



KINGDOM POLITICS

PART FIVE

Forty Daily Devotions
from the Book of 1 Chronicles
(Based on the NKJV)

Introduction

People often ask why we have the books of 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles. My answer to this question is that we have these different accounts of the history of Israel and its rulers for the same reason we have four Gospels. While it is true that Kings and Chronicles cover much of the same period in the history of Israel, and therefore, much of the same subject matter, we see in them Israel's history from a different perspective. The Books of the Chronicles were written after some of the people of Israel returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the city, its walls, and the temple. The book of 1 Chronicles begins with Adam and ends at the beginning of Solomon's reign as the last king of a united Israel. In these important pages of God's Word, we will read about many of the important families whose lives blazed a trail for all of us to follow. We will also read about many roles that God's people played in the work of ministry and worship.

Daily Reading Schedule

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
1	1 Chronicles 1:1-31	3/13/25
2	1 Chronicles 1:32-54	3/14/25
3	1 Chronicles 2:1-24	3/15/25
4	1 Chronicles 2:25-55	3/16/25
5	1 Chronicles 3:1-24	3/17/25
6	1 Chronicles 4:1-23	3/18/25
7	1 Chronicles 4:24-43	3/19/25
8	1 Chronicles 5:1-26	3/20/25
9	1 Chronicles 6:1-18	3/21/25
10	1 Chronicles 6:19-38	3/22/25
11	1 Chronicles 6:39-63	3/23/25
12	1 Chronicles 6:64-81	3/24/25
13	1 Chronicles 7:1-19	3/25/25
14	1 Chronicles 7:20-40	3/26/25
15	1 Chronicles 8:1-40	3/27/25
16	1 Chronicles 9:1-22	3/28/25
17	1 Chronicles 9:23-44	3/29/25
18	1 Chronicles 10:1-11:5	3/30/25
19	1 Chronicles 11:6-25	3/31/25
20	1 Chronicles 11:26-47	4/01/25

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
21	1 Chronicles 12:1-22	4/02/25
22	1 Chronicles 12:23-40	4/03/25
23	1 Chronicles 13:1-14:17	4/04/25
24	1 Chronicles 15:1-29	4/05/25
25	1 Chronicles 16:1-22	4/06/25
26	1 Chronicles 16:23-43	4/07/25
27	1 Chronicles 17:1-27	4/08/25
28	1 Chronicles 18:1-17	4/09/25
29	1 Chronicles 19:1-20:8	4/10/25
30	1 Chronicles 21:1-30	4/11/25
31	1 Chronicles 22:1-19	4/12/25
32	1 Chronicles 23:1-32	4/13/25
33	1 Chronicles 24:1-31	4/14/25
34	1 Chronicles 25:1-31	4/15/25
35	1 Chronicles 26:1-19	4/16/25
36	1 Chronicles 26:20-27:15	4/17/25
37	1 Chronicles 27:16-34	4/18/25
38	1 Chronicles 28:1-13	4/19/25
39	1 Chronicles 28:14-29:9	4/20/25
40	1 Chronicles 29:10-30	4/21/25

Day 1: 1 Chronicles 1:1-31

“Adam, Seth, Enosh,” (1 Chronicles 1:1)

From Adam to Abraham

We will be reading more verses on a daily basis in this devotional than we have in others, but many of the verses in this book are just about as long as the first one. Remember that the books of 1 & 2 Chronicles, just like the Books of Kings, were one book until it was divided in the third century BC when the Septuagint translation was written. At that time, the Greek translators gave Chronicles a Greek name which means “the things left over.” But, be advised, Chronicles is not just a book of “leftovers” but a “main course” of spiritual food that provides us another look at some wonderful Bible history. What we see in this first chapter tells us that the book was written with the intention of recording the genealogies of some of the Bible’s earliest families. Today’s reading begins with Adam and ends with the introduction of part of the family of Abraham. However, it is important to note what we do *not* see in this first chapter – beginning at the first verse. In the Book of Genesis (4:1-2, 25), we read about Adam having three sons that are named. We are also told they had many other “sons and daughters”, which were not named (Genesis 5:4). But here, in the first verse of 1 Chronicles, we *do not see* the names of Cain or Abel who were born before Seth. Therefore, we must immediately conclude that this book was not intended to be an exhaustive listing of every person who ever lived, but a selective record of the names and stories of just some of God’s beloved people.

Prayer Emphasis: Commit to being faithful to your Bible reading during the course of this devotional. **Share** a copy of this new devotional guide with someone and **encourage** them to read along with you.

Day 2: 1 Chronicles 1:32-54

“Now the sons born to Keturah, Abraham’s concubine...” (1 Chronicles 1:32)

Keturah

Today’s verses begin with the record of the sons born to Abraham by Keturah and continue through the names of the kings and chiefs of Edom. The Edomites were descendants of Esau, the firstborn son of Isaac who sold his birthright for a bowl of stew. Before they were even born, Esau and Jacob (referred to by his new name, Israel, in verse 34) struggled with each other within their mother’s womb, and God told their mother, Rebekah, that her two sons would become “two nations” (Genesis 25:23). Years after these men were born and dead, their descendants would continue to be enemies. Today’s focus verse contains the name of the first woman to be mentioned in this historic record of God’s people. Think about this, almost 2,000 years passed between Adam and Abraham, and only one woman, Keturah, is mentioned during this record of all those years! Two other women are later mentioned in this first chapter, those being “Mehetabel” and “Matred” in verse 50. Keturah, who married Abraham after Sarah’s death, was referred to as his “wife” in Genesis 25:1. Some see a conflict in the fact that she is referred to as a “concubine” here in 1 Chronicles 1:32. The record in Genesis seems to indicate that Keturah was a concubine (an unmarried woman who committed her life to one man) until she was elevated to “wife” after Sarah died.

Prayer Emphasis: Contact some of the significant women in your life and let them know how much you love and appreciate them. **Pray** for the many godly women who participate in the various ministries of our church and **ask** God to bless them and their efforts to serve Him.

Day 3: 1 Chronicles 2:1-24

“These were the sons of Israel...” (1 Chronicles 2:1)

“The Sons of Israel”

The list of the names of the “sons of Israel” found here in the first two verses of 1 Chronicles chapter 2 matches the listing of their names in Genesis 35:23-26. However, in the Genesis record, we are told that these 12 sons were born to Israel by four different women: Leah, Rachel, Bilhah, and Zilpah. Another listing of these names is found in Exodus 1:1-4 where “the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt” are found. Joseph’s name is not included in that list because Exodus 1:5 informs us that “Joseph was in Egypt already.” These 12 “sons” of Israel eventually became 13 “tribes” because Israel eventually adopted two of Joseph’s sons, Ephraim, and Manasseh (Genesis 48:5). The writer of Chronicles begins his record with the lineage of the fourth son of Israel, Judah. This focus on Judah will continue until we get to the information regarding the family of Reuben in the last half of chapter four. The emphasis on Judah is because much of 1 Chronicles will focus on the life and times of King David, who was the most famous descendant of Judah. I have often stated that God does not hide any of His children’s “wrinkles” or failures from us, including the sad story of “Er” in verse three. The “Achar” listed in verse seven is none other than the “Achan” whose sad story of sin and failure is shared with us in Joshua 7.

Prayer Emphasis: Praise God that He does not kick us out of His family – nor remove our names from His book – because we sin and fall short of His glory. **Believe** that the names of “those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life” (Revelation 21:27) are written in permanent ink!

Day 4: 1 Chronicles 2:25-55

“These were the descendants of Caleb: The sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, were Shobal the father of Kirjath Jearim, Salma the father of Bethlehem...” (1 Chronicles 2:50-51a)

“Ephrathah” and “Bethlehem”

There is an especially important difference between the Books of the Kings and Books of Chronicles. In Kings, we read primarily about the lives, reigns, and exploits of David and his son, Solomon, including the fall of that dynasty and the things that led to that fall. We will read much of that same information in the Books of Chronicles, but for what seems to be a quite different and specific purpose. The focus in the Chronicles seems to be on Judah and Jerusalem. Some present the Books of Chronicles as some kind of “supplement” or “addendum” to the Books of Kings and Samuel. I am convinced that these books were written for a much more important purpose than that! Chronicles is definitely a more detailed review of the ancestors and descendants of David, and it provides clear details to the lineage of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. For example, in today’s focus verses, we see two names that should be familiar to Bible students. “Ephrathah” is mentioned in verse 50. She was the second wife of a man named “Caleb” and the grandmother of “Caleb” the faith-filled spy mentioned in Numbers 13. Then, “Bethlehem” is mentioned in verse 51. It was after these two people that the city of “Bethlehem Ephrathah” was named, and we all know that to be the city from which came forth Jesus the Messiah, “the One to be Ruler in Israel” (Micah 5:2).

Prayer Emphasis: Read Chronicles like you would read the family history in an old family Bible and **believe** that as we read through this book, we are actually reading about the ancestors of Jesus Christ! **Understand** that we do not have to be *well known* to be *well used* of God for His purpose and glory!

Day 5: 1 Chronicles 3:1-24

“Now these were the sons of David...” (1 Chronicles 3:1)

“The Sons of David”

Verse four of today’s reading informs us that David “reigned seven years and six months” in Hebron and, after that, “in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years.” Verses one through 3 record the names of the six sons that were born to David in Hebron while verses five through eight record the names of his sons that were born to him in Jerusalem. The first part of verse five seems to draw special attention to the four sons that were born to David in Jerusalem “by Bathshua the daughter of Ammiel.” These two names are alternative pronunciations of the “Bathsheba” and “Eliam” of 2 Samuel 11:3. It was from David’s marriage to Bathsheba that Solomon, his successor to the throne, was born. There is an interesting point to be made from the many “sons of Jeconiah” that are listed in verses 17-18 and the many grandsons that are then listed in verses 19-24. These were the descendants of David who were born after Jerusalem’s fall and exile to Babylon. Some of these descendants were, no doubt, born in Babylon. Jeremiah referred to Jeconiah as “Coniah” and had prophesied: “Write this man down as childless” (Jeremiah 22:30). Because of that, some have been thrilled to think they had found a “contradiction” in the Bible. However, if they read Jeremiah’s entire statement, they will clearly see that Jeremiah went on to say that “for none of his descendants shall prosper, sitting on the throne of David.” The word “childless” there obviously only referred to the fact that none of Jeconiah’s sons would follow him on the throne of Judah.

Prayer Emphasis: Read your Bible with absolute confidence that it is the inspired, inerrant Word of God that is written to help you believe in Jesus Christ and also help you lead others to that same kind of faith.

Day 6: 1 Chronicles 4:1-23

“Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers...And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, ‘Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me...that I may not cause pain!’ So God granted him what he requested.” (1 Chronicles 4:9-10)

Meet “Jabez”

On day three, we mentioned two places in the Bible where the “sons of Israel” are listed by name. The first listing is found in Genesis 35:23-26 and the second in Exodus 1:1-4. In both of those lists, Judah is listed fourth. However, in keeping true to its focus on the lineage of Christ through David, Chronicles lists the descendants of Judah first. In this listing of Judah’s descendants, we read, for the first time in the Bible, about a man named Jabez. We saw the word Jabez back in the 55th verse of the second chapter, but there the Bible is referencing a city and not a person. We are not given any details about the “pain” that the mother of Jabez experienced at his birth. We do know a part of his beautiful prayer was that he “may not cause pain” (v. 10). But that was the final request in the prayer of Jabez. Before that, he first prayed for God’s blessings on his life. The word “indeed” that follows this request for blessing is a word that implies that Jabez wanted to be aware of all that God was doing for him. He also prayed for an enlarged territory, the presence of God’s hand in his day-to-day life, and finally, that he would be kept “from evil.”

Prayer Emphasis: Note that we are told “God granted him what he requested.” The truest measure of prayer is whether it is a prayer that God can answer within His divine will. **Believe** that “no” or “wait” can sometimes be the appropriate answer to our requests.

Day 7: 1 Chronicles 4:24-43

“The sons of Simeon...these were their dwelling places...” (1 Chronicles 4:24 & 33)

“The Sons of Simeon”

Simeon was Jacob’s second oldest son – the first born to him after Reuben. In Genesis 34, we read where Simeon, along with his next eldest brother, Levi, avenged the assault of their sister, Dinah, by tricking the men of her assailants’ city into being circumcised so they could intermarry with the families of the house of Israel. Then, “on the third day” after their circumcision, when the men of that city “were in pain,” “Simeon and Levi...each took his sword...and killed all the males” (Genesis 34:25). Genesis 34:30 clearly indicates that Jacob was greatly troubled by the brutal actions of his two sons. When he gave his final blessings to his sons, he said of Simeon and Levi, “Simeon and Levi are brothers; instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place...I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel” (Genesis 49:5 & 7). You may or may not have noticed, but when Moses gave his final blessings to the tribes, Simeon is not mentioned at all. When the Promised Land was divided among the tribes, Simeon did not receive his own land, but only cities that were within the lands of others (Joshua 19:1-9). If you look carefully at today’s verses, you should see the word “dwelt” three times. Notice that these people were only given “dwelling places” (v. 33), and it certainly seems that they lived as nomads among the peoples of the Promised Land.

Prayer Emphasis: Remember that God’s Words are always fulfilled. **Live** today in such a way that God can bless your tomorrows – and the tomorrows of your children. Don’t forget that Levi, Simeon’s partner in crime, was also granted only cities within the lands of the other tribes (Joshua 13).

Day 8: 1 Chronicles 5:1-26

“Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel – he was indeed the firstborn, but because he defiled his father’s bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel, so that the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright.” (1 Chronicles 5:1)

“The Son’s of Reuben”

Today’s focus verse provides the answer about why the sons of Israel are not mentioned by birthright order in 1 Chronicles. In Genesis 35:22, we read where “Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father’s concubine; and Israel heard about it.” Today we see that Reuben did not escape punishment for his evil deed. The names of Jacob’s sons, by birth order, were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin. In 1 Chronicles chapter four, we notice it was Judah’s lineage that was given first, after the introduction to David’s family in chapter three. The listing of Jacob’s sons clearly indicates that Judah was not the *firstborn* but the *fourth-born*. However, a closer look at the listing of the sons will reveal that the first three were disqualified from the rights of the firstborn because of some very bad moral decisions. Hence, the blessing of being the one to continue the lineage of the Messiah, through David, fell to Judah rather than to one of his three older brothers. No book explains the Bible better than the Bible! If we look, we can usually find the answers to our questions within its pages, just as the case here in our focus verse where we are clearly told why “the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright.”

Prayer Emphasis: Notice that Reuben, Simeon, and Levi were not excommunicated from the family of Israel because of their sins. However, they did suffer the loss of some of their inheritance. **Remember**, as believers, sin may not cost us our *relationship* with the father, but it may cost some loss of *rewards*.

Day 9: 1 Chronicles 6:1-18

“The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.” (1 Chronicles 6:1)

“The Sons of Levi”

The first part of chapter six chronicles the genealogy of Levi. If you look closely at verse two, you will see that, through Kohath, Levi had a grandson named Amram. We are first introduced to Amram in Exodus 6:20 where we are told he “took for himself Jochebed, his father’s sister, as wife; and she bore him Aaron and Moses.” The writer of Chronicles includes “Miriam” as a child of Amram (6:3). We read in an earlier devotional (Day 7) where Levi joined in with Simeon in the slaughter of the men of Shechem after their sister was sexually assaulted. Now we see that, even though Levi had earlier sinned against both his earthly and heavenly father, his descendants are still allowed to play a significant role in the history of God’s people. All the descendants of Levi had an incredibly special place in Israel because they became the workers and keepers of the Tabernacle and, later, the Temple. It is from within this tribe that God selected Aaron and his descendants to serve Him as priests. In verse 10, we read where “Azariah...ministered as priest in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem.” When we read the story of the Levites, it is as if God knew He needed to keep them close to Himself so they would never again fall into the snare of participating in the evil deeds of others like their forefather did with Simeon. All priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests. Later, in the New Testament, we will see that all apostles were disciples, but not all disciples were apostles.

Prayer Emphasis: Remember sin did not cost Simeon or Levi their *relationship* with God, but it did cost them some *rewards*. However, Levi’s past sin definitely did not prohibit the descendants of Levi from having a key role in God’s service.

Day 10: 1 Chronicles 6:19-38

“Now these are the men whom David appointed over the service of song in the house of the LORD... They were ministering with music before the dwelling place of the tabernacle...” (1 Chronicles 6:31-32a)

The Importance of Music

Two words found in today’s verses merit our close attention. The first of those words is “music.” Although the word “music” is not found in our first focus verse, we can clearly see that the words “the service of song” relate to the word “music”, which is found in our second focus verse. The fact that David “appointed” some specific men to be “over” the singing in the Tabernacle worship speaks to the importance of worship through music and singing, and that a proper amount of attention should be given to it. The second word found in our focus verses that I want to mention is the word “ministering.” The Hebrew word used here is a word that is often found in the Bible – in both verb and noun form. In this case, it is in the verb form. The first place this word is found in verb form in the Bible is in the story of Joseph while he lived in Potiphar’s house where we are told “Joseph found favor in his sight, and *served* him” (Genesis 39:4). The first time we find this word in noun form in the Bible is in Exodus 24:13 where Joshua is described as an “assistant” (many translations say “servant”) to Moses.

Prayer Emphasis: Recognize how important music is to our worship services and **pray** for those who serve the Lord through music in our church. **Consider** becoming a part of our worship choir and help lead us in making a joyful noise to the Lord! **Express** appreciation to someone in our music ministry today!

Day 11: 1 Chronicles 6:39-63

“But Aaron and his sons offered sacrifices on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense, for all the work of the Most Holy Place, and to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.” (1 Chronicles 6:49)

“Aaron and His Sons”

Music was an important and powerful tool that helped set the stage for the main part of every Tabernacle or Temple service – that being, the sacrifices on the burnt altar that stood without the building and the sacrifices on the altar of incense that was placed within the building. I mentioned in an earlier devotional that all priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests. Only Aaron and his descendants were made a part of the priesthood. Until the arrival of Jesus Christ, no other person, other than a descendant of Aaron, was ever referred to as a priest. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus was a priest, but His priesthood was “according to the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 7:17). Verse 50 of today’s reading lists the names of “the sons of Aaron.” A careful eye will note that the names of Nadab and Abihu, who were killed for bringing strange fire to the altar of the Lord (Leviticus 10:1-2), are excluded from this list. Verse 54 serves as a reminder to us that the descendants of Levi did not receive a land of their own upon Israel’s arrival to the Promised Land. Instead, they were spread out among all the tribes and given “cities” within the lands of the other tribes. Joshua 21 lists all 48 of the cities that were given to the Levites, while only 42 of them are listed here in 1 Chronicles.

Prayer Emphasis: Please **pray** for your pastors and for all pastors of God’s churches everywhere. **Ask** God to help them to serve in accordance with His will and in the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit and Word of God! **Express** your appreciation to one of God’s pastors today.

Day 12: 1 Chronicles 6:64-81

“So the children of Israel gave these cities with their common-lands to the Levites. And they gave by lot...these cities which are called by their names.” (1 Chronicles 6:64-65b)

Cities for the Levites

Yesterday, we read where the Levites were provided “dwelling places” (6:54) throughout the lands that were allotted to the other tribes of Israel. In Numbers 18:20, “the LORD said to Aaron: ‘You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance.’” The main reason the Levites were not given their own land was then revealed to them in verse 23 of that same book and chapter: “But the Levites shall perform the work of the tabernacle...” Because the Levites had no land to farm or to support flocks, God said, “I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle” (Numbers 18:21). Later, God reminded Moses to “command the children of Israel that they give the Levites cities to dwell in from the inheritance of their possession” (Numbers 35:2). And, according to the history given here in verse 64, that is exactly what the children of Israel did: “So the children of Israel gave these cities with their common-lands to the Levites.” The “common-lands” referenced in verse 64 were the lands immediately surrounding the cities given to the Levites.

Prayer Emphasis: **Let** this year be the year that you become a fully involved giver to the church and a financial investor in God’s kingdom. **Watch** for God’s blessings to be poured out to you when you give.

Day 13: 1 Chronicles 7:1-19

“The sons of Issachar were Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shamron – four in all.” (1 Chronicles 7:1)

“The Sons of Issachar”

Issachar was the ninth son born to Jacob and the fifth born to him by Leah. In the Genesis record, we are not specifically told that Issachar was her fifth son, but we are told in verse 19 of that chapter that, after the birth of Issachar, “Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son” (Genesis 30:18-19). The Bible records little history of the life of Issachar. Most of his mentions are found in the genealogical records of the Books of Numbers and Chronicles. One thing that is noted about Issachar’s descendants is that they were “mighty men of valor.” That statement is first made in reference to Issachar’s descendants here in 1 Chronicles 7:2, and then that same statement is made about them another four times in today’s Scripture reading. In addition to that statement, we are told that the men of this tribe were “ready for war” (v. 4) and “fit to go out for war and battle” (v. 11). At Sinai, a census to determine the number of men who were “twenty years old and above” and “able to go to war” (Numbers 1:28) was taken for each tribe. From the tribe of Issachar “fifty-four thousand four hundred” men “numbered” as being qualified for military service (Numbers 1:29). At that time, that gave Issachar the fifth largest army among all the tribes. By the time of the second census, Issachar’s number of eligible fighting men had grown to “sixty-four thousand three hundred” (Numbers 26:25), giving them the third largest army among the different tribes of Israel.

Prayer Emphasis: Believe that we are all called to be “a good soldier” who is ready and able to “endure hardship.” **Strive** to live a life that will “please him who enlisted him (you) as a soldier” (2 Timothy 2:3-4).

Day 14: 1 Chronicles 7:20-40

“Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.” (1 Chronicles 7:22)

“Comfort”

In Genesis 48, Joseph presented his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to his father, Jacob, for blessing. At that time, Jacob stated that the descendants of Ephraim would “become a multitude of nations” (Genesis 48:19). If you look at the names of “the sons of Ephraim” that are listed in 1 Chronicles 7:20-21, you will think Ephraim had made a good start toward seeing that prophecy fulfilled! However, the last part of verse 21 says that “the men of Gath who were born in that land killed them (the sons of Ephraim) because they came down to take away their cattle.” Hence, we are told that Ephraim “mourned many days” (v. 22). Needless to say, Ephraim had every right to think that his grandfather was mistaken when he stated that “a multitude of nations” would come from his seed. He may very well have had many questions for God at that sad time in his life. It is no wonder that he “mourned many days.” I am sure the “brethren” who “came to comfort him” (v. 22) found that to be quite a considerable task. At some time after this great tragedy, Ephraim’s wife “conceived and bore a son” and Ephraim “called his name Beriah” (v. 23) and his line continued. I am sure Ephraim never got over the loss of his sons, but there were still some great blessings in store for this suffering saint. The last of Ephraim’s descendants mentioned in this listing was a man named “Joshua” who was born to a man named “Nun” (v. 27). This was “none” other than the Joshua who followed Moses as the leader of God’s people!

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that every life meets with sorrow and suffering. **Comfort** those you know who have suffered loss. **Reach out** to someone who is suffering today.

Day 15: 1 Chronicles 8:1-40

“...These were all sons of Benjamin.” (1 Chronicles 8:40b)

Benjamin

It may have startled you to see that today’s reading included 40 verses, but as you can see, 11 of those verses are comprised of no more than three names of some of those found in Benjamin’s family tree. We read some about the descendants of Benjamin earlier in verses 6-12 of chapter seven, but we now have a full genealogy of this tribe before us here in chapter eight. Benjamin was the youngest of the sons born to Jacob. He was born just outside Bethlehem, and his mother, Jacob’s beloved Rachel, “labored in childbirth, and she had hard labor” (Genesis 35:16). Benjamin was born “as her soul was departing,” but just before her death “she called his name Ben-Oni” (Genesis 35:18), a name that Jacob later changed to Benjamin. “Ben-Oni” meant “son of my sorrow,” and Benjamin meant “son of my right hand.” From that name, we get an idea that Benjamin was a child that Jacob wanted to keep close to him so he could protect him. Later, in Genesis 42:4, we read where Jacob sent his other 10 sons to Egypt to buy grain, but “did not send Joseph’s brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, ‘Lest some calamity befall him.’” From this youngest son of Jacob came several well-known biblical figures, including the likes of Saul, the first king of Israel, and the Apostle Paul (See 1 Samuel 9:16 and Romans 11:1).

Prayer Emphasis: Since Benjamin was the youngest child of Jacob, today would be a suitable time for us to remember to pray for the children of our church. **Pray** for the children, **pray** for their parents, and **pray** for those who work with our children. In other words, when it comes to our children, **pray, pray, pray!**

Day 16: 1 Chronicles 9:1-22

“And the first inhabitants who dwelt in their possessions in their cities were Israelites, priests, Levites, and the Nethinim.” (1 Chronicles 9:2)

A “Romans 8:28” Moment

The reference to the “book of the kings of Israel” in verse one is not a reference to the book that is so named in the Bible, but to the public records of that time. The writer of Chronicles recorded not only genealogies but facts of Jewish history. Here he records the fact that “Judah was carried away captive to Babylon because of their unfaithfulness” (v. 1). In verse two, the reference to “the first inhabitants who dwelt in their possessions” is a reference to those who returned from captivity to restore the walls, city, and temple of Jerusalem. Since we know Judah was in captivity to Babylon for 70 years, we know 70 years passed between the events recorded in 1 Chronicles 9:1 and 9:2. The *possessions* mentioned in verse two are the lands first allotted to the tribes in the days of Joshua just after Israel, as one nation, crossed the Jordan River to possess them. This land was now going to once again be rich and fertile because, due to God’s disciplining of His people, the land was now fully rested after 70 years of forced “Sabbaths.” The *people* who returned are now referred to as “Israelites” (v. 2). The “Romans 8:28” blessing that came from the Babylonian captivity was that God’s people were now, once again, one nation and no longer a divided kingdom and people!

Prayer Emphasis: **Look** for God’s hand of blessing in everything that happens. **Remember** we may have to wait a while to clearly see what God is doing in the situations and circumstances of our lives.

Day 17: 1 Chronicles 9:23-44

“For in this trusted office were four chief gatekeepers; they were Levites. And they had charge over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God. And they lodged all around the house of God because they had the responsibility, and they were in charge of opening it every morning.” (1 Chronicles 9:26-27)

Some Old Testament “Prodigals”

Luke 15 records the rebellion and return of a son who, after going away “to a far country” (Luke 15:13), “came to himself” (Luke 15:17) and went back home to his father. You know the story. This prodigal son’s homecoming was met by compassion and celebration. But do we know the rest of the story? What happened on the days that followed that celebration? Probably the same things that happened before the prodigal son left home. Work! I am sure that, when the father restored the young man to *sonship*, he also restored him to *service*! Such was the case with Israel. Today’s reading describes the work of the “gatekeepers” (9:17-27) and the responsibilities of other Levites who served in the temple area (9:28-44). Notice that the workers mentioned in verse 27 were given a “responsibility” that they were to do “every morning.” Hence, upon their return to Jerusalem, their *service* and their *schedule* now belonged to God. Look again at verses 28 through 32 and note that “some of them” did one thing while “some of them” did another. But they were all working for God in a specified area of responsibility – and quite happily so – I am sure!

Prayer Emphasis: Ask yourself a difficult question: “Is *my* service and schedule in the capable hands of God? Do we serve God how and when *we* say, or do we serve Him how and when *He* says? In other words, is our service to God based on *convenience* or *commitment*?”

Day 18: 1 Chronicles 10:1-11:5

“So Saul and his three sons died, and all his house died together.” (1 Chronicles 10:6)

A Tragic Story

The family of King Saul was mentioned in the last part of yesterday’s reading, and Saul’s father and sons were named in the 39th verse of chapter 10. So, a little history of Saul’s life and death is here entered into this genealogical and historical record of the nation of Israel. The fact that Saul’s sons died with him should serve as a sober reminder to every father (or parent) that what we do and how we live can have an enormous impact on the lives of our children! If you were asked why Saul died, you might say it was because he went to battle against the armies of the dreaded Philistines. However, the “cause of death” that is here entered into the public records of Israel gives a much more extensive explanation to Saul’s passing than that! Verses 13 and 14 of 1 Chronicles 10 clearly state, “So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the LORD, because he did not keep the word of the LORD, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance. But he did not inquire of the LORD; therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.” Parents, look carefully at those verses and underscore the pronouns that clearly state that Saul, and his sons, died because of “*his* unfaithfulness” and because “*he* did not keep the word of the LORD.” The verses go on to say, “*he* did not inquire of the LORD” and “*he* consulted a medium” instead of God!

Prayer Emphasis: Parents, **live** in such a faithful, obedient way that your family’s story will end in *triumph* and not *tragedy*! **Commit** to leading your children by example and let them see you putting God first in your life!

Day 19: 1 Chronicles 11:6-25

“Now these were the heads of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel.”
(1 Chronicles 11:10)

David’s “Mighty Men”

We first read about David’s mighty men in 2 Samuel 23 where we first find them referred to as “mighty men” and then having a list of their names. Verse 15 of today’s reading refers to these men as “chiefs” and also refers to them as “the thirty.” However, at the end of the full listing found in 2 Samuel, we are told there were “thirty-seven in all” (2 Samuel 23:39). There is no contradiction here because there is a simple explanation to why these men are referred to as “the thirty” in one place and said to have “thirty-seven in all” in another. Not all these men served at the same time, so over the course of the years, 37 different men were at some time a part of this exclusive fighting unit whose main charge was the protection and care of the king. You might want to take the time to read 2 Samuel 23 and review the stories of the individual exploits of some of these men while you are reading about them here in 1 Chronicles 11. I am sure there were many more stories that could have been told, but these are the ones the Holy Spirit has chosen to share with us. All of the stories about these men emphasize their courage and commitment to God and their king.

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that God is aware of every faithful *servant* as well as their faithful *service* for Him. **Seek** out a place of service within the church and faithfully **fulfill** those responsibilities. **Remember** that the measure of your *responsibility* is the measure of your *opportunity*.

Day 20: 1 Chronicles 11:26-47

“Also the mighty warriors were...” (1 Chronicles 11:26)

More About the “Mighty Men”

Although the listing of the names of these men here in 1 Chronicles refers to them as “mighty warriors,” a quick comparison of this list with the one found in 2 Samuel 23 will confirm that we are talking about the same group of men. Since Chronicles was written much later than Samuel, the listing of names found here is longer than the listing found there. I am not going to take the time to discuss all the differences in the two lists with you, but I will point out that one does not have to read far into the two lists to see that they are slightly different. In the listing of names found in 2 Samuel 23, you will find a man named “Elika the Harodite” (2 Samuel 23:25). His name is listed after that of “Shammah the Harodite” and just before “Helez the Paltite.” This man’s name is not included in the listing found here in 1 Chronicles 11 as it goes immediately from “Shammoth the Harorite” to “Helez the Pelonite” (11:27). I found it interesting that there were several men on the list that hailed from the same city, as well as at least four pairs of brothers (vs. 34, 44-46) that served in this honorable position. A sad note to both lists is that “Uriah the Hittite” appears in both places (2 Samuel 23:39 and 1 Chronicles 11:41). This man who is referred to as “your servant” to King David at least two times in 2 Samuel 11 is the same man that David had killed in battle to help cover up his sin with Bathsheba, Uriah’s wife.

Prayer Emphasis: As I have said before, God does not hide the warts and wrinkles of his children! **Realize** that any of us could fall into gross sin. **Be** faithful to reading and obeying God’s Word!

Day 21: 1 Chronicles 12:1-22

“Now these were the men who came to David at Ziklag while he was still a fugitive from Saul the son of Kish; and they were among the mighty men, helpers in the war,” (1 Chronicles 12:1)

“The Men Who Came to David”

I found it interesting that the Holy Spirit describes the warriors mentioned here in 1 Chronicles 12:1 as “men who came to David.” It does not appear that these men were recruited by anyone but God Himself! It is important to note that these men “came to David...while he was still a fugitive from Saul.” In other words, these men did not wait to choose sides after the battles had been fought and won. They made their choice to stand with David even when his small army was outnumbered by the heavily armed and highly skilled professional soldiers of Saul. But the Holy Spirit does not just tell us these men “came to David” without noting from where they “came.” The last part of verse two of our text informs us that these “men who came to David” came *from* Saul’s own family when it says, “They were of Benjamin, Saul’s brethren.” In 1 Samuel 27:1-8, we learn that Achish, King of Gath, who was a Philistine, gave the city of Ziklag to David for a residence for him and his men. You can also read more about David’s time in Ziklag in 1 Samuel 30. This all transpired during the time that David was hiding from Saul who was trying desperately to kill him. Obviously these men, like the soldiers of Saul, were highly skilled, trained warriors. It makes you wonder if some of them may have, at some time, actually fought for Saul with David, when he was himself a part of Saul’s army.

Prayer Emphasis: Trust God to supply you with whatever you need to accomplish whatever He has asked you to do! **Refuse** to underestimate what God can do or be surprised at how He goes about doing it!

Day 22: 1 Chronicles 12:23-40

“All these men of war, who could keep ranks, came to Hebron with a loyal heart, to make David king over all Israel; and all the rest of Israel were of one mind to make David king.” (1 Chronicles 12:38)

“A Loyal Heart”

In today’s verses, we read about some of the men who came to join David’s army at Hebron. Verse 23 declares that their purpose was “to turn over the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the LORD.” Verse 29 reminds us that some of the men who came to David’s side were “relatives of Saul” who joined forces with David even though “the greatest part of them had remained loyal to the house of Saul.” Is it any wonder that God would tell us that “all these men” had within them “a loyal heart”? But we also learn at least three other important things about these men in today’s verses – things that contributed to their having such loyal hearts. First, we are told these men “had understanding of the times” (v. 32). By this, we understand that they knew Saul’s time was up, and God now desired to set David over His people, Israel. Second, we are told these men were “stouthearted” (v. 33). Some translations state that these men were “not of double heart,” or they had “undivided loyalty,” or they “served with a singleness of purpose.” Then, we are told twice that these men “could keep ranks” (vs. 33, 38). This implies they were the kind of men who did not break and run in the heat of battle.

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to give you a loyal heart that will keep you exactly where you need to be when the enemy comes against you. **Focus** on always being loyal to God in all situations.

Day 23: 1 Chronicles 13:1-14:17

“Then David consulted with the captains...and with every leader.” (1 Chronicles 13:1)

A Procedural Error

God put it in David’s heart to bring the Ark back to a central place among God’s people. The Ark was a wooden chest overlaid with gold that God instructed Moses to make for the Tabernacle some 400 years before David’s time. Unfortunately, this precious piece of furniture, which was designed to remind Israel of God’s presence, had fallen into the hands of the Philistines. The Philistines, after experiencing some chastisement from God, decided to return the Ark to Israel. To do so, they took “the ark of the LORD and set it on a cart” (1 Samuel 6:8) and sent it to “the house of Abinadab” (1 Samuel 7:1). Now God was seemingly leading David to return the Ark to its rightful home. There was certainly nothing wrong with what David felt led to do – but there was definitely something wrong with the way he chose to do it! While we are told “David consulted” with his leaders, we read nothing about David consulting with God or God’s Word! After the Ark was built, God gave Moses some extremely specific instructions about how it was to be transported (see Exodus 25:14). David did not decide to move the ark in the manner that God had prescribed. Instead, if you will compare 1 Samuel 6:3 with 1 Chronicles 13:7, you will see he attempted to move the Ark in the same way the Philistines, God’s sworn enemies, had moved it!

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that God’s work must be done in God’s way! **Refuse** to secularize the church by replacing ministry with marketing or compassion with commercialism. **Believe** the Bible is God’s Operations Manual for His church!

Day 24: 1 Chronicles 15:1-29

“For because you did not do it the first time, the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order.” (1 Chronicles 15:13)

A Sin of Omission

One might have thought I only assumed David had not consulted God before his first attempt to return the Ark to its proper place in Israel. Here, in today’s focus verse, we read where David admitted he had forgotten to “consult Him” (God) about the “proper” way to transport it. The “we” in this verse is a clear indication that none of the “captains” or “leaders” (13:1) were any more aware of the “proper order” for moving the Ark than David. In today’s verses, it is apparent that David had finally done his homework. He now knew *who* was supposed to carry the Ark and *how* they were supposed to do it! He obviously found out about the *who* in Numbers 4:15 and the *how* in Exodus 25:14! The phrase “because you did not do it” (v. 13) was not intended to place the blame on anyone, but to admit that he sent the wrong people to accomplish the task of moving the Ark. Now David is clear about the proper procedure. He states, “No one may carry the ark of God but the Levites, for the LORD has chosen them to carry the ark of God” (v. 2), and to carry it in the way “Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD” (v. 15).

Prayer Emphasis: Realize it is sometimes counterproductive if we attempt to do the right things in a wrong way. **Recognize** the value of knowing God’s Word and applying it to our every practice and procedure. **Consult** with God first – and follow His prescribed plan for service.

Day 25: 1 Chronicles 16:1-22

“On that day David first delivered this psalm into the hand of Asaph and his brethren, to thank the LORD:” (1 Chronicles 16:7)

A Song of Praise

The “that day” referenced in our focus verse is the day “they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it” (v. 1). The statement, “set it in the midst of the tabernacle,” implies that the Tabernacle was literally built around the Ark. Hence, it was more about the Ark than it was an architectural structure. “On that day David first delivered this psalm into the hand of Asaph,” one of the music directors who served in the Tabernacle. Most of this psalm is found in the Book of Psalms, in Psalm 105, but it was “first” used and sang on this incredibly special day in the life of Israel. This psalm finds those who sing it first *speaking to God*: “Oh, give thanks to the LORD” (v. 8) and “Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him” (v. 9). Then it finds those who sing it *speaking to others*: “Make known His deeds among the peoples” (v. 8). And it finds its singers *speaking to themselves* when they were reminded to “glory in His holy name,” “seek the LORD and His strength,” and “remember His marvelous works which He has done” as well as “His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth” (vs. 10-12). A famous preacher from the past, Charles Spurgeon, once said, “If we talked more of *God’s* wondrous works, we should be free from talking of *other people’s* works.”

Prayer Emphasis: Bring God up in a conversation today and brag about how good He has been to you! **Praise Him** *privately* in your prayer time and *publicly* as you go about your daily responsibilities.

Day 26: 1 Chronicles 16:23-43

“Sing to the LORD, all the earth; proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples.” (1 Chronicles 16:23-24)

“Declare His Glory”

Today’s focus verses serve as another reminder that we are to often engage in conversation with God, and with others as well! To others, we are to “proclaim the good news of His salvation day to day” and to “declare His glory among the nations.” The idea of proclaiming God’s “good news” on a “day-to-day” basis reminds me of the New Testament command in Hebrews 3:13 to “exhort one another daily.” The Greek word that is translated “exhort” here is often translated “encourage” in other translations of the Bible. I can think of nothing more encouraging than a daily dose of “the good news.” Later, in Hebrews 10:25, we are told to be “exhorting one another, and so much the more as you (we) see the Day approaching.” These two verses are a big part of the reason that I take the time to write these devotionals. It is my heart’s desire to encourage believers and to do so on a daily basis. That is also partly the reason one of our church website addresses is the365church.com. It is my paramount and consuming desire to see our church sending forth the message of God’s love on a daily basis. The word that is translated “declare” in the first focus verse is translated “count” in the first place it is found in the Bible, where God told Abraham to “Look now toward heaven, and *count* the stars” (Genesis 15:5). Perhaps God is suggesting that we “count,” or make a list “among the nations,” of all the reasons we should be glorifying Him.

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that one of the purposes for our singing is to **proclaim** God’s good news to one another and the world, and to **declare** his glory and wonders to all the peoples of the earth.

Day 27: 1 Chronicles 17:1-27

“And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled, when you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you...He shall build Me a house...” (1 Chronicles 17:11-12)

A “House” for God

Today’s chapter begins with David’s realization that he lived “in a house of cedar” while “the ark of the covenant” sat in a tent (v. 1). Cedar was a very prestigious and expensive wood and only the most affluent people could afford a house like the one in which David lived. While David lived in a very nice house, God’s Ark, which was a representation of His presence, still remained in a temporary structure. At first, Nathan seemed to be in full agreement with David about his building a permanent place to house the Ark (v.2). However, God spoke to Nathan, saying, “Go and tell My servant David... You shall not build Me a house to dwell in” (vs. 3-4). I had never really thought about it, but God’s comment that He had “gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another” caused me to realize that Israel was not still meeting in the same Tabernacle that Moses first constructed at Mount Sinai approximately 500 years earlier. God did tell David that when his time as king was fulfilled and he had gone “to be with (his) fathers,” that David’s son, Solomon, would “build Me a house” (vs. 11-12). Although Solomon is not mentioned by name in this chapter, we know it was Solomon who was used to build a house (the Temple) for God.

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that we, too, may be guilty of putting our own needs and desires ahead of those of God. **Refuse** to be someone who can afford many luxuries in life but argue that they cannot afford to give God that which is rightfully His.

Day 28: 1 Chronicles 18:1-17

“...And the LORD preserved David wherever he went. So David reigned over all Israel, and administered judgment and justice to all his people.” (1 Chronicles 18:13b-14)

“The LORD Preserved David”

The opening verse of today’s reading contains information that clearly marks that things were now different for the nation of Israel. If you recall, when David was a young man, the Philistines were attacking Israel (see 1 Samuel 17). Now we see a complete reversal. In verse one, we are told that “David attacked the Philistines” and “subdued them” and he even “took Gath.” Since Gath was one of the five major cities of the Philistines, and since it sat on the border between their two nations, the taking of Gath represented freedom from fear and a great step of faith. Verses two through 13 describe some of the other military exploits of David and his faithful army. If we were able to ask David how he accomplished such a reversal in Israel’s long-standing battles with their enemies, he might say something like, “The LORD preserved (me) wherever (I) went” (v. 13). Realizing that everything he had was literally a gift of God’s love, David obviously desired to live a godly life before his people. Therefore, as he “reigned over all Israel,” he “administered judgment and justice to all his people” (v. 14). That is probably the main reason that God’s people still regard David as their greatest king ever.

Prayer Emphasis: Believe that God can be with you and preserve you in the many struggles that you will encounter along life’s way. **Trust** God to constantly watch over you. **Ask** God to give you wisdom in all your relationships and dealings with others.

Day 29: 1 Chronicles 19:1-20:8

“Then David said, ‘I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me...’” (1 Chronicles 19:2)

“Kindness”

I have often wondered if the bitter memories of his time served under cruel King Saul inspired David to be different in his dealings with people. People often allow bad memories or tragic past experiences to make them *bitter* people. Here, we find David allowing such experiences to make him a *better* person. I have repeated some wise words that I once heard spoken: “Trouble will make you bitter, or better, but it never leaves you just like it found you.” It might be difficult to imagine that the same man who could have such military prowess as that described in our previous chapter could be the kind of man who would reach out to others in such a compassionate way as that described in today’s chapter. His decision to “show kindness” to the “son of Nahash” was based on the memory of a time when Nahash had “showed kindness” to him (David). We have often heard about people who have “selective memory.” By that, we usually mean that such people have the ability to remember and retrieve certain facts, or parts of the story, while conveniently forgetting others. In college, I loved to take some elective courses. Elective courses were taken by *choice* and not by *compulsion*. In the case of King David, he could have easily chosen to remember and model the life of those who treated him wrongfully, such as King Saul, or he could choose to pattern his life after better models, such as Nahash. We all make the same kind of choices every day of our lives. Choose wisely.

Prayer Emphasis: Show kindness to someone today. **Remember** that God chose to “show the exceeding riches of His grace in His *kindness* toward us in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:7). **Model** that! **Practice** kindness – *verbally* and *visibly* – to others. **Allow** good role models to teach you how to love others.

Day 30: 1 Chronicles 21:1-30

“Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.” (1 Chronicles 21:1)

“Satan”

It might surprise you, but today’s focus verse is the first place in the Bible where the devil is referred to by the name “Satan.” After this, we will see our evil adversary called by this name another 52 times in most translations of the Bible. However, after today’s verse, he is not called by this name again until we get to the Book of Job. There, in the first two chapters of that book, we find Satan busy in his efforts to destroy a good man and his testimony as he is mentioned in that section of the Scriptures 14 times! The majority of the mentions of the devil by this name are found in the New Testament, and it is interesting to note that no one referred to the devil by this name more often than Jesus. He called His enemy by this name 17 times – 12 times in the gospels, once in Acts, and four times in The Revelation. A quick review of Exodus 30:12 will reveal that God warned Moses that there was a right way and a wrong way to take a census, and the results of taking a census in the wrong way – a way or time not directed by God – would bring disastrous results. Verse seven of today’s chapter clearly reveals that David was moved to take a census at the wrong time because we are told that “God was displeased with this thing; therefore He struck Israel.”

Prayer Emphasis: See Satan for what he is! Jesus said, “there is *no truth* in him...he is a *liar*” (John 8:44). **Heed** Jesus’ warning that Satan “does not come except to steal, kill, and destroy” (John 10:10).

Day 31: 1 Chronicles 22:1-19

“Now David said, ‘Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent...I will now make preparation for it.’” (1 Chronicles 22:5)

“Exceedingly Magnificent”

The words that are translated “exceedingly magnificent” in the NKJV are translated “great and famous” or “of great magnificence” in other translations. My favorite translation of the original language here is in the Common English Bible, where it reads “beyond compare.” And that really makes all the sense in the world, doesn’t it? Since God’s house was to represent God’s home on earth, it should be a little bit like “heaven on earth”! Even though David was not going to be the one who would build the Temple, I can imagine him having many conversations with young Solomon about how it should be built. And, beyond that, David began to make some of the necessary arrangements and gather some of the necessary materials to assist Solomon in that magnificent work. He first sent out a command “to gather the aliens who were in the land of Israel” so they could meet the enormous labor requirement for such a task. After that, he then “appointed masons to cut hewn stones to build the house of God” (v. 2). Some of the materials that he gathered included “iron...for the nails” and “bronze” for the hinges on the doors (v.3). Then, “from Tyre,” David ordered “much cedar wood” (v. 4). “Then he called for his son” (v. 6) and told him about God saying to him, “Behold a son shall be born to you...His name shall be Solomon...He shall build a house for My name” (vs. 7-10).

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that we do not have to be a part of a ministry to **help** and **encourage** those that are! **Reach out** to someone who is busy for God and **ask** them if there is any way that you can help them.

Day 32: 1 Chronicles 23:1-32

“So when David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel. And he gathered together all the leaders of Israel, with the priests and the Levites.” (1 Chronicles 23:1-2)

King Solomon

Typically, a king ruled until the time of his death and then his firstborn son would follow him on the throne. In David’s case, “he made his son Solomon king over Israel” before his death. The decision to do that may have been because David had other sons who he knew might try to lay claim to the throne after he was gone. And don’t forget, we saw in yesterday’s reading that “the word of the LORD” (22:8) had come to David telling him that Solomon was to be king after him. In 1 Kings 1, we are told that Adonijah was one of David’s sons, and in that chapter, we see how David involved many people in the process of making sure that Solomon, and not Adonijah, followed him on the throne. After making Solomon’s reign secure, David returned immediately to the work of recruiting workers to help Solomon with “the work of the house of the LORD” (v. 4) by gathering “together all the leaders of Israel, with the priests and the Levites” (v. 2). The “work of the house of the LORD” mentioned here is not the building of the Temple but the fulfilling of the “work” that was to be done within it after it was built. This chapter outlines some of the duties and responsibilities of the Levites, while verse 28 pretty much sums up their purpose when it says, “their duty was to help the sons of Aaron (the priests) in the service of the house of the LORD.”

Prayer Emphasis: Ask yourself this question: “What can I do to help those who serve in our church?” **Express** love and appreciation to someone who works in some ministry in the church today.

Day 33: 1 Chronicles 24:1-31

“Now these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron. The sons of Aaron were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. And Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children; therefore Eleazar and Ithamar ministered as priests.” (1 Chronicles 24:1-2)

A Solemn Reminder

The sad story of Nadab and Abihu is recorded for us in Leviticus 10:1-2 where we are told “fire went out from the LORD and devoured them” after they “offered profane fire before the LORD.” Perhaps this sad story is again mentioned here in the record that assigns different duties to different divisions of the priests so they would be reminded that God is always watching and He had a zero-tolerance policy on priestly disobedience! Because the priests were assigned to their different divisions and duties “by lot,” all the groupings would be treated equally – or “one group as another” (v. 5). The words “the schedule of their service” (v. 3) implies that these men had regular duties and they were assigned scheduled shifts where they would serve in their assigned capacities. Verse four tells us that there were “sixteen” divisions made among “the sons of Eleazar” and “eight” divisions made up from “the sons of Ithamar.” As such, there were 24 divisions in all. Since the Jewish Temple operated on a lunar calendar of 48 weeks, each division of the priests would be called upon to serve two full weeks during the course of each year. Apparently, there was no “seniority” among these priests because we read in verse 31 that “the chief fathers did just as their younger brethren.”

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that no believer will ever retire from being a servant of God. **Find** a role to play in the work of the church and actually **schedule** some of your time and energy for the service of God.

Day 34: 1 Chronicles 25:1-31

“Moreover David...separated for the service some of the sons of Asaph, of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals.” (1 Chronicles 25:1)

Musicians

In our past two chapters of 1 Chronicles, we have read about the men who were set aside to serve God in the Temple as priests and Levites. In today’s chapter, we are provided with a record of those who served in the Temple services through their musical gifts and abilities. In 1 Chronicles 23:5, we were told there were “four thousand” who “praised the LORD with musical instruments” and their purpose was not for entertainment but “for giving praise.” The word that is translated “prophesy” in today’s focus verse means “to act or speak under the influence and leadership of the Holy Spirit.” It is the same word that is used throughout the Old Testament to refer to the work that men like Samuel, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel did in speaking boldly for God. The thought that God would use such a word to describe the work of musicians implies that the music these men composed and performed was not just from natural talent but by the inspiration and aid of the Holy Spirit. At the least, we must consider that this word was used so we would know that these musicians were doing a spiritual service by using their spiritual gifts to bring praise to God.

Prayer Emphasis: Express appreciation to some of those who serve our church through the music ministry. **Allow** your spirit to connect with God’s as we lift our Lord’s name in praise.

Day 35: 1 Chronicles 26:1-19

“Among these were the divisions of the gatekeepers, among the chief men, having duties just like their brethren, to serve in the house of the LORD.” (1 Chronicles 26:12)

“The Gatekeepers”

One cannot help but note how much conversation there is about “security” in our churches these days. However, we learn from today’s Scripture reading that such services are not new to the house of God. The “gatekeepers” were Levites who were assigned to the various entrances to the Temple to make sure that only those who should enter the Temple were allowed access to it. God certainly gives His divine endorsement to these men and their service when He refers to them as “men of great ability” (v. 6), “able men” (vs. 7, 9), and “able men with strength for the work” (v. 8). Then, in today’s focus verse, God refers to them as “chief men.” The statement that they had “duties just like their brethren” tells us that this work of security was held in the same esteem as the various ministries of the other Levites. God clearly states that these men were selected “to serve in the house of the LORD.” Some translations use the word “minister” instead of “serve” in this verse. The word used here to describe the work of the “gatekeepers” is the same word that was used in 1 Chronicles 16:4 to describe the work of the “Levites” who were chosen “to *minister* before the ark of the LORD” or the priests in 1 Chronicles 23:13 who were to “burn incense before the LORD, to *minister* to Him.” In both of those verses, the Hebrew word that is translated “minister” is the same word that is translated “serve” in the description of the gatekeepers.

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that every work of service to God is holy and important to Him. Consider becoming a part of our team that works at our church entrances either as *greeters* or *gatekeepers*.

Day 36: 1 Chronicles 26:20-27:15

“Of the Levites, Ahijah was over the treasuries of the house of God and over the treasuries of the dedicated things.” (1 Chronicles 26:20)

Stewards and Soldiers

The last half of chapter 26 and the first half of chapter 27 describe some other people who served God and His house in diverse ways. Today’s devotional will provide a brief discussion of those mentioned in chapter 26 who were “over the treasuries of the house of God” (26:20) and those who “served the king in every matter of the military divisions” (27:1). It is clear that one of the things David was directed by God to do was to assign certain Levites to oversee the care of the funds that were to come in for the building and eventual operation of the Temple. Among the funds that these people were “over” was the regular tithes and offerings of the people as well as “the spoils won in battles” that were to be “dedicated to maintain the house of the LORD” (v. 27). For clarification’s sake, I will tell you that there are nine men named “Ahijah” mentioned in the Bible, but this is the only reference to this man who was a Levite who led the “Stewardship Team” at the time of the building of the Temple. The “divisions” of David’s army each had “twenty-four thousand” men, and each of these divisions “came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year” (27:1). Since verses two through 15 provide the names of the leaders of the divisions who served in “the first month” (v. 3) through “the twelfth month” (v. 15), we understand that each division of the army served on active duty at least one month each year.

Prayer Emphasis: Express your love and appreciation for those who do such a wonderful job in the oversight of our church funds and take every opportunity to **thank** those who serve in our military.

Day 37: 1 Chronicles 27:16-34

“Furthermore, over the tribes of Israel...” (1 Chronicles 27:16)

Other Tribal Leaders

After discussing the many roles and responsibilities of the priests and the Levites, God went on to speak about those who were not of the tribe of Levi who were to also play important roles in the lives of God’s people. Some of the different leadership positions mentioned are those who were over “the storehouses in the field” (v.25) and “those who did the work of the field for tilling the ground” (v. 26). As you read through this list of names and responsibilities, it might make you think about the many counselors and advisors that serve our president today. It seems like most everything is mentioned from the leader of the Department of Agriculture to the Leader of the National Defense when you read about “Joab” who was “the general of the king’s army” mentioned in verse 34. You might say the priests and Levites served as leaders in the spiritual service of Israel while the other tribes, and their leaders, served in the civil service of the nation. However, it certainly does not appear that God expected anything less from those who served in the *pew* than He did from those that served in the *pulpit*. I have long been an advocate of something that I learned from the late Dr. Bob Jones. He once said, “all ground is holy ground” and that “every bush is a burning bush.” In other words, he was saying that one certainly does not have to be in “the ministry” to be a true “minister.”

Prayer Emphasis: Believe that what you do is important to God, and therefore, it is important for the well-being of our church and society. **Read** and **heed** the advice of Colossians 3:23: “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.”

Day 38: 1 Chronicles 28:1-13

“...Solomon, know...God...and serve Him with a loyal heart and...a willing mind...seek Him...consider now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house... be strong, and do it.” (1 Chronicles 28:9-10)

Some Final Advice

The fact that the Holy Spirit includes the statement that “King David rose to his feet” (v. 2) indicates this was an act of worship not easily accomplished by a man of David’s years. 1 Kings 1:1 tells us that “King David was old” and “advanced in years” at the time he surrendered the throne of Israel to Solomon. The fact that David mentioned Solomon by name three times in this brief speech (vs. 5, 6, 9) indicates that David wanted all of the people to know that God had told him that Solomon was to now become the king of Israel – and not any other son of David. As such, in this same speech, David begins to speak directly to Solomon with an offering of some final advice. The phrase “As for you, my son Solomon” (v. 9) reveals David’s intent for everyone, including Solomon, to know to whom he was speaking. In some of his final words, David encouraged his son to “know” God and to “serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind.” Solomon was then encouraged to “seek” God with an added promise that, if he did so, God would “be found” by him. Surely David was speaking from personal experience here. In verse 10, he reminded Solomon to “consider” what God had called him to do and to simply “be strong” and “do it.”

Prayer Emphasis: Read again the advice given to Solomon in our focus verse and **realize** that this same advice should apply to anyone who serves God today - especially the charge to “do it”!

Day 39: 1 Chronicles 28:14-29:9

“Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the LORD; and King David also rejoiced greatly.” (1 Chronicles 29:9)

Cheerful Givers

I remember reading through my New Testament for the first time as a young Christian and underlining these words written by the Apostle Paul: *“I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation”* (2 Corinthians 7:4). I immediately longed to have that kind of joy – joy that could not be stopped by trials, troubles, or tribulations. Over the years, I have discovered three very consistent sources of that kind of Christian joy. The first is *a right relationship with God*. Romans 15:13 reads, “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.” The second is *a right relationship with God’s Word*. Jeremiah said to God, “Your words were found, and I ate them, and *Your word* was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart” (Jeremiah 15:16). Then, at some later time, I learned about the joy that is to be found in *a right relationship in giving*. Sometime after I read that “God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7), I came across this story from the life of David and his efforts to gather the necessary materials to build the Temple for God. You cannot help but notice that it was only when the people gave “willingly” that both they and their spiritual leaders “rejoiced.”

Prayer Emphasis: Become the kind of believer who thinks “I get to give” rather than “I’ve got to give”! **Look** back at 28:9 and **see** where David urged Solomon to “serve Him (God) with a loyal heart” and then **look** again at our focus verse to see that joyful giving is one of the ways that a loyal heart serves God.

Day 40: 1 Chronicles 29:10-30

“But who am I...who are my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly...” (1 Chronicles 29:14).

David’s Praise

Yesterday’s focus verse told us that “King David...rejoiced greatly” after seeing his people give generously to God from “loyal” and willing hearts. 1 Chronicles 29:10-15 contain some of the words spoken by David during that time of rejoicing. Jesus would eventually express what David must have understood on this day when He said, “For where your treasure is, *there* your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21). Seeing his people give so “willingly” to the Temple project must have convinced David that the hearts of his people were in full support of that great endeavor. Generous giving did at least three things for David. First, *it led him to exalt God*. You cannot read verses 10-11 without noticing that David referred to God as “our Father” (v. 10) and then spoke of the “greatness,” “glory,” “and the majesty” of God (v. 11). Then, in verses 12-13, we see that generous giving *led David to express thanks*. Since everything they had to give came from God’s “hand” (v. 12), David had to bow his head before his people and say, “we thank You” (v. 13) to God. Finally, *generous giving led David to experience humility*. In verses 14 and 15, David recognized how small he and his people were before God and was led to say to God, “all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You” (v. 14). He humbly acknowledged that, without God, the days of Israel “on earth” would be “as a shadow, and without hope” (v. 15).

Prayer Emphasis: Express some serious and sincere appreciation to God today! **Notice** that David praised and thanked God *privately, publicly, and personally*. **Seek** to do the same! If we can minister to you, please **contact** me at gary@seminolebc.com or call Seminole Baptist Church at 850-562-8069.