



Bible Study Series:

1 Chronicles



Our Mission:

*To glorify God together in response to his grace
by making disciples of Jesus Christ*

About These Studies

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Study 1: “The People of the Kingdom” (1 Chronicles 1:1-9:34)

Context

Originally 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles was one book and was split into two during the time that the Septuagint (earliest extant Greek translation) was written. At first glance we might think that 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles are merely extended footnotes to Samuel and Kings. Even the authors of the Septuagint gave the book the title “things left out” (paraleipomena). However, this scripture is also part of God’s word and therefore is useful for instructing us and revealing God’s will for us.

The book of Chronicles was written around 200 years after the book of Kings and was written after the Israelites returned from the Exile. In the original Jewish canon, Chronicles was the last book and it recaps the history of the Israelites but with the addition of some portions that are explained in more detail while intentionally avoiding others. Looking out for these additions and omissions may help us to see the author’s intention in writing the book of Chronicles.

This book was written after the return of the Israelites from the exile. Discuss as a group and highlight the main events leading up to their return.

Digging in

Skim through 1 Chronicles 1:1-9:34

1. What do you notice about the genealogy? What catches your attention?

-Discuss anything that people bring up, ok to say “that is interesting, I am not sure myself”

-Maybe talk about how many names there are, maybe draw a contrast to the Book of Life of the Lamb and how we would pore through that book to see if our name is there to see how to God everyone is remembered

2. Suggest a “title” or a short summary for these passages

Passage	Title/Summary
1:1-54	E.g: The generation from Adam to Esau
2:1-2	Sons of Israel
2:3-4:23	Sons of Judah
4:24-43	Ten Tribes: Simeon
5:1-26	Ten Tribes: Reuben
6:1-81	Tribe of Levi - religious duties (musicians, high priests, city set aside for them)
7:1-40	The Northern Tribes
8:1-40	Tribe of Benjamin (Additional info)
9:1-34	Genealogy of the people after returning from the exile

3. What significance do you think can be gleaned from the fact that this section starts with Adam and ends with the genealogy of the returned exiles in Chapter 9?

-Problem: Sin (through Adam), we see the problems through the people listed and the faithfulness of God despite that, the exile is also sin

- Points to the hope of returning back to the Garden foreshadowed in the return to the Promise Kingdom despite sinfulness

4. Do you think the Chronicler has a theological motivation for providing this genealogy? Discuss.

- Showing that God keeps His promises, God forgives sins and restores people, God is with Israel, God judges and God keeps a remnant

5. Chapters 1-3 starts off with Adam then narrows down to the middle east and then to the line of Judah and eventually David. What could we surmise from that on what the author is trying to show about God's plans for the world?

-God's plan to deal with Adam's sin is to ultimately come into focus through one people in a specific place and is narrowed down to one king though David. Also, Kingship is God's solution to people (can discuss Federal Headship as well)

6. Check Chapters 2-8 and identify the names of the tribes of Israel and compare it against 2:1, which ones are missing? What can it mean that some tribes are missing from the list? (Judges 18:30-31, Judges 18, 1 Kings 12:29-30, 2 Chronicles 11:14-15;13:8-12)

-Dan and Zebulun is missing. We can imply that this was intentional. The passages listed shows that Dan led the 10 tribes into idolatry and that may be why they were not listed. Note also that the listing of the tribes is not the same as 2:1 (genetic link to Israel) and is more a picture of receiving the promises of the land (so faithfulness is what makes you count as a recipient)

-Reminded of Judas, one of the 12 but lost and not counted

-No idea why Zebulun is also missing, perhaps as a consequence of what Dan did

7. Look at the 144,000 gathered in Revelation 7 and what does it show about God's continuing work until today?

-Can discuss what you think the 144k is referring to. Shows that God's ultimate plan for his people goes beyond the current all the way to the end. He is faithful

-Dan is missing, unfaithfulness is serious and salvation isn't genetic

-If we see the fullness of God's people as seen in the 144k then we too are grafted in into that people, so we too are included in the ultimate name list :)

8. How do we see the hope that Israel has in God's promises at this point of the narrative ultimately fulfilled? How do they respond to it?

-In Christ, as foreshadowed by emphasis on Daniel in 1 Chronicles.

-They respond poorly and crucify him, need to come by faith for salvation. Rejection of Christ will still lead to being cast off and name removed from the Book of Life (like Dan's tribe)

9. What do you think Question 7 and 8 tell us about God's promises and our responsibility?

-God keeps his promises but we are called to respond as well, it's not an empty calling but one which is tied in to obedience in response (but not perfection in response)

-So we trust God and seek to respond rightly in light of his promises to us and us being called His people

Application

10. Can you see that God is portrayed as one who keeps His promises and can be trusted even when things looks bad? What does this mean to you?

-Look for areas that people find that is hard to trust God and see if we can encourage everyone to keep on trusting in God despite current circumstances

11. What promises of God that you find difficult to trust? Why is it difficult?

-Can be difficult for some people to really believe in assurance of salvation or promise of a perfect restored new body etc.

12. Do we live in obedience to God knowing that His promises can be trusted? What areas are difficult to obey?

13. What would we expect from our response to God based on what we see in the genealogy? What warning should we heed?

-Be obedient and don't take your faith for granted. Flee temptation and work on trusting in God more and more

14. **Smaller groups:** In response to Question 14, would there be areas that you would like help with? Close with prayer.

Study 2: “The Fall of Saul and the Ascension of David”

(1 Chronicles 9:35-11:9)

Getting started

1. Discuss with each other some examples of the rise and fall of famous kings/queens that we have known throughout history and what was the reason for their fall from power?

Suggest several examples – Caesar, Last emperor of China, European kings/queens, or Malacca sultanate. Reasons could be corruption, assassination, people revolution, etc. The idea is to highlight at the end of the study how the fall of Saul’s dynasty was essentially caused by the larger issue of Saul’s personal disobedience to God rather than external factors such as his poor military strategy or eventual suicide.

Context

Last week, we were introduced to the various genealogies of Israel – we saw that some tribes received more attention, and some were not mentioned at all. Today, we are going to focus more closely on two records of the kings of Israel’s, namely Saul and David.

Digging In

Read 1 Chronicles 9:35-9:44

2. There is a repetition of Saul’s genealogy (8:1-40) in Chapter 9:35-9:44. What is familiar and different about the two passages? Why do you think the Chronicler has repeated Saul’s genealogy?

In Chapter 8, the focus was on the tribe of Benjamin, starting from Benjamin himself and tracing down to Saul and his descendants. However, in Chapter 9, the focus was from Jeiel onwards (see 8:29 onwards) and other information such as that they were mighty men of war and such were also no longer mentioned. While we can’t be sure what the Chronicler meant by doing so, it seems that the Chronicler is repeating Saul’s genealogy as a bridge to Chapter 10 which introduces the last moments of Saul’s life.

Read 1 Chronicles 10:1-14

3. What happened to Saul and his sons in this passage?

Saul was leading the Israelites to launch a charge against the Philistines at Mount Gilboa. They were subsequently defeated by the Philistines. Saul’s sons, Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchi-shua were killed by the Philistines. Saul and his armour-bearer committed suicide. The Philistines decapitated Saul and paraded his head at their temple. Israel was thoroughly humiliated by the Philistines with their King’s body being mutilated and exhibited.

4. What were the reasons that the Chronicler had highlighted for the death of Saul? (cf. 1 Samuel 13:8-14; 1 Samuel 28)

Breach of faith, failure to keep the command of the Lord, seeking guidance from a medium – the Chronicler could possibly highlight them as a general statement or summary of Saul's reign which was not one that is approved by God. Saul did many other things in open disobedience to God throughout his reign as king of the Israelites (failure to commit to total destruction of Amalekites, making rash vows, attempts to kill David) but we have highlighted 1 Samuel 13:8-14 because of the proclamation of judgment that his kingdom will not continue and 1 Samuel 28 which is the passage on Saul seeking a medium.

In Samuel 13:8-14, he offered sacrifice to God himself instead of waiting for Samuel. This contravened God's command on the specific role given to the prophet (separation of roles) and also marks a grave disrespect to the role of the prophets. Saul had also misunderstood the role of sacrifice for Israel as compared to how the Philistines view sacrifice – the Philistines did it as a form of tribute/bribe to gain the favour of their gods while sacrifice for the Lord was an act of submission/obedience. Through Samuel, God proclaimed judgment on Saul where Saul was informed that his kingdom/dynasty will no longer continue, and the Lord has sought another man to take over Saul's place as the next king of Israel.

In 1 Samuel 28, Saul consulted a medium to 'contact' the spirit of Samuel. This is effectively dabbling in witchcraft and necromancy, which is strictly prohibited by God's commands in Leviticus 19:31 and 20:27. One possible reason why the Chronicler highlighted this could be because seeking mediums was a serious offence, especially for Saul, being the King of Israel and he had failed to consult God. This could also be the "tipping point" of God's overflowing wrath. It was also in 1 Samuel 28 that the spirit of Samuel had foretold the death of Saul and his sons at the battle of Mount Gilboa.

5. The Chronicler is quite detailed in describing how and why Saul died. Why do you think it was necessary for the Chronicler to dedicate a portion of the book of Chronicles on the last moments of Saul?

A reminder to the future generation of Israelites on the consequences of persistently disobeying God without any intention of genuine repentance – the result is death and destruction. After Saul was rebuked by Samuel, it appeared that he tried to repent and sought for the Lord's forgiveness in 1 Samuel 15 but as we see in the later chapters in 1 Samuel, Saul's repentance was not genuine as he tried to kill God's chosen king (David) and further transgressed against God by engaging in witchcraft. Saul was shown in the Scriptures as a king who wanted things done his own way and sought to rely on his own human reasoning and strategy instead of relying on God's guidance and wisdom. In response to Saul's disobedience and persistent sinning, God ultimately delivered judgment and punished Saul. God takes sin seriously and will not let it go unpunished.

This passage also highlighted God's sovereignty in choosing a king that will lead his people. Being God's chosen King is not a biological hereditary right (as seen by the fact that Saul's descendants (apart from the short reign of Ish-bosheth) no longer became part of Israel's line of royalty). God's chosen King is characterised by a heart of obedience and submission to God. Saul had also attempted to take things into his own hands by killing David to derail God's plan but ultimately, God did not allow man's schemes to succeed. From the account of the fall of Saul, the returning Israelites are reminded on the seriousness of breaking faith with God, and that God is ultimately faithful to carry out his promises by His own means.

Read 1 Chronicles 11:1-9

6. How did David become the King of the Israel? (cf. 2 Samuel 2:1 – 2:11, 4:5-8, 5:1-10)

After the death of Saul, there was a civil war between David's men and the house of Saul. The tribe of Judah seceded from the rest of Israel and made David their king first (probably due to David being from the tribe of Judah) while Ish-bosheth, the remaining surviving son of Saul was made King over the rest of Israel by Saul's army commander. Ish-bosheth ruled for 2 years and was subsequently assassinated by his own army captains. In 2 Samuel 5, the rest of Israel recognised that David had led them even when Saul was King, and the elders of Israel anointed David as King of all of Israel. 1 Chronicles 11:1-9 is essentially taken from 2 Samuel 5:1-10. It is interesting that the Chronicler has chosen to omit out accounts of the civil war and Ish-bosheth to emphasize the point that the death of Saul effectively marks the transfer of power and the beginning of the royal house of David, notwithstanding that there was still a surviving son of Saul.

7. In 1 Chronicles 11:2, the Lord said to David "You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over my people Israel." What is the significance of this description of David for us who are reading the book of Chronicles at this current age? (cf. Isaiah 9:6 and John 10:11-18)

This reminds us of the foretold coming of the Messiah King, which is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus. Isaiah describes the Messiah as the "Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6) and Jesus also describes himself as the good shepherd (John 10:11-18). David is essentially a prototype Christ, which points forward to the reality of Jesus being God's ultimate chosen King over His people in the new heaven and earth.

8. According to the Chronicler, what was the reason for David's empire growing in strength and his military victories?

David's victories and success was attributed to the presence of God with him (1 Chronicles 11:9). It is particularly important to note that the fact that God was with David was stated first before the account about David's strong military men in Chapters 11:10 – 12:38. It appears that the Chronicler is emphasizing that David's victories was not due to his strong military men, but it was firstly and fundamentally due to God's will and favour on him as God's chosen King.

9. Comparing Chapters 10 and 11, there is an undeniable contrast of how David and Saul fared in their reign over Israel. Saul's end marks David's beginning, and this is also paralleled with a clear understanding that God left Saul and was with David.

- a) what do you think this message will mean for the exiles back then (the authors intended audience)?

The Israelites will remember their history and understand that God faithfully works out His plans through whom He wishes. On top of that, the importance that faithfulness and obedience to God matters. In 1 Samuel 15, Samuel told Saul that obedience to God is much more important than sacrifice or burnt offerings that are offered to Him. God does not commend those who offer the best 'tribute' or 'offering' in the temple but those who are dedicated to be obedient and faithful to his command and words. Furthermore, the consequences of disobeying and rebelling against God is death and destruction. Saul had tried many attempts to preserve his dynasty through his humanly ways although the favour of the Lord has left him, but those attempts turned out to be futile in the end.

Saul's story can be said to be the first of the many examples of disobedient kings in Israel's royal line that had disobeyed God. In contrast, David was highlighted as a King who seeks after God and was successful only because God was with him.

b) what about for us in the present age?

A reminder for us that there are serious consequences for those who persistently sin without repenting (like Saul) and we must commit to obedience to God's word as His people. We can also be assured that God is faithful to carry out His promised plans through whom He has said He will, as seen by the fulfilment of the coming of the Messianic King through the line of David. Therefore, looking back on the faithfulness of God as told by us from the Old and New Testaments, we can similarly have assurance that the 2nd coming of Christ will happen and Jesus will take His rightful place as the chosen King of God's people.

Study 3: “Wholehearted Allegiance to the One whom God Helps”

(1 Chronicles 11:10-12:40)

Getting Started

1. Is there a person or a cause you felt you could/would give yourself to wholeheartedly and completely?

Why do we so often have issue with authority? Think about giving yourself wholeheartedly to a person or a certain cause unreservedly, unconditionally and interminably.

And to a great extent that is understandable and reasonable, after all, if all people are fallible and so many great causes (whether a political cause, economic structure / system, or a social cause) have proven to be lacking and disappointing, who or what could be deserving of our complete devotion and wholehearted allegiance?

On the other hand, it also shows our strong desire and propensity for self-determination. We want to be the boss of our lives, and the idea of giving up control to someone else is so foreign and contrary to our (fallen) nature. And that really is the essence of Sin isn't it? "I get to determine the course of my own life, I get to decide how I want to live, I get to decide what is right and wrong, what is good and evil."

Context

2. Who was Chronicles written for and what was the Chronicler trying to achieve with his audience? (c.f. 2 Chronicles 36:23, Ezra 1:2-4)

It is important we realise that 1 and 2 Chronicles is essentially 1 book written by 1 author to achieve an intended purpose for his readers/audience. Chronicles was written to the restored people of Israel living a few generations after Cyrus issued the edict for them to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple (we know this based on the genealogy of Zerubbabel in 1 Chronicles 3:19). As such, the Chronicler wrote perhaps with specific concerns of the restored people in mind, and perhaps to invoke a specific response from his audience.

The ending of Chronicles give us a clue as to what the motivation of the Chronicler was; the ending of the book is left mid-sentence and hanging (comparing this with Ezra 1:2-4), "...Whoever is among you of all his people, may the Lord his God be with him. Let him go up."

One of the key purpose of Chronicles is to act as a book to motivate its readers to arise, let him go up! But go up to what? Arise to pursue:

- (i) God's promised and chosen King from the Davidic line
- (ii) God's presence; God among His people (the temple and priestly line)
- (iii) The unity of the people under God

(this is the structure and focus of the genealogies in Chapter 1-9 and the whole book of Chronicles)

3. What were the reason for Saul's tragic death and David's accomplishment? (c.f. 1 Chronicles 10:13-14, 11:1-10)

	1 Chronicles 10:1-13	1 Chronicles 11:1-9
Main character	Saul	David
Other characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Saul's armour bearer suffering the exact same fate as Saul (ii) v6 speaks of Saul's 3 sons and all his house who died together (iii) v8 many of those who fought alongside Saul were slain as a result of following Saul into battle. (iv) v7 tells us that all the men of Israel had to abandon their cities and flee, losing their homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) All Israel who gathered together to make David King (ii) Joab
What did they do / Happened to them?	They all died	David conquered Jebus. Made it into his capital, Jerusalem; the eternal city of God. Zion; the spiritual city of God. And fortified the city and made it a stronghold.
Reason for their fate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) breach of faith (ii) his disobedience against God's commandment in seeking a medium (iii) his dependence and seeking guidance from things other than God 	The reason for David's success was clear and solitary – The LORD of hosts was with him.

What are the reason given for Saul's tragic death? Who else listed in Chapter 11 suffered as a result of Saul's failure? Saul died specifically because of his:

- (i) breach of faith
- (ii) his disobedience against God's commandment in seeking a medium
- (iii) his dependence and seeking guidance from things other than God

The Bible is unambiguous about the reason for Saul's death, it wasn't because of the actions of others or because Saul made poor political decision, but it is primarily and solely because of his attitude and posture against God.

The Bible is also quite explicit about the fate of not only Saul, but also those who followed him. v5 speaks of Saul's armour bearer suffering the exact same fate as Saul, v6 speaks of Saul's 3 sons and all his house who died together, and finally in v8, it is clear that many of those who fought alongside Saul were slain as a result of following Saul into battle. And even those who did not die, v7 tells us that all the men of Israel had to abandon their cities and flee, losing their homes.

David conquered Jebus, made it into his capital, Jerusalem; the eternal city of God. Zion, the spiritual city of God, and fortified the city and made it a stronghold.

The reason for David's success was clear and solitary – The LORD of hosts was with him. The bible is very clear and does not list any other reason for David's success (e.g. his political prowess, his strength or might in battle, his resources, etc..), and I believe it is intentional, God was the sole reason and only agent of David's success.

The reason for doing this recap: is to lead into this study's passage, which really is an account of the men who had to choose between David and Saul. The Chronicler presents a contrast between these 2 kings – Saul and David, makes a very clear comparison between them – God's judgement on Saul because of Saul's unfaithfulness vs. David's greatness because of God's favour. I think it is important for us to remember the contrast between David and Saul as we read through the account of David's mighty men, to properly appreciate the passage.

Digging in

Read 1 Chronicles 11:10-12:40

The passage is immensely dense and rich; full of great truths interspersed and woven intricately into the narrative and record of names. And because we are often tempted to gloss over sections of the bible with lots of names, we can very easily miss these truths and gems, which would be a huge tragedy to us and our members.

It is worth, I think, to read the passage together slowly and perhaps more than once (maybe once quietly individually, and once together out loud)

4. As we read through today's passage, we see a repeated theme at the start and end of the passage, and intersperse throughout the passage (look at 11:10, 12:1-7, 12:19, 12:23, 12:29, 12:31, 12:32, 12:38). What is this theme?

- (a) At what point did the mighty men come to David?

Saul was still king at the time when the mighty men came to David. The list of mighty men in 2 Samuel comes at the end of the book, and so, sometimes it might be easy to think and assume that these men were appointed or loyal to David when he was at the height of his power. But Chronicles make it clear that this is not the case, they came to David when Saul was still the King of Israel and Chapter 12:1 tells us that group of them came to David when he "could not move about freely because of Saul the son of Kish."

- (b) What was the main intent of coming to David?

v23 These are the numbers of the divisions of the armed troops who came to David in Hebron to turn the kingdom of Saul over to him, according to the word of the Lord.

v31 of the half-tribe of Manasseh 18,000, who were expressly named to come and make David king.

v38 All these, men of war, arrayed in battle order, came to Hebron with a whole heart to make David king over all Israel. Likewise, all the rest of Israel were of a single mind to make David king

- (c) What were some of the struggles / conflict they would have faced by their actions?

We need to appreciate the choice they had to make; Saul was the current king of Israel; David was promised by God that the kingdom was to be handed over to Him (1 Chronicles 11:10). However, to choose king David, virtually a nobody at that moment, vs. Saul who was the current king with all the power of being king at his disposal, would actually put them in considerable danger and required significant faith on their part to believe God's promise to David that he will actually be king one day.

In addition, some of these are Saul's kinsmen (1 Chronicles 12:1-2), not only were they doing something difficult politically (going against the present king), but they were also doing something difficult from a social and familial perspective (going against their kinsmen and family relation). "Of the Benjaminites, the kinsmen of Saul, 3,000, of whom the majority had to that point kept their allegiance to the house of Saul (1 Chronicles 12:29)".

- (d) In spite of that, what do you think made them do what they did?

They came to make him king because they knew that it was according to the word of the Lord concerning Israel, they knew that David was promised by God that the kingdom was to be handed over to Him (1 Chronicles 11:10).

Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, 200 chiefs, and all their kinsmen under their command (1 Chronicles 12:32). The men of Issachar shows us that were aware of the times they were living in and they understood how they ought to live and respond to the times.

Some of the men of Manasseh deserted to David when he came with the Philistines for the battle against Saul. (1 Chronicles 12:19) The event described in verse 19 preceded the account of Saul in chapter 10. It was right before the battle at Mount Gilboa where Saul and his sons were killed, that the men of Manasseh deserted Saul and joined David (this is recorded in 1 Samuel 27-30). It is clear that if those men did not decide at the very last moment, to defect to David, they would very well have joined Saul in being slain by the Philistines and their names would never have been recorded and read by us today. It tells us that when faced between a choice of remaining loyal to a king that God has abandoned or defecting to the King who God helps and has chosen, we need to be decisive and immediate, there is an expiry date and it is of no benefit to tarry in making the right decision. Do it before it is too late.

5. How are some of these mighty men described and what were the response it would have invoked in the original readers? (refer to 11:12-14, 11:20-22, 12:8-15)

The record of Gadite warriors joining David overflows with descriptions of their military acumen. They were brave (12:8) and skilled in close fighting with shield and spear (12:8). They had the faces of lions (12:8) and the speed of gazelles (12:8). In biblical times it was common to use zoomorphic language to indicate warriors' ferocity.

Beyond this, no enemies could match these Gadites. In hyperbolic language, the Chronicler wrote that the very least Gadite could handle a hundred enemies; the best Gadites could withstand a thousand (12:14). In this passage it is evident that the Chronicler intentionally used numerical overstatement to exalt the Gadite warriors. On many occasions he drew attention to the magnificence of Israel's military might by using large numbers.

The strength and courage of these Gadite warriors is illustrated further by their crossing the Jordan in the first month during spring flooding (see Josh 3:15) and their defeating everyone living in the valleys (12:15). The Chronicler lavished these praises on the Gadites to make it clear to his readers that the very best of this tribe joined David at the stronghold. By doing so, the Chronicler idealized David's supporters and encouraged his own readers **to join in support of the Davidic line.**

Source: Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr.

6. In 1 Chronicles 11:15-19, what does this account of David say about his character and kingship?

David's kingship was one characterized by him being a shepherd King (1 Chronicles 11:2), David's kingship was to be for the benefit of the people and not for his own selfish gain. He refused to use the bravery and sacrifice of his men for his own benefit, "far be it from me to drink the lifeblood of these men". David's actions were done to discourage his men from doing things that endanger themselves for the benefit of the king. the King was to lead **and serve** his people.

David demonstrated humility and piety in his refusal to drink the water. He refused because they (the mighty men) risked their lives (11:19). While the three men were courageous, David did not encourage such risks for his personal comfort. Instead, he demonstrated his humility by pouring the water out before the Lord (11:18). David's actions highlighted the Chronicler's conviction that David's kingship was for **Israel's benefit and encouraged similar self-denial and religious devotion in the leadership of God's people.**

7. What are the details that the Chronicler tell us about the list of mighty men in 1 Chronicles 11: 26-47? What do you think was the Chronicler's intention?

The variety of the people who came to David; they were not only from a particular tribe or place in Israel, but David's rule was over all Israel, and all tribes are given the opportunity to be part of David's mighty men. The account of David's leading military supporters at Hebron ends with a long list of names and locations. In this way, the list bolstered the Chronicler's insistence that David's reign extended widely. Moreover, all the tribes of Israel submitted themselves to Davidic rule, encouraging the immediate readers of Chronicles (the restored people of Israel) to be united, in looking and longing after the Davidic King and the Temple.

8. What is the recurring/repeated theme/phrase in the exchange between the "men of Benjamin and Judah" and David? (1 Chronicles 12:16-18)

- (i) Have you come in friendship to **help** me?
- (ii) God **helps** you
- (iii) peace to your **helpers**

Therefore, we are yours, O David!

The men of Benjamin and Judah are clear that David is the one whom God helps. And they were absolutely clear in the mind that because God helps David, the helpers of David will share in God's blessing and peace. Hence, the most important and the wisest thing to do for them to do is to help the one whom God helps and devote wholehearted allegiance to that person.

Application

9. How does today's passage inform us about what we should be looking for in our Christian leaders?

10. How does the mighty men's example help us think about where we should place our allegiance today?

Jesus (the promised King from David's line) promised that He will come back as King and His Kingdom will come in all its fullness, with severe consequences for both those who are His and those who are against Him. In the same way the followers of Saul suffered as a result of following the wrong king/cause, and David's followers shared in David's glory and blessing. Who we follow and pledge our allegiance to today, will have its associated consequences? The "Sauls" of the world today are tangible, real and immediate, they currently sit on the throne and appear to have power to give us what we desire and want. Whereas, the promised King from David's line has promised that He will come back, judge the world, put all things right, rule perfectly and eternally. His rule might seem far and long in coming, but He is faithful to His promises, and our posture and response to Him now, will have eternal consequence. Let us not be fooled, let us not delay, we must pledge our wholehearted allegiance to Him today.

Study 4: “Don’t Get Lazy with the Lord” (1 Chronicles 13-15)

Getting Started

1. Could we be serving God and doing His work in a manner that is not pleasing to Him?

Digging in

Read 1 Chronicles 13

2. Describe what David planned to do (v1-4). How did David seek consultation and what can you comment about its manner?

-David attempted to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. He consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader (v1).

-But he did not consult with the LORD.

-The idea of bringing the ark was right in the eyes of all the Israel people (v4).

3. How did David and all Israel carry the ark (v5-8)? What can you comment about the method of transporting the ark? (cf. Exodus 25:12-15, Numbers 4:15)

-David gathered all Israel together to bring up the ark on a new cart from the house of Abinadab, and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart

-Transporting the ark on a cart was against God’s specific command. The ark was designed to be carried (Exodus 25:12-15) and was only to be carried by Levites of the family of Kohath (Numbers 4:15).

4. What happened to Uzza and why was he killed (v9-11)?

-Uzza put out his hand to hold the ark, which was strictly forbidden (Num. 4:15)

5. How did David react to what happened (v12-14)?

-He was angry initially, and then became afraid of God

-He knew that it was important to bring the ark

-He then took the ark into the house of Obed-Edom, who is a Levite of the family of Kohath

Read 1 Chronicles 14

6. Describe David’s situation in Jerusalem (v1-7).

-David seems to have his kingship established as he knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel
-He took more wives in Jerusalem, and begot more sons and daughters there.

7. What happened after David had been anointed king over all Israel? (v8-10)

The Philistines came after him.

8. How did David respond to what had happened? (v11-17)? Was his response different compared to 13:1-4?
 - As the Philistines came after David, he first sought God and looked to Him for guidance.
 - Compared with 13:1-4, this shows David's dependence on God.

Read 1 Chronicles 15

9. Describe how David brought the Ark this time and what lesson he had learnt (v1-15).
 - David instructed that no one may carry the ark of God but the Levites.
 - He knew that because they did not do it right the first time, the LORD broke out against them. David realised his mistake of not consulting God.
10. How did the people respond to the ark being brought into their place? (v16-29)
 - They had a ceremony with music and David had appointed their brethren to be singers
 - Joy
 - They offered seven bulls and seven rams
11. How did David's actions turned out? Compare this to first attempt at bringing ark back.
 - Fame of David went out, Lord brought fear (v.17)
 - Different to ark incident as David was successful this time. Similar as God used both instances to bring out a right fear of David (14:17) and Himself (13:12)
12. How does the Chronicler present David in these chapters?

Application

13. What does the chronicler want his audience to think about God and about David?
14. How do you think this passage is fulfilled in Jesus? In what ways does it point to Him?

Study 5: “Proclaim His Praise To All Nations” (1 Chronicles 16)

Context

1. Recap what we've seen in 1 Chronicles 13-15.

Digging In

Read 1 Chronicles 16:1-3

2. Describe what has taken place. Read 2 Samuel 6:17-19. Are there any significant changes?
 - Israel had brought in the ark of God and put it in the tent David had pitched
 - They offered burnt offerings and peace offerings
 - David blessed the people, distributed to each person a loaf of bread, a portion of meat, cake of raisins. Uncertain of what is the significance of these items; a commentator said food is mentioned 3 times in the book to mark high points of David's reign
 - The passage is a parallel verse to 2 Samuel 6:17-19. Mostly the same, except that 1 Chronicles 16:1, it says the people offered whereas in 2 Samuel 6:17 it is David who offered. Some can say it shows Chronicler's focus on the whole of Israel rather than David alone, but I personally don't think we can push the difference too much.

Read 1 Chronicles 16:4-7

3. Describe what the passage is about. Is there a parallel verse in 1 and 2 Samuel? If so, are there any significant changes?
 - David appointed some Levites to invoke, praise and thank the Lord.
 - Chronicler listed the names of the people who were involved in the worship: Asaph is the chief, along with musicians, etc.
 - Strong focus on praising God through music and with thanksgiving
 - This is a trick question! There does not appear to be a parallel verse in 1 or 2 Samuel - this appears to be new material from the Chronicler. Chronicler seems to point out the significance and importance of corporate worship, and how thanksgiving and praise of God is an important element of worship of God.

Read 1 Chronicles 16:8-22

4. Is there another part of the Bible where we can see this passage?
 - This section is taken from Psalm 105:1-15. If needed, teach GG members how to use cross-references.
 - (a) To whom is this section / song addressed to?
 - The call is specially directed to God's people, Israel (v. 13; 19)
 - (b) What are some striking elements about the passage? (look at mood, repetition, choice of words, etc.)
 - Mood is of joy, with words such as "give thanks", "sing"; "rejoice"
 - A lot of imperatives "Give thanks"; "Sing to him"; "Glory"; "Seek the Lord"; "Remember" - which is a motivational and encouraging call to listeners (or readers)

- Repetition of word “Remember” (v.12 and 15). One is to remember God’s works, one is a narrowing of focus towards God’s eternal covenant with his people.
- We can see how God’s faithfulness can be tracked down through the generations from Abraham to Israel (vv.16-18)
- Contrast in v.19-22. God’s steadfast love is shown towards a little nation of no account, and he would rebuke kings for this little nation. Chronicler’s audience would have also felt this keenly, given they are now not a “nation” and are considered of little account too.

Read 1 Chronicles 16:23-33

5. Which other part of the Bible do we see this from?

-Taken from Psalm 96.

(a) What are some imperatives (commands) for the listeners of this song? Any common patterns?

-Sing, tell, declare, ascribe, worship. - it has a sense of oral worship, using words to worship God.

(b) To whom are the imperatives directed? What is the significance of this?

-All the earth, families of the peoples

-Shows God’s universal kingship. While first section (v8-22) looks at his love for Israel, this shows his rule over all nations. Emphasised with phrases like “among the nations”, “among the peoples”.

Read 1 Chronicles 16:34-36

6. Where else do we see this passage in the Bible?

-Psalm 106:1 and vv.47-48.

(a) What is similar to the previous two sections?

-Goes back to concept of giving thanks to God

-God’s name is praised among the nations

(b) Are there themes more strongly emphasised in this section?

-Salvation is more strongly emphasised (v.35) - this verse is an address to God.

-God’s eternal faithfulness (v.34 and 36) more clearly drawn out here

Read 1 Chronicles 16:37-43

7. Summarise what David has done and how the Chronicler concludes this section. Compare this to 2 Samuel 6:19.

-David left specific groups of people in charge of ministering before the ark. (Burnt offerings, gatekeepers, musicians)

-When this was in order, all of Israel went back to his own house. Chronicler adds that David went back to bless his household. While in 2 Samuel, the return of the ark was marred by Michal’s hard-heartedness, the return of the ark ended on a positive note in 1 Chronicles

Bringing things together

8. What emphasis does the Chronicler wish to bring out with the new material?

-To show the centrality of worship in the lives of God's people. This worship is full of joy, remembering God's faithfulness to His people but it also invokes God for salvation. (v.35)

-In 2 Samuel, David has prayer of gratitude (2 Samuel 7) and song of deliverance (2 Samuel 22) - which focuses specifically on David and his royal line. In 1 Chronicles, however, we see how the Chronicler adds to that by showing that God's king brings together all of Israel in corporate worship. Earlier in 1 Chronicles 13-15, we see how David assembles the people of Israel to seek God's presence (ark). Although he failed and was complacent at first, he later saw the need to seek God on His terms. In 1 Chronicles 16, this is extended by showing how he gathers people of Israel in worship of God. The chapter begins with all Israel being blessed by David, and also ends with all Israel departing and David blessing his household.

9. What response would it evoke in the Chronicler's audience?

-Remembrance of God's faithfulness and commitment to them

-Understanding that it is a good and right thing to be praising and giving thanks to God, even if they are of "little account".

-Yearning for a glorious kingdom under a king who would bring His people together in corporate, joyful worship

-Perhaps a yearning for God to "save" them and deliver them from the nations (v. 35)

Application

10. In light of the gospel, how does worship of God look like now? Do provide specific passages in other parts of Bible, if possible!

-Jesus tells us how to worship God rightly to worship in spirit and truth. It does not mean being in a specific physical place to worship. As Jesus tells the Samaritan woman, the Messiah will come and tell God's people how to worship rightly. (John 4:20-26). Essentially, Jesus is our true worship leader.

Worship is living lives that are pleasing to God (Romans 12). Worship of God also still takes place collectively and corporately. (Colossians 3:16-17). We give thanks to God together, and we also teach and admonish each other.

11. What are areas in our lives where we do not joyfully worship God? How can we as a church collectively help each other in this?

Study 6: “A House for God and a House for David” (1 Chronicles 17)

Getting Started

1. As a Christian, what have you done for God recently?

This is a trick question.

Digging In

Read 1 Chronicles 17:1-2

2. Chronologically, when did the events in verses 1-2 occur?

Chronologically chapter 17 came after the termination of the wars chronicled in chapter 18 and it should be dated about 995 B.C." (Payne)

3. "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under tent curtains." Why did David say what he said to Nathan?

"I dwell in a house of cedar": Cedar wood was especially valued. This means that David lived in an expensive, beautiful home. When he remembered that the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under tent curtains, the contrast bothered him. David was troubled by the thought that he lived in a nicer house than the ark of the covenant.

Without saying the specific words, David told Nathan that he wanted to build a temple to replace the tabernacle.

4. What was Nathan's reply? Did seem it unreasonable?

Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you: Nathan said this to David because it seemed good and reasonable. What could be wrong with David building a temple?

Read 1 Chronicles 17:3-6

5. What was God's response? Was it a reprimand?

-God corrects Nathan's hasty approval to David's plan to build a temple.

-Was it a reprimand? Yes, Nathan's response to David was presumptuous. He answered according to human judgment and common sense, but before the word of God came to him.

-David wanted to do more than God commanded. This seems to be one of David's flaws but not a terrible flaw to have.

Read 1 Chronicles 17:7-10

6. In His response to David, why did God first remind David of all He had done for him and Israel?

-Firstly, as a reminder of God's powers and sovereignty. David should not have presumed to do things for God that God had not asked him to do.

-Secondly, as a reminder of God's faithfulness and how God will always fulfilled what he had promised.

7. What was God's promise to David?

That the Lord will build him a house.

Read 1 Chronicles 17:11-15

8. List out the details of the promise God made to establish the House of David in the verses 11 to 15. How many are fulfilled by Solomon?

- I will set up your seed after you. God specifically promised a hereditary monarchy for the house of David.
- He shall build Me a house: Though David would not build a temple for God, David's descendent would.
- I will establish his throne forever: One from The House of David will rule over Israel forever.
- I will be his Father, and he shall be My son: This descendent of David would enjoy a special relationship with God.
- I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him who was before you. God will not give the sons of David the same Judgement he gave Saul.

Each of these great promises was partially fulfilled in Solomon, David's son and successor to his throne.

- Solomon ruled on David's throne.
- God's mercies never departed from Solomon, though he sinned.
- Solomon built God a magnificent house.

Read 1 Chronicles 17:16-22

9. What was David's initial response to God's promise to his House and why?

Humility: When David received this spectacular gift, he didn't think it made him any greater. In David's eyes it made God greater.

Praise and Thanksgiving: David is full of praise and thanksgiving to Lord in verses 19-22.

Read 1 Chronicles 17:23-27

10. Why did David boldly ask: "let it be established forever, and do as You have said"?

- David had faith that the great and supreme Lord will do exactly as he had promised.
- This was bold prayer that said, "God, here is Your promise - now I trust You to fulfil it grandly and to be faithful to Your word."
- David boldly accepts and prays for what God has promised because he knows the fulfilment of these promises would only bring more glory to God.

Application

11. How can we avoid making David's mistake of doing more than God commanded?

12. "Name it and claim it". What do you think of this prosperity Gospel statement and how does it differ from David's response in the passage we just read?

Study 7: “A Leader who Delivers” (1 Chronicles 18-20)

Context

1. Based on what you have seen in 1 Chronicles 17, how do you think the nation of Israel will fare?

-Can point them to 17:27
-We can see that God will cut off the enemies of Israel (17:8)

Digging In

Read 1 Chronicles 18:1-13

2. What seems to be the big themes that is prevalent throughout this passage? Why do you think so?
 - Military victory despite going against impressive forces
 - God's delivery of victory to David
 - The growth of Israel though conquered land, materials and people
3. What do you make of David's decision to hamstring the chariot horses and only leave 100 chariots?
 - Deuteronomy 17:6 - the king should not have many horses
 - Shows that David has wisdom in obeying God, shows his trust in victory is not by strength of arms but in God and His promises
4. What is the point of v6 and v13 and how does it help in understanding what the author is saying about these events?
 - God ultimately controlled these events and gave victory
 - God brings in different forms of blessing to Israel through conquest
5. Besides the spoils of war we also see David receiving gifts (v10), what do you think the narrator is trying to tell us? What do you think of David's attitude to these things?
 - David keeps the bronze which will one day be used for the temple by Solomon
 - David gains slaves, materials, gold, glory and peace → leading up to the things that are needed for the temple to be built one day
 - Narrator showing these to show God's faithfulness in keeping his word and bringing about his plans
 - David honours God - v11 he dedicated the silver and gold to the Lord (which might imply that it is kept for God's temple building)

Read 1 Chronicles 18:14-17

6. What do you think is the point of the narrator recording these details?
 - This isn't just story but also historical recording of events
 - The characters here have rich history and play different roles
 - Joab who ends up betraying David is pictured here in a good light - possible the chronicler trying to make things look nice and positive to keep the message in Chronicles encouraging
 - Ahimelech is the survivor of the priestly line that was killed by Saul for helping David, so perhaps he is being shown here, honoured by David so that people can be encouraged by it

Read 1 Chronicles 19:1-5

7. From this event what can you see about the character of David? Where do you see these?
 - Kind, compassionate and politically wise - seen in sending the messengers
 - Sensitivity and respect for his people - sending messenger to meet them and giving them time off so they can grow their beard and return without being shamed

Read 1 Chronicles 19:6-20:3

8. What does v13 teach us about Joab and his thoughts regarding this battle?
 - He sees that he has applied his wisdom as best as he could, then he puts his trust in God
 - He acknowledges that God will do as he pleases, and he just have to faithfully serve his king and use his strength to serve Israel and God
9. We see in v17 that David was involved in the fight initially. However in 20:1 we see that after the Syrians surrendered and became subjects, David remained in Jerusalem. What was David doing (2 Sam 11-12) and why do you think the Chronicler did not include this narrative?
 - 2 Samuel 11-12 shows us David is busy committing adultery and murdering a loyal Mighty Man
 - The Chronicler again removes sensitive parts that exposes David's weaknesses and failures
 - Possibly to paint a Israel "sure win" through its chosen king picture to the readers despite the king being flawed. Discerning readers will notice this and see the need for a greater king to rescue them
10. What was the end result of the conquest? (v 2-3)
 - Glory, riches - comes to David
 - Israel becomes richer with money and slave labour
 - God shows His favour and His strength

Read 1 Chronicles 20:4-8

11. We see two persons similar to Goliath, Lakhmi the brother of Goliath and another man of great stature. We see Elhanan and Jonathan striking them down. Why do you think David is not involved despite the clear allusions to Goliath? (2 Samuel 21:16-17)
 - We see that there is fear that David might fall in battle
 - Here we don't see that fear shown, just the heroes that defeated these giants
 - Notice how the mood is different than with Goliath, when Israel is taunted, they didn't cover in fear (v7) but instead Jonathan struck him down
 - Credit was given to "David and his servants" v8
 - God is now with them and guiding them through his King that God has been giving victory to → Israel has confidence

Thinking It Through

12. We saw that David was not to be the one to build the temple. What does this text teach us as to why that is so? (1 Chronicles 28:3)
 - David is a man of war not a man of peace
 - We see David fulfilling his role well, trusting in God's choice for him

-David still has his eye set on the bigger movement in God's plan (building the temple) so even in his military victory we see him preparing towards that (even though it means the credit of building the temple goes to someone else)

13. How does David contribute towards the building of the temple?

- Gathering materials, labour force
- Bringing peace and prosperity
- Obeying God
- Leading his people to also trust in God - not keeping chariots

14. How does this passage help us to see how God works through Israel?

- God is faithful towards what he has promised and brings about his plans

15. How does this passage help us to see the response that the Israelites had towards God?

- The people trusted God and were willing to follow their King (e.g. 19:17)

Application

16. How does that challenge us to see our response towards God?

Study 8: “Judgment, Repentance and Mercy” (1 Chronicles 21-22)

Getting Started

1. In your experience, what is the function of performing a headcount?

Making sure no one is lost, making sure there is enough food for everyone.... most of the time, these decisions were for useful/beneficial reasons rather than harm. You can also maybe dig up possible answers of people taking headcount in a competitive/paranoid manner (e.g. just to make sure they have more than their rival).

Context

2. What did we see in last week's passages, and how do we think the Israelites might have been feeling around that time?

Conquest and winning battles must have been feeling pretty good about themselves, and thinking things were well because the LORD was with them (18:6 and 18:13). Pride could also be growing among David and the Israelites.

Digging In

Read 1 Chronicles 21: 1-17

3. Why did the chronicler begin Chapter 21 by mentioning that David was incited by Satan to number Israel? Compare this with the corresponding account in 2 Samuel 24:1 where it was stated that "...the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them..."

The Chronicler varied from 2 Sam 24:1 ("the anger of the Lord") to clarify that God did not directly tempt David to sin; he did this through the instrumentality of Satan (21:1). In Hebrew, Satan's name means "the accuser" and indicates one of the special roles this creature played in the heavenly court. Satan brought charges against the people of God. As the story of Job illustrates so clearly, one of his duties as "accuser" was to tempt and test human beings. Although God himself tempts no one (see James 1:13), God gives Satan permission to test believers (for e.g. Satan testing Job (Job 1) and Jesus (Matthew 4:1-10)).

4. What was Joab's reaction to David upon receiving his orders to take a census and what was the reason for his reaction? (cf. Numbers 1:49)

He disagreed with David's order (v3) but still obeyed his orders (v4) nevertheless because of David's authority as the King. However, Joab refused to number the tribe of Levi and Benjamin (v6).

Joab's objection to David's order suggests that David may have even ordered the counting of Levi for military purposes. The text gives special attention to the fact that Joab did not include Levi and Benjamin (21:6). Mosaic law forbade the counting of Levi for military service (see Num. 1:49). The reason for omitting Benjamin, however, is not clear. Joab initially resisted the king's order and made sure not to violate Mosaic Law. For this reason, only David could be blamed for the terrible results that came upon the nation. David's disregard for the Law of Moses (Numbers 1:49) which prohibits the numbering of the Levi and David's disinterest in having the Lord care for his military needs could be reason for Joab's strong objections.

5. Why was God displeased with David's actions and the census? (v7)

It is evident that taking a census was not wrong in itself. Moses used a census to collect contributions for the tabernacle (see Exodus 30:11-16) and Moses also numbered all of the firstborn of Israel (see Numbers 3:40-43).

David's action was sinful probably because of his motivations. The purpose of his census was to assess military strength - David gave orders to Joab (his general) and the commanders of the troops (21:2) and Joab's report focused on fighting men (21:5). David's desire for a military census may have expressed a growing dissatisfaction with reliance on divine power in battle. Like many kings after him, David began to turn from trust in God to trust in his armies.

6. Why was Israel punished because of David's actions?

While it can seem unfair, the communal aspect of punishment is not an entirely new thing we see in the Bible. In the Old Testament, kings had a special representative function before God. Their righteous deeds often brought blessings to the nation, but their sins also brought wrath on the entire nation (for e.g. Ahab's worship of Baal and consistent rebellion against God caused Israel to suffer famine - 1 Kings 18:16-18).

7. How did David respond to God's judgment?

David confessed, "I have sinned greatly," and asked for forgiveness. David also admitted that he had done a very foolish thing (v8). Although these words come from the parallel account in 2 Samuel, they coincided with the Chronicler's perspective on this event. David's rejection of reliance on God as his military security was contrary to wisdom derived from his own military campaign in 1 Chronicles 18-20.

8. What were the punishments that were proposed by God and what did David choose?

David was offered a choice of three kinds of punishment. 1) three years of famine, 2) three months of fleeing from his enemies, or 3) three days of the sword of the Lord in the form of a pestilence (disease). It appears that David had picked option 3 and places confidence in God's mercy. David would rather endure the discipline of this merciful God than man. In some ways, he recognizes that it is more dangerous to surrender his life to man than God. Therefore, even if God had the power to do anything to him, he still found it more palatable to entrust his punishment into this God whom is more likely to show mercy to him.

At first glance, it may seem that the punishment of lesser time (three days) was the lightest sentence, but the severity of this option is revealed in the explanation that follows. It would consist of a plague in the land, and the angel of the Lord ravaging every part of Israel (21:12). The potential of this option was great. Indeed, 70,000 men fell dead and Jerusalem itself came near utter destruction (see 21:14-15).

9. David makes an interesting (and quite noble) statement of offering himself and his household to be punished for his sins instead of having the people of Israel suffer because of his mistakes. Why do you think there was no reply from God to David's pleas?

It is possible David wants to contain the gravity of his sin to himself, as all of us probably do when we sin. We are not told why this is not possible, but it does show that David is not in as much control of his circumstances as he may seem to be. Also, it might be that this also brings about the awareness that his sin is not solely just about him and his family. As a leader of Israel, he bears responsibility for his people, and it can be that this event sends a clear sign that whatever that he does can affect his people.

Another possible perspective is that this episode highlights David as an imperfect Christ. David had attempted to be the mediator and intercede on behalf of Israel to prevent Jerusalem from being destroyed. David also attempted to offer himself as a penal substitute to be punished by God instead of Israel. However, unlike Jesus, David himself is not sinless and as such, he will never be able to fulfil the role of being the penal substitute for the nation of Israel. As Jesus is the perfect Christ and is sinless, he can offer himself as a penal substitute not only for the nation of Israel, but also to all Christians who put their trust in Him as Lord and Saviour.

David's response spoke to the post-exilic community in a number of ways. Those who led the people of God in the Chronicler's day were to see David's example as a model of attitudes and behaviours they should have in their own day. They had turned from God as David; they had been punished as David. Now they sought to be restored. The way of restoration appeared in David's

Read 1 Chronicles 21:18-22:1

10. What was the Lord's command to David following David's repentance?

In response to David's profound repentance, David was commanded by the Lord to build an altar on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (21:18). Sacrifices had to be made before relief from guilt could come to the nation.

11. It might have seemed like David turned down a really good deal with Ornan. We can commend David for not abusing his power as king or his humility etc., but what do you think the Chronicler wishes to convey regarding David's response towards Ornan's generosity?

Ornan offered to give the land, but David insisted on buying it. The reason for David's insistence is stated explicitly. He argued, "I will not take for the Lord what is yours" (21:24). Moreover, as he explained, he would not "sacrifice a burnt offering that costs [him] nothing (21:24). Once again, the passage emphasizes David's sincerity and desire to give of himself in payment for his sin. He takes his manner of presenting the sacrifice to God seriously. Once the property was purchased, David built an altar to the Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings (21:26). David took the necessary steps for the return of harmony and peace between himself and God. In 21:26a, the Chronicler began to diverge significantly from the account of Samuel (// 2 Sam 24:25). For the most part he added information not found in Samuel.

Read 1 Chronicles 22:2-19

12. How did David make preparations for the building of the temple?

Note: This passage comes entirely from the Chronicler's hand. He may have used other sources, but with the exception of several minor allusions, he did not depend on Samuel, Kings, or other portions of Scripture.

The account of David's commission of temple construction can be divided into three main reports from the Chronicler. Each of these report focuses on different aspects of David's preparation for the temple, namely:

- (i) Gathering the building materials and resources required(v22:2-5)
- (ii) Commissioning his son Solomon to build the temple(v22:6-16),
- (iii) Ordered Israel's leaders to support Solomon(v22:17-19)

13. Why does the Chronicler record the account of David's preparation for the building of the temple?

One thing could be to show David's recognition and obedience that he is not the one to build God's temple. He prepares his son Solomon with the materials needed to build God's temple, and charges him to follow in the laws of the LORD who has given the promise of establishing his kingdom. In doing this, David shows confidence and conviction that all that he has is given is from the LORD, and he is seeking to do God's will (The LORD is mentioned 18 times in this chapter itself). David charges his son and even his leaders to have the same trust in the LORD as he does.

Application

14. We have seen in this study how David's personal sin can lead to serious consequences at the community level and causing the death of thousands of Israelites. At the same time, David's timely and sincere repentance had also saved Israel (in particular Jerusalem) from further destruction. How does this help us to understand the big picture of our salvation in Christ? (cf. Romans 5:18-19)

Romans 5:18-19 states that "Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous." This particular episode of David could be pointing to the bigger picture of how Adam's sin had caused all mankind to be under God's judgment, Jesus's obedience to God to die on the cross have led to the salvation to mankind. Just as how the Lord is a righteous God that has to issue judgment and punishment to deal with transgressions and sin (as how God had punished David), God is also merciful God that offers forgiveness to those who repent (as how God had shown mercy to David after he repented). Furthermore, because of God's faithfulness to his promise, the house of David continued to prosper, and Solomon was allowed to experience a time of peace where he can build the temple.

15. Despite receiving punishment for his pride and sin, David still acts in complete assurance of the promises God has given to him and encourages Solomon and his leaders to trust in the LORD. Certainly, that is clear from today's study. How does this challenge you as you think about yourself as a Christian and the promises that is given to you as a follower of Christ?

As you talk about this, probably helpful to discuss what promises are actually for the believer (<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/which-promises-are-for-me/>). Probably also helpful to consider how our misconceptions/misunderstanding of what are His promises can often add to the difficulty for us to feel confident in God's promises.

Another area of discussion is working out that it is not often clear whether what we experience is God's discipline towards us or whether it is God's training us for maturity. Since we cannot easily find that out, perhaps what is more profitable to think about how to respond to difficult events in our lives with humility and trust that God is for His people and intends to work for His people's good.

Study 9: “Building God’s Glorious House” (1 Chronicles 23-26)

Digging In

Read 1 Chronicles 23

1. In this chapter, how does David continue with making preparations for the house of the Lord?

Last week, we saw how David had begun preparations for the building of the temple of the Lord. In today's chapters, he seems to be paying particular attention to ordering those who are to be serving in the temple. According to what God said (1 Chronicles 22:9), Solomon was made king over Israel (1 Chronicles 23:1).

2. Read Numbers 4:1-3, 30-31, 49. What took place in those verses, and what was the purpose?

Transporting the tabernacle from place to place before required able men / strength) a census of the Levites between 30 - 50 years old were taken.

3. What do you think is the significance of not having to carry the tabernacle for service anymore? (25-26)

For David said, “The LORD, the God of Israel, has given rest to his people, and he dwells in Jerusalem forever. And so the Levites no longer need to carry the tabernacle or any of the things for its service.”

4. With a new permanent location of the temple, David reorganizes the Levites with specific duties. What was their role? (27 - 32)

Read 1 Chronicles 24

5. What did David organize for the house of the Lord in this chapter?

Priests, sons of Aaron.

6. How many divisions were set up here?

David set up 24 divisions or orders of priests. Based on the Jewish calendar. On rotation (2 weeks every year, the priests were to go to Jerusalem on duty to serve at the temple.

Read 1 Chronicles 25

7. What did David set up in this chapter, and what were their roles? (1-6)

Musicians - prophesied with lyres, with harps, and with cymbals for the service of the house of God, with thanksgiving and praise to God. In 1 Chronicles 15-16, we saw how David introduced / instructed / organised men to be in charge of worship with music. With the permanent construction of the temple, how formalises this.

8. How many divisions were set up here?

David set up 24 divisions or order of musicians.

9. We see that they are appointed to prophesy. What does this mean?

Their role in prophesying was not in the sense of predicting the future, but rather proclaiming & declaring the truth of God, giving thanks and praise to Him.

Read 1 Chronicles 26

10. What did David organize for the house of the Lord in this chapter?

Verse	Role/Duty
1-19	
20-28	
29	
30-32	

Thinking It Through

11. Why do you think the divisions of priests, musicians, and gatekeepers were in this way? (24:5, 31, 25:8, 26:13)
How does this contrast with David taking the census?

It was decided by the casting of lots. It was not gambling, but a common way of determining God's will. In David's census, he was relying on the strength of arms for victory, which ultimately points to reliance on human wisdom. This is contrasted here where we see David organising according to how God sees things. Perhaps it shows that there was no favouritism - small and great alike, God uses all our talents; there were different roles, not all as glamorous as others (priest entering into God's very presence vs. gatekeepers who were essentially security guards), but all has to be done and done according to what God has allotted each to do.

Spurgeon: "*If there be degrees in glory [in heaven], they will not be distributed according to our talents, but according to our faithfulness in using them. As to whether there are degrees or not, I know not; but this I know, he that doeth his Lord's will, shall have said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant."*"

12. How would reading these chapters have been significant for the original readers?

This temple is a big deal and it's about God's covenant with His people. As they are about to rebuild the temple, this encourages them to recognise their roles/involvement in God's purposes.

13. Consider the number of people David gives responsibility for the service of the house of God, and his preparations for the temple as a whole.

(i) Why is this so important?

Why is so much time, money, effort and people channelled into the building and running of the temple system? Because it symbolizes God's presence among his people. The fate of the nation depended on this - on God being on our side and being among us and being our God. There is not any institution more important than this! When we ask, why dedicate so much attention and time in the bible to this section, the question should be what else could be more important. God's presence and communion with his people is the most important thing for anyone.

(ii) What does this tell us about David?

He makes extensive preparations for the building and personnel. Perhaps this points to him committing the people of Israel to this course. He wants to ensure this comes to fruition. This is how he displays faithfulness. Looking back, David has disobeyed God before, but always responds in repentance and seeks to do what is right before God. Here, we see David's change of attitude, wanting to do things that bring glory to God by doing it His way.

14. David was the king who led God's people to worship God rightly. We know this is fulfilled in Christ. What are the similarities and differences in their role as king?

Jesus: sacrifice / temple / high priest. What David is doing here mirrors what Jesus has done. David prepares for the building of God's temple and its personnel, which is temporary. Jesus brings forth an eternal one.

15. How exactly has God's King, Jesus appointed and enabled God's people to worship Him rightly?

- He brought the true temple (John 2:20-21)
- He saves us so we're able to turn to God. (Ephesians 2:1, 4-5)
- He sends the Spirit, the one who ensures that we get God's word as scripture.
- Through that, we come to the knowledge of Christ, enabling us to worship God rightly.

Application

16. What do these passages tell us about who we are, and discuss what the implications are for us today:

(i) Ephesians 2:18-22

(ii) 1 Peter 2:9

Study 10: “God Will Build His House” (1 Chronicles 27-28)

Recap

1. Recap the book of 1 Chronicles

Chap 1-9:34:	Genealogies: Creation to Restoration
Chap 9:35-11:9:	Saul to David
Chap 11:10-12:	Allegiance to King David
Chap 13-16:	Return of the Ark; Establishment of David's Kingdom
Chap 17:	God's Covenant with David
Chap 18-20:	David's Conquests
Chap 21-22:	Census & Temple Preparations
Chap 23-26:	Organization of Temple Service

<https://www.bibleblender.com/2010/bible-stories/old-testament/1-chronicles/detailed-outline-of-1-chronicles>

Digging In

Read 1 Chronicles 27:1-22

2. From the passage, how's David's military division arranged? What does this tells us more about David's military division?

Verses 1-15: David's mighty men (cf 2 Sam 23:8-39, 1 Chronicles 11:11-47)

- (i) Jashobeam
- (ii) Dodai
- (iii) Benaiah-son of Jehoiada
- (iv) Asahel
- (v) Shamhuth
- (vi) Ira
- (vii) Helez
- (viii) Sibbecai
- (ix) Abiezer
- (x) Maharai
- (xi) Benaiah (of Pirathon)
- (xii) Heldai

1 Chronicles 27:1

....served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month, throughout all the months of the year; by which it appears that the militia of the kingdom was divided into twelve courses, which served each month by turns; when one went out another came in; by which possibly means the king **was well supported and guarded**

Cf 1 Chronicles 17 God's Covenant with David

Verses 16-22: All except Gad and Asher, who are omitted; V23 David did not count those below twenty years of age, for the Lord had promised to make Israel as many as the stars of heaven. (cf 1 Chronicles 21)

Read 1 Chronicles 27:25-34

3. What can we tell from the passage regarding the grandeur of David's kingdom? List out what you can observe from the text.

-over the King treasures (v25)-Those treasures consisted of gold, silver, precious stones, cedar-wood

-vineyard (v27)

-olive and sycamore trees (v28)

-herds that pastured. camels, donkeys (v29-31)

Image of wealth/prosper v25-34, people v16-24 (cf 1 Chronicles 17-God's Covenant with David)

Verse breakdown: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/jamieson-fausset-brown/1-chronicles/1-chronicles-27.html>

Read 1 Chronicles 28:1-8

4. Who did David assemble and what's David instructions to them? Encourage to list them out. What is significant about these instructions?

-David's charge to Israel (audience v1: leaders listed, cf. 1 Chronicles 27:1-15)

-(v4-5) It was the **grace** of God that Solomon is chosen by God to build the temple

-establishment of Solomon's kingdom depends on his obedience to Yahweh

-(v8) This solemn and earnest exhortation to those present, and to all Israel through their representatives, to continue faithful in observing the divine law as essential to their national prosperity and permanence, is similar to that of Moses (cf Deuteronomy 30:15-20).

-(1 Chronicles 22:17)

Verse breakdown: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/jamieson-fausset-brown/1-chronicles/1-chronicles-28.html>

V4 Yet the Lord God of Israel chose me from all my father's house to be king over Israel forever. For he chose Judah as leader, and in the house of Judah my father's house, and among my father's sons he took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel.

-David's posterity for many years to come, and best of all in his antitype Christ, the son of David (cf Luke 1:31-33)

Read 1 Chronicles 28:9-20

5. What's David's instruction for Solomon? Let's list them out and explore its significance.

-Exhortation as well as instructions/plan for the Lord's temple (cf 1 Chronicles 22:11-16)

v18-19. It is quite clear that in all these directions David was not guided by his own taste, or by a desire for taking any existing model of architecture, but solely by God alone(v19)

Verse breakdown: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/jamieson-fausset-brown/1-chronicles/1-chronicles-28.html>

Application

6. How does these passages apply to the readers back then?

Heading towards the end of the story of 1 Chronicles, the author reminds again of the purpose of writing this book:

Calling God's people (post exilic) to arise and build His temple! Reminded them of faithfulness of God, encouraged them to be strong and courageous (cf. 1 Chronicles 28:20, 2 Chronicles 36:23)

7. What about us now?

We are God's temple nowadays, different from the physical temple back in the Old Testament (cf. Ephesians 2:11-22) We are building up the "temple" through building up each other (cf. Hebrews 10:19-39)

Can ask members to give some practical examples of how to build "temple" up nowadays.