

BIBLE COMPANION COMMENTARY:1

CHRONICLES

1 CHRONICLES

PREFACE

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Are there errors of thought and intellectual process in these volumes? Surely there are. Let me know about them. But don't fail to see the wood for the trees. Never let the wonder of the simple, basic Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Kingdom become obscured by all the angst over correctly interpreting this or that Bible verse. Believe it, respond to it, be baptized into Him, and let the word become flesh in you as it was so supremely in Him.

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Duncan Heaster

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 1

1Ch 1:1 Adam, Seth, Enosh-

We have to ask why these genealogies were prepared. It is quite likely that they were first formalized in the time of Hezekiah, but I would suggest that they were completed at the time of the restoration, when there was a problem in finding a High Priest and priesthood because it was hard to prove who was descended from Aaron, presumably because the genealogies were destroyed when the temple was burnt. The genealogies give much emphasis to the descendants of Aaron, far more than to the other tribes. There are a number of references to faithless men being punished by invasions (e.g. 1 Chron. 5:6). Ezra 8 contains a genealogy recorded in similar style and language to these in Chronicles. Nehemiah made a special study of the genealogies in order to find an acceptable priesthood (Neh. 7:5,64). So there were Israel returning from captivity, led by a faithful remnant of the priests, looking back through their history, right back to Abraham and beyond, and seeing that their history was shot through with failure. Such self-examination extended even to considering the names parents gave their children. Marriage out of the faith was a problem at the time of the restoration, and therefore the records of the genealogies stress how this had been a problem in the past- and had still not been forgotten by God (Ezra 9:1,2). The prophets foretold that Israel's restoration would only come once they achieved a suitable recognition of their sinfulness. And Isaiah's

prophecies of the restoration from Babylon are without doubt applicable to the establishment of the Kingdom at Christ's return; which means that Israel at the time of the restoration should represent us now, on the brink of the second coming and the full re-establishment of Israel's Kingdom. The coming of that blessed time may well be dependent upon our self-examination, to the point of really taking a breath when we realize the extent of our personal and collective shortcomings all down the years. The priests who wrote those records in Chronicles were writing down the result of their national self-examination. This was the record of their lessons from Chronicles. Each of the genealogies say something about the people they are concerned with; and thus 2 Chron. 12:15 RVmg. speaks of how the acts of Rehoboam are reflected in the reckoning of the genealogies.

1Ch 1:2 Kenan-

Perhaps this was from whom the faithful Heber the Kenite was descended (Jud. 4:11,17; Jud. 5:24).

Mahalalel, Jared-

Mahalalel is "Praise of God". It's questionable how much significance we should attach to the meaning of names; but this meaning would encourage us to again see some spirituality in the line of Seth. Jared had a child somewhat later in life (Gen. 5:18). Perhaps this reflects a lengthy search for a Godly wife; or perhaps his earlier children were spiritual failures and weren't therefore the ones through whom the seed was to be preserved.

1Ch 1:3 Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech-

Adam Clarke and others see "Methuselah" as meaning something to the effect of "When he dies, it [or judgment] shall come". And he died in the year the flood came. Jude 14 mentions that Enoch prophesied of judgment to come upon the world of his day. This would suggest that there had been a revelation about the flood before Noah received the command to build the ark. He would've obeyed, encouraged by Methuselah. The threat of judgment was therefore hanging over the earth for many centuries before the flood came; they were a society without excuse, and the gradual falling away of the faithful until only Noah was left would've been an awful period to live through. And the days of Noah are as our last days.

We wonder why Lamech was not saved in the ark, and why he died relatively young (Gen. 5:26). We can assume that he fell away from the faith, whilst his father and son [Noah] remained faithful. To hold to the faith amidst such mass apostasy, including amongst your immediate family, is notable indeed. Or it could simply be that he died younger than the others because of persecution or natural causes.

Another alternative is that we are to understand 'comfort' in Gen. 5:29 as only one possible translation; the idea could be that Lamech hoped that his son Noah would be the one who would bring about repentance / changing in God regarding the curse upon the earth. In this case, we see Lamech hoping that this son of his would be the promised "seed of the woman" of Gen. 3:15, a Messiah figure. However, the Lamech of Gen. 5:28 may well be the Lamech of Gen. 4:18-22; both Lamechs are described as having Methuselah as their father. As often in early Genesis, this would be a case of one history being recorded in one chapter and then another one in the next- as with the two creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2. In this case, if Lamech is the same Lamech, then Noah had very gifted and high flying siblings. His brother Jabal was the leader of the cattle owners (Gen. 4:20); his brother Jubal was the leading musician of the age (Gen. 4:21); Tubalcain his other brother was the leader of all the metalworkers. Lamech was the first polygamist, who killed a young man for a slight insult and boasted about it; and whose wife Adah means 'decorated / adorned'. These were people of the world. And Noah was the sidekick brother who was to do all the menial farm work so the rest of them could pursue their careers and social lives. Against this of course it can be

