

Friday, August 31, 2018

Foolish

1 Chronicles 21-22

Then David said to God, "I have sinned greatly by doing this. Now, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing." 1 Chronicles 21:8

David has a lapse in judgment. It is a severe lapse. He determines that it will be good to see just how big his house is getting—time to survey what he has. In itself, this may not appear to be an issue, and yet, to God it is. The command David gave is evil in the sight of the LORD, so He punishes Israel. What David has done is sin. It is foolish. My friend, Pastor Kevin Shorkey, has written a book entitled *Sin Makes You Stupid*. I remember the first time I heard him say that. It is so true. Sin has caused David to do a foolish thing. All sin is foolish—rooted in pride and self-serving thoughts and attitudes that ignore the sovereignty and provision of God. But God will forgive those who confess. David confesses quickly, openly, and completely. He doesn't blame-shift or rationalize. He states truth. "I have sinned greatly." God forgives, but there are consequences. Sin must be punished. All sin. David must make a sacrifice. He immediately obeys, and the sight of the future temple is established. All sin deserves punishment and all my sin affects much more than me. Like David, I must be ready to quickly, openly, and completely confess my sin and find my Savior ready to forgive.

Lord, thank You for Your forgiveness. Forgive me, please, for my foolishness and the way that sin makes me do such stupid things. Remind me that there is a better way. Amen.

August 27 - September 1, 2018

Saturday, September 1, 2018

Preparations

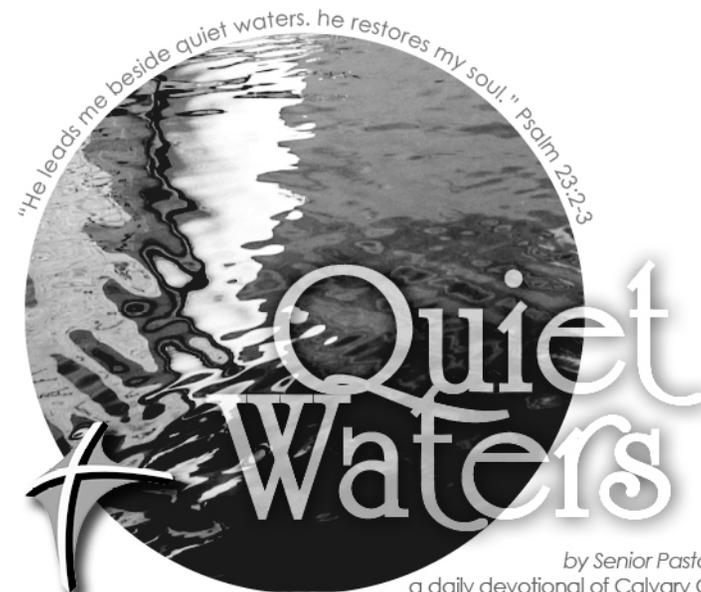
1 Chronicles 23-24

When David was old and full of years, he made his son Solomon king over Israel. He also gathered together all the leaders of Israel, as well as the priests and Levites.

1 Chronicles 23:1-2

David is making the preparations for his departure. But more than that, he is ensuring that Solomon knows the plans for the temple of the LORD. Previously, he described the actual structure to Solomon so that Solomon could know what to build and what articles to place in the temple; now he moves on to tell Solomon the rest of the plans for the temple. That begins with the Levites. Again, this goes back to the sons of Levi, showing that this is grounded in a long-term plan of God. The exiles need to understand this as the temple is rebuilt. The text makes it clear that there is an order that was established by David, but more than that, there is a divine decree as well (see 24:19). These chapters are rich to help understand that God has determined the order of worship. He can be approached boldly on His terms. The Levites served the LORD in His temple, allowing all Israel to worship. Just as David had made this clear for Solomon, so the Chronicler reminds the nation so that the new temple can also allow for worship as God designed. While these lists can be hard to read today, I must remember that God is revealing His plan for people to approach Him in worship. It reminds me that I must come to Him on His terms, grateful that I can come into His presence.

Dear God, You have made it possible for us to worship You. We would not know this apart from Your revelation. Thank You for allowing us to come before You. Amen.



by Senior Pastor Chuck Cervenka
a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, August 27, 2018

Ark

1 Chronicles 13-14

"Let us bring the ark of our God back to us, for we did not inquire of it during the reign of Saul." The whole assembly agreed to do this, because it seemed right to all the people.
1 Chronicles 13:3-4

At the time of the writing of 1 Chronicles, the ark has been lost. It is a distant memory. However, it is still understood to be a significant piece of Israel's history and heritage. It was the central symbol of God's presence with Israel. For the most part, it remained hidden behind the veil of the tabernacle. Of course, it had a prominent role in the crossing of the Jordan and the taking of Jericho. David led the people to consider once again the importance of the ark, desiring to bring it to Jerusalem so that it could be inquired of. And yet, it appears that in the desire to have the ark near, there may have been a misunderstanding of what exactly the ark was. The ark was not to be sought for direction—God was. The ark was not to be worshiped—God was. God took the opportunity to make it clear that he will not allow worship to come to Him in any manner other than what He has defined. Even good intentions do not allow for disobedience. David had inquired of the people and had received agreement, but he did not inquire of God. So Uzzah died and the ark rested. In this I am reminded that God has determined how I may approach Him. It is through Jesus that entry into His presence is possible, and I must learn to come with clean hands and a pure heart as I come into His presence. God's power is found in His presence.

Dear God, thank You for the graphic reminder of my need to get Your input and not to trust in the input of others apart from inquiring of You. Amen.

Tuesday, August 28, 2018

Everlasting Covenant

1 Chronicles 15-16

He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant: "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit."
1 Chronicles 16:15-18

The Chronicler places parts of three of the psalms (105, 96, 106) into the account of the ark being brought into Jerusalem. It is so helpful to know the context of these psalms and when God led David to have them be used in worship. It brings new meaning and depth to the words. Before I move too quickly into applying the scriptures to myself, I must remember that first, these words were written to someone else. These psalms would have reminded postexilic Israel that the promises endure for a thousand generations because of the oath that God made to Isaac and confirmed to Jacob. Because of the covenant that God made with Abraham, His people were back in their home. It is the same way that many Jewish people feel today in Israel. This is an everlasting covenant. It extends for a thousand generations. Canaan belongs to the nation of Israel. The Owner of the land has decreed it. He remembers His promise. I can see the hand of God as He fulfills the covenants He makes. For me, it is the new covenant in His blood—forgiveness of my sin—an everlasting covenant in that I will be with Him forever!!

Dear God, You are a covenant keeping God and I praise You for that. Thank You that You never change and that You are working Your plan in all the world. Amen.

Wednesday, August 29, 2018

Who am I?

1 Chronicles 17-18

Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said: "Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?" 1 Chronicles 17:16

Who am I? In this question, David reveals his heart. It is a heart that seeks after God. As the accounts of all the kings of all times reveals, very few think they do not deserve all that they have. David stands alone in His heart toward the LORD. God singles him out and blesses him with a covenant that will find its fulfillment in Jesus coming to reign as King on the throne of David. In this moment, David is overwhelmed to consider the blessing and to consider that God has spoken specifically about the future of the house of David. David realized that he was undeserving. He had given his heart to the LORD and he loved the LORD, but he knew that he still did not deserve anything from the LORD. He realized it was the LORD who had brought him this far. He did not take credit for the LORD's hand and what it had accomplished. He led the people to know that God was leading him and so God was leading them. I must be ready to live in the implied answer to the question, "Who am I?," realizing that it takes a lifetime to even begin to understand the truth that I am not deserving of anything from God and yet, most unexplainably, he make me worthy—for His name's sake.

Dear God, who am I really? I am Your child by Your design and Your grace. I am adopted into Your family and blessed with a promised future beyond anything I could imagine. I am a man who stands amazed in Your presence, overwhelmed by Your generosity and longing to live for You in all aspects of my life. Amen.

Thursday, August 30, 2018

Bravely

1 Chronicles 19-20

Be strong and let us fight bravely for our people and the cities of our God. The LORD will do what is good in his sight."
1 Chronicles 19:13

Spurgeon is quoted as saying, "work as if it all depended upon you—and then trust in God, knowing that it all depends on Him." I believe that is what Joab is saying to Abishai in this verse. There is a battle to be fought. They were fighting for the cities of God and for the people of God. Over and over again, Joab had seen the LORD bring victory through David, as David relied on the LORD. He was confident that God was sovereign in this battle as well. What he had also learned from David is that God expected people to fight. God expected the armies to fight for Him as well. The account reveals that the enemy fled. Just showing up ready allowed for God to instill fear in the enemy that caused them to run. Joab was ready for either outcome. He was ready to fight bravely and to be strong, trusting in God's will. I can learn from this. Every day, I face enemies of God's city and His people. I must learn to be strong and brave in my fight alongside the King, realizing there are times when He will fight the battle completely and there are other times when He will have me do the fighting. Either way, the LORD will do what is good in His sight. I can absolutely trust in that.

Dear Lord, help me always be strong and ready to fight bravely for You and for Your mission. Help me not get distracted. Help me know that I can trust You to do what is good in Your sight and help me to be very satisfied with what You have determined is good. Amen.