the battle. And Joshua was upset with the Lord and frustrated over the whole situation. He couldn’t understand why God allowed this to happen to them. Did the Lord want to destroy them? Obviously not and Joshua had no reason to be mad at the Lord and the Lord said to Joshua, **“Get up, sanctify the people, and say, ‘Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘There is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you.’”**” Joshua 7:13.

If you remember from that story, all the spoil from the first victory was to be given to the Lord, it was the Firstfruits and in the giving of them to the Lord it was ensuring future victories. But Achan disobeyed, and his sin caused this defeat. Solomon is saying, “Lord, when we come to our senses, and repent of our sin, forgive our sin and return the land back to us, give us victory against our enemies.” What is the key to the victory after defeat? Repentance! Returning back to the Lord! And as you look at the history of Israel, you see God did answer this prayer of Solomon when they repented and returned to the Lord!

VERSES 26-31

1. The next thing that Solomon prays for is natural disasters that are brought about by sin. And in the Scriptures God uses drought many times to get their attention, to awaken them out of their spiritual slumber, and cause them to repent of their sin so that God would send rain upon the land once again. And this is true in our own lives, it may not be physical drought but there can be dryness in our walk with the Lord. And folk’s, God will use this on believers and unbelievers. To believers to try to get them back on track and to unbelievers to get them to look up and turn to the Lord.

2. And, of course, it is not just drought, but there are many natural things that God will use to get people's attention. And God is warning His people, through Solomon, that these things will come to pass if you turn from Me. You will be defeated by your enemies. You will experience drought upon the land. You will experience famine in the land. You will experience pestilence in the land. All these are a result of turning from the true and living God, and now God is trying to get their attention, He wants them to fall to their knees and repent of their sin so that God would forgive them and heal them and their land!

3. Now this is interesting because at the dedication of the Temple what is the focus? Yes, it is the Lord and the next thing is prayer! Spurgeon picked up on that as he wrote, "It is not therefore to be wondered at that, when Solomon dedicated to the Lord the temple which he had built, his great petition was that God would hear every prayer that should be uttered in that place or toward that place. He wished the temple always to be to Israel the token that God's memorial is that he hears prayer." God wants to hear from us and even when we sin, He wants to hear those words of repentance and a returning to Him so that He can work again in us and through us for His glory!

VERSES 32-33

1. I find this interesting, that way back here in II Chronicles God opens the door for all people to come to Him, not just the Jewish people. But the Jewish people developed a theology that excluded Gentiles from coming to God unless they became Jews. It got so bad that they believed that a Gentile was only born to fuel the fires of hell. Quite a different attitude from what Solomon was praying for. Solomon is asking the Lord to forgive all who come and repent of their sin before You, even a foreigner, that they could come to know the true and living God.

Listen to what we are told in Isaiah 56:6-8, **“Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, And to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants - Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant - Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”** **The Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, ‘Yet I will gather to him Others besides those who are gathered to him.’** Once again our God is here for all who will come to Him and repent of their sins, receive the forgiveness of their sins and that can only be accomplished through Jesus Christ!

VERSES 34-39

1. Please understand that this is not some blanket request for a blessing on every military adventure. It is as God sends them out, that this is the will of God for them to be in battle. Christians today get into battles that God has not called them and they pray and wonder why they are not victorious? The reason is simple; God has not called them to be in that battle.

2. Here in the Old Testament we see Solomon speak like Paul spoke in Romans 3:23, **“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”** Solomon put it like this, **“When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin) . . .”** II Chronicles 6:36. I wish more people would understand this and apply it to their lives, that there is no one who is righteous, there is no one who has not sinned and even if you didn't, which is impossible, you still have that sin nature from Adam! Thus, you are guilty and like Solomon said, you must repent and return to the Lord and He will hear your prayer!

The problem for many is they compare themselves to others and when they do they don't pick the best nor the worst but someone in the middle and someone that they feel they are doing better in their actions. Thus, that is their ticket to Heaven but that is not the ticket to Heaven because the standard is perfection and there is only one person who has done that and it is not you, it is Jesus! And I don't care how close you come to perfection, you still miss the mark and you will not enter in. The only way you can enter in is through Jesus and thus, you must repent, you must turn to Him!

I like what Selman wrote about this as he sums it up. He wrote, “The sense that sin is all-pervading dominates, epitomized in one of the clearest biblical statements about sin’s universality (*there is no-one who does not sin*, v. 36). No greater indication of the need for a place of atonement and forgiveness could be given.”

3. Solomon also speaks of their captivity, which is interesting because it is still a few hundred years down the road, some 400 years and yet he is praying for when it happens what they are to do, ***REPENT!*** When the Southern Kingdom of Judah fell into sin and turned from the Lord God brought judgment on them by the hands of the Babylonians, who took away many people captive in their first invasion in 606 BC, including Daniel and his 3 friends. And then in 586 BC king Nebuchadnezzar lead his third and final assault upon Jerusalem, destroying the city and the Temple and taking away the people captive, leaving only a few to care for the land. This young man named Daniel, taken to a foreign land, continued to pray 3 times a day, facing towards the holy city of Jerusalem. Daniel was doing what Solomon had said here in II Chronicles. Listen to what is said of Daniel in Daniel 6:10, **“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.”** You see, he was doing what Solomon had said here!

And then in Daniel chapter 9 we see an awesome prayer of Daniel as he intercedes for the nation, his people, as he confesses his own sin before God, asking God to hear, to forgive, to listen and act upon his requests. That God would not delay in pouring out His mercy upon His people. And God did answer Daniel's prayer. You see, God was not a local God, the God of the hills or the God of the flat land, He was the God of the universe and He can answer prayers anywhere they were given, even in the belly of a whale!

VERSES 40-42

1. In other words, Solomon is asking the Lord to make Himself at home among them, to dwell among them! No longer were they going to wander in the wilderness, no long was the Ark of the Covenant in a tent, but it was coming to rest in Jerusalem among God's people! What a great way to close this evening, with the presence of God dwelling among us!