argued that there are differences in the genealogies of Genesis chapters 4 and 5. However, in the context, Gen. 6:1-4 describes how the lines of Seth and Cain intermarried [the sons of God married the daughters of men] and it could be argued that the genealogies we have aren't complete, generations are skipped, and 'having a son' could be understood in a wider sense than referring to a son directly fathered by the person concerned. 'Lamech' in Hebrew is comprised of the three central letters of the Hebrew alphabet and it could be argued that this reflects his 'joining' function [as it does in other Semitic literature], in joining the Sethite and Cainite lines together. The resemblances between the six names in Gen. 4:17,18 with six in chapter 5 is striking, and they both culminate in Lamech, as if he was the one in whom the lines mixed. Interestingly, Lamech in Gen. 4:24 speaks of 77 fold vengeance coming upon him; and the Lamech of Gen. 5:30 [the same Lamech?] dies at 777 years old. It also needs to be carried in mind that Semitic 'genealogies' aren't always chronological; they are constructed in order to make various points or develop themes, as in the genealogies of the Lord in Matthew and Luke.

1Ch 1:4 Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth-

Did Noah's parents expect Noah to be the child who would do all the hard menial work for them, so that they would suffer less from the curse placed upon the ground in Eden? This might explain why Noah had children when he was 500, far older than others of his time (Gen. 5:32- Noah's father had had his first children at 182, Gen. 5:28; Seth had his first child at 105, Gen. 5:6; Enos at 95, Gen. 5:9; Cainan at 70, Gen. 5:12; Mahalalel at 65, Gen. 5:15; Jared at 162, Gen. 5:18; Enoch at 65, Gen. 5:21; Methuselah at 187, Gen. 5:25); Gen. 6:18 implies that Noah only had three sons, whereas for people with such long life spans we'd have expected him to have had far more than that. He only had three children- for he prepared the ark to save "his house" (Heb. 11:7) and Gen. 7:1 is quite clear: "Go into the ark, you and *all* your household"- his whole household was his wife, three sons and their wives. Period. Perhaps we get the picture of a man who was the underdog, the farm worker, the sidekick of the family, whose own family life was delayed and limited by this background. Perhaps he turned to alcohol for comfort (hence Gen. 9:21). But it was he whom God chose to save, he alone who was righteous in that generation which perished. It was the quiet, broken man who was saved. The Hebrew word for "Comfort" [a play on 'Noah'] occurs later, when we read how God "repented" that He had made man (Gen. 6:6,7). Lamech's desire for 'comfort' was fulfilled but not as he imagined; not through his son being his personal slave, but rather in God changing His mind about humanity and making a new start. We get what we desire, in essence; and so we need to desire the right thing.

1Ch 1:5 The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras-

These and other names here occur in the list of nations in Ez. 38 who will invade Israel in the latter days, and we see that they are therefore all within the territory of the *eretz* promised to Abraham. And that is precisely the situation we see developing there today. The idea that "Japheth" refers to western Europe is mere fancy; the context here clearly explains that these are the nations living in the *eretz*. "Madai" refers to the Medes. "Tiras" is Tyre; and clearly Meshech refers to an area within the *eretz* and not to Moscow; and likewise with Tubal.

We note that out of Noah's three sons, fewest descendants are listed for Japheth. And there is no suggestion in this genealogy that they lived "in the tents of Shem", as Noah had predicted in his half drunken cursing of Ham and blessing of Japheth. This would suggest that his cursings were just that, the cursings of a man awaking with a hangover... and are not to be taken as actual prophecies of the future relationships between the sons.

1Ch 1:6 The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Diphath and Togarmah-

Ashkenaz was one of the nations which overthrew Babylon (Jer. 51:27). Again, we're dealing with a people within the *eretz* and not outside of it. I would argue that the Bible has very little to specifically say about the peoples beyond the *eretz*.

1Ch 1:7 The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim and Rodanim-

Tarshish is a relative of Togarmah (:6), Meshech and Tubal (:5). This confirms my suggestion on Ez. 38 that Tarshish is with the other invaders and not against them. Tarshish may be another name for Tyre. The Tel Amarna tablets mention some of these names as peoples in the *eretz* promised to Abraham.

1Ch 1:8 The sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim, Put and Canaan-

The Canaanites were therefore under Noah's curse to be subservient to Shem. But as discussed on Gen. 9, it's hard to know whether to take Noah's cursings as any more than the cursings of a man awaking from a drunken stupor.

Pan-Arabism will in the end come to its full term (however short-lived), in the final invasion of Israel. The Hebrew word translated "Libya" is also translated "Phut" or "Put", which was another name for Libya in Bible times. "Mizraim" likewise is the Biblical name for Egypt. Significantly, Phut, Mizraim and Canaan were brothers (Gen. 10:6). There is therefore a strong and valid idea of Arab brotherhood between the Palestinian Arabs [i.e. the Arabs living in Canaan or the land of Israel] and the Arabs of Libya, Egypt and the other countries in the surrounding Arab world. The Babylonian invasion of Judah was a type of the invasion of Israel by latter day 'Babylon', which will bring on the return of Christ. But this invasion [as at the time of the Assyrian invasion of Israel] was really by a confederacy of nations- including the Ethiopians, Lydians, Egyptians and Libyans (Jer. 46:8,9 cp. Nahum 3:9). And history will repeat itself- in that these nations along with Babylon will invade Israel in the last days. But where history shall stop, the red line of human time come to a terminus, will be in the simple fact that this time, the Lord Jesus shall return to earth to establish God's Kingdom here.

1Ch 1:9 The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba, and Dedan-

Sheba and Dedan are found in Ez. 38 as amongst the enemies of Israel in the last days; see on Ez. 38:13. The impression is given that all the nations surrounding Israel in the *eretz*, descendants of all three sons of Noah, will invade her in the last days.

1Ch 1:10 Cush became the father of Nimrod, who began to be a mighty one in the earth-

Nimrod founded Babel or Babylon (Gen. 10:10). The "top" or *rosh* of the Babel tower was to reach to heaven; as in Ez. 38:2, the *rosh* refers to a person who was being elevated, and we assume this person was Nimrod. Ham and his descendants were not therefore black Africans, as proposed by 19th century racist theologians. The connection is clearly with the "mighty ones" of Gen. 6:4, for whose sake the earth was destroyed by the flood. Again, the potential for restoring Eden was messed up by human dysfunction. The term is used of the 'mighty ones' of Canaan who were to be subdued (Josh. 6:2; Jud. 5:13,23). Israel in the wilderness listening to Moses' teaching would have learnt that there had been 'mighty ones in the land', the very land they were now approaching, who likewise would ultimately come to nothing.

The "mighty in the land" or *eretz* promised to Abraham had been the likes of the "giants" of Gen. 6:4; Nimrod / Assyria (Gen. 10:8); Babylon (Gen. 46:12) and indeed all the Gentile nations of the *eretz* (Ez. 32:27); but the hope of the promises to Abraham was and is that *his* seed will be mighty in the land" (Ps. 112:2). There is to be a radical inversion of all things upon the earth.

Nimrod "the mighty hunter against the Lord" (Gen. 10:9 Heb.) uses a word related to 'Gibbor', the title of Christ used in Is. 9:6. Nimrod appears to be a prototype anti-God and anti-Christ, and for this he was well known even then. Gen. 10:10,11 shows his characteristic of building cities in the Babylon/Assyria area. Seeing that "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel" (Gen. 10:10), it is not unreasonable to assume that when "a man said to his neighbour, Go to, let us make brick" to build the tower of Babel, this is in fact referring to Nimrod (Gen. 11:3 A.V. mg.).

1Ch 1:11 Mizraim-

This is the usual word for "Egypt". The *eretz* extended to the river of Egypt, and so we can assume that this person lived in Egypt east of the Nile, rather than referring to "Egypt" as it is now defined.

Became the father of Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim-

Anamim may be related to the "anakim", the giant people who inhabited Canaan. This material reminded Israel of the origin of the peoples they were to encounter in Canaan. These people were mere men, descendants from the same Noah whom they too were descended from; and whatever their size or physical features, they were not to be unduly feared. We note the absence of Divine names in nearly all the descendants of Noah here listed; in contrast to the way that they feature in the names of those before the flood. The impression we get is that Noah's descendants failed to keep the faith, until it had totally died out and God called Abram and revealed Himself to him.

1Ch 1:12 Pathrusim, Casluhim (where the Philistines came from) and Caphtorim-

As noted on :12, one intention of this genealogy was to assure Israel that the enemies they were encountering in the *eretz*, such as the Philistines, were mere men; there was nothing superhuman about them.

1Ch 1:13 Canaan became the father of Sidon his firstborn, Heth-

Sidon is known as a town in northern Palestine. Constantly, we encounter evidence that this genealogy describes the peoples of the *eretz* promised to Abraham. Heth likewise lived in the land of Canaan (Gen. 25:3).

1Ch 1:14 the Jebusite, the Amorite, the Girgashite-

The Jebusites inhabited Jerusalem (2 Sam. 24:18), and so often the Hivites, Jebusites and Amorites are spoken of as the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. There is no way that Canaan therefore refers to Africa and negroid peoples.

1Ch 1:15 the Hivite, the Arkite, the Sinite-

These were the tribes through whom the Israelites would've travelled on their wilderness journeys; the Sinites lives around mount Sinai.

1Ch 1:16 the Arvadite, the Zemarite and the Hamathite-

Gen. 10:18 adds: "Afterward the families of the Canaanites were spread abroad". The same word is used for how the builders of Babel feared being "spread abroad" (Gen. 11:8), and yet they were "spread abroad" after the confusion of languages (Gen. 11:9). Again this is evidence that the genealogy of chapter 10 is descriptive of what came to pass after the Babel incident in chapter 11. We read there of how the situation in chapter 10 came about; see on :20. The same word is frequently translated "scattered", and usually refers to Divine judgment. So we could read this as meaning that the Canaanites were scattered, spread abroad, after Babel, in judgment for wanting to resist that judgment; and for wanting to build

the blasphemous ziggurat, a massive temple system intