

April 18

1 Chronicles 26-29

The first thing we need to see about chapters 28 & 29 is that the building of the temple was a team effort between David the father and Solomon the son. God prevented David from building the temple because he was a man of war, with blood on his hands -- that task was to fall to Solomon. But Solomon was "young and inexperienced," so the task of planning the temple fell to David. There is no hint in the text that God's unwillingness to allow David to build His house is in anyway a repudiation of the king or a rebuke to him. What we do come away with is a sense that God raises up different people to accomplish different tasks. David was to conquer and plan; Solomon was to build. Both were part of God's purpose. Both were used by God to achieve His ends. This is a brilliant example of multiple generations being faithful to the same vision in order to do what he wants to in this world.

One of the reasons for God's determination that the temple should not be built until the reign of Solomon is clearly connected to the long recognized goal of establishing the Israelites in the Promised Land and giving them "rest." The theme of a "Sabbath rest" that provides opportunity for a special time of worship and enjoyment of the Lord is a very important one in Scripture. We discovered it in the creation account; we saw it in the Mosaic Law; we'll encounter it in the Book of Hebrews. In the reign of David, God brought the enemies of Israel into subjection and gave His people rest. In the reign of Solomon, the focus turned toward the temple and it should have also turned to worship.

It is quite clear from the Scripture we read that Solomon was not only David's choice to succeed him, he was God's choice. After David and Solomon, not one of the kings of Judah or Israel is ever again identified as God's "choice."

God encouraged him in the same way that God encouraged Joshua when Joshua took charge. Notice the verse 1 Chronicles 28:20, "Be strong and courageous and do the work, do not be afraid and do not be discouraged for the Lord God my God is with you". Those of you that know your Bibles well will realize that it resonates very clearly with the same thing God said to Joshua.

Be strong and courageous, it is the promise that God will be with you and if you are a new leader, you can take that promise to the bank for what God has called you to do. The next thing that is worth noticing is David's fundraising motto. Did you know that 1 Corinthians 29 is a passage very often used by Christians in fund raising campaigns particularly if you want to raise a lot of money for a building and that is what David is doing, he is raising funds for the temple. He establishes a pattern that is a very healthy fund raising pattern. David, himself the leader, went first and he brought a radical, sacrificial gift. Then he invited the leaders by the thousands to

come. Then he invited the leaders of hundreds to come and finally he invited the general population to come. Now the result was absolutely enormous because each group was inspired by what the last group gave and they themselves gave generously. Now it was the wealthiest who gave first, the King, and the broadest spectrum of people who gave last, but every single group gave a generous amount towards the temple and in so doing they built a mountain of resources. Now the temple did not last forever but it did last for a couple of hundred years and it was awesome for all to see. It gave a sense of God's presence among his people and it served as a center of worship for many generations. It was one generation's generosity that made it possible for all of the other generations to experience this. That is an awful lot like people who sacrifice today for a capital campaign when you give with faithfulness towards Gods amazing things happen for your generation and for the next generation. Leaders go first just like we did when we had our Double Your Impact campaign. I went right off the top, and then our elders gave, our core group gave and then finally the general population gave, each person followed suit. The generosity that was poured out has been tremendous and the giving continues on and it is a beautiful thing and here is what happens when you do this lost people get found. Kids grow up in the way of the Lord. The marginalized get justice. The uneducated get trained. The poor get Good News, the thirsty get drink, the hungry get food, and people in jail get visited. Marriages get healed and love is poured out world-wide and that is just about as good as getting a fresh temple.

I'm so glad we get to be a part of this generation and this generation's generosity. Well this has been Mark Ashton hoping that God's blessings are poured out on you as you are generous with all that he has given you. God bless you.