

Friday, September 7, 2018

Glory

2 Chronicles 4-5

The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang: "He is good; his love endures forever." Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God.
2 Chronicles 5:13-14

There is no way that I can read these chapters and not be swept away! God's Shekinah glory comes and fills the temple. Imagine the breathtaking experience this must have been. Never before or never since has such an event occurred in this way. With sacrifices beyond the ability to count as recognition of sin and repentance, preparations are completed, the temple is constructed to exact specifications, hearts are full with seeking the presence of the LORD—and He does not disappoint. He comes down in a way that pushes the priests from His presence. It is time to stop and stand in awe. God's glory is among men.

Precious LORD, there is no way I can even begin to imagine what I am reading today. A nation stands in awe of You. Your people seeking Your presence among them. You, coming down in Your splendor. God, please change us and cause us to be a people today who seek Your presence among us. Help us stand in awe of You. Amen.

Saturday, September 8, 2018

Why?

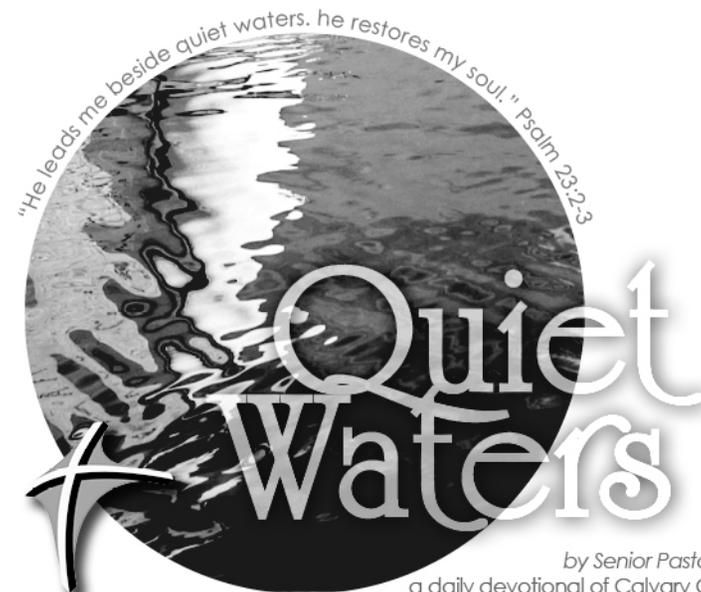
2 Chronicles 6-7

And though this temple is now so imposing, all who pass by will be appalled and say, 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?' People will answer, 'Because they have forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them—that is why he brought all this disaster on them.'
2 Chronicles 7:21-22

God is speaking to Solomon. He is telling him that He has heard the prayer that was offered and he is indicating to Solomon what the answer will be. It is God's heart to dwell among men. He created us for that purpose. Our sin breaks the possibility at this time. And yet, God makes it clear that He will dwell in the temple He has chosen. That temple is in His land that He has given to Israel. But He will only dwell in this temple, and the people will only be in the land, as they worship Him alone. God alone is worthy of worship. Worship of anything else draws His people from God and into His rightful wrath and causes discipline to come. That discipline is what is promised by God here. He will reject the temple and remove the people from their land. The readers of Chronicles know that this has already happened. It serves as a warning that the new temple they have built is not the home of the LORD because of a decision they have made; it is only so as God chooses. And if they do not remain faithful, discipline will come once again. I love that God loves me enough to discipline me.

Dear God, thank you that You love me enough to discipline me. It is not pleasant and I can choose to avoid it by learning and following Your truth. I worship You alone. Amen.

September 3 - 8, 2018



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

Monday, September 3, 2018

Music

1 Chronicles 25-26

All these men were under the supervision of their fathers for the music of the temple of the LORD, with cymbals, lyres and harps, for the ministry at the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman were under the supervision of the king. 1 Chronicles 25:6

I can't help but wonder what the music sounded like in the temple when Asaph led the singers under the supervision of the king. The music is declared to be the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres, and cymbals (25:1). So, the words of the song spoke truth about God. The singing would be theology—it would make known the heart of God. Many of the psalms are the words of these songs preserved by God. In these songs, the heart of the worshiper reveals a seeking and a longing for the nature and character of God to sustain in times of joy and peace, sorrow and war, sadness and pain. In these songs, we read the true nature of God revealed to a generation and beyond. Music is an important aspect of worship in the throne room of God (Revelation 5). It was clearly an important part of the worship in the tabernacle as well. So much so that the musicians were under the supervision of the king. Solomon would need to bring that worship into the temple he would build and it would need to be in the new temple as well. It is in these truths that I see the importance of music in the worship of Almighty God. It is important as well that the songs I sing in worship are sound in their theology and declaration of truth.

Dear God, may the music that I sing as I worship You be honoring to Your name. May it declare Your glory and proclaim Your truth to all who listen. Amen.

Tuesday, September 4, 2018

Wholehearted

1 Chronicles 27-28

And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever. 1 Chronicles 28:9

David knew what the most important thing was for Solomon to know in the midst of all the plans: acknowledging and serving God. Solomon would need to recognize God as valuable and then be led into service of Him with his whole heart, literally a perfect heart, a heart completely devoted to the LORD. This is what truly had set David apart from Saul. David knew from his own life that it was not his actions that kept him in God's presence, it was his heart—his motives. He also knew from experience that it was the heart and motives of Saul that caused God to reject him forever. Solomon would need to keep his heart set perfectly on the LORD, with a mind that was willing to serve Him alone, so that He could be found by the LORD. He was being handed the kingdom and he would experience the pull of power. That pull so easily can draw someone—whose heart is not completely devoted—away from God. I must remember and hold this truth tightly. I long to be found by God as a man after His heart with all my heart. I long to acknowledge Him and serve Him with all that I have and all that I am, but that is only possible as I give my will to him.

Dear God, take my heart and make it Yours. Guard me from any pride that would draw me away from You. Cleanse me, LORD, so I can be all and only Yours. Amen.

Wednesday, September 5, 2018

Wisdom

1 Chronicles 29 - 2 Chronicles 1

Solomon answered God, "You have shown great kindness to David my father and have made me king in his place. Now, LORD God, let your promise to my father David be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth. Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?" 2 Chronicles 1:8-10

Much has been said about Solomon's request for wisdom. Originally, the Chronicles were not divided. There were not chapter breaks and subheadings. It is helpful for us to have them but it can break the flow of the text if we are not careful. Overlooking the breaks in the reading today allows me to see that David prayed that God would give his son wholehearted devotion (1 Chronicles 29:19) and that Solomon prayed for wisdom and knowledge. God's response to Solomon's request seems to indicate that He was pleased with Solomon's choice, but I can't help but wonder what would have happened had Solomon asked for the same thing as his father. David had sought the LORD for an undivided heart (Psalm 86:11) and was given that by God. In receiving wisdom and knowledge, Solomon would have the opportunity to use them for God or for himself. The heart makes the difference. History reveals that Solomon's wisdom did not naturally lead to a willing service and a contrite heart. I must seek God for wisdom, but also for the heart to use that wisdom for the service of the LORD.

Dear God, please give me wisdom and knowledge so that I can know and serve You, but also, gracious Lord, give me an undivided heart that I may fear Your name. Amen.

Thursday, September 6, 2018

Mount Moriah

2 Chronicles 2-3

Then Solomon began to build the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David. It was on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, the place provided by David. 2 Chronicles 3:1

There are only two places in Scripture where Mount Moriah is mentioned. One is here and the other is in Genesis 22:2. The Chronicler ties these together. This is a place that God has chosen to reveal His presence. It is the threshing floor that David purchased, but it has significance that goes far beyond that. God has had a special plan for this spot, revealed in the provision of the sacrifice for Abraham and revealed in the worship that will happen in the temple to be built in this precise location. The exiles have laid the foundation for the second temple on this same spot. It is this temple to which the Messiah will come at His first advent. It is this spot that still belongs to the LORD, even though, at this moment, it does not appear that way. God has a special plan for His people and for this mountain that remains to be fulfilled in the second advent of the Messiah. The excitement that surrounded the construction of the building of the first temple can only be imagined. The emotions that surrounded the building of the second temple were mixed. The anticipation of what will yet occur on Mount Moriah should move my heart to eager expectation as I pray for God to restore His chosen people and His worship on Mount Moriah.

Dear Lord, how I long for the day when worship of You comes back to Mount Moriah. I pray for You to reclaim Your people Israel and draw them to Yourself. Amen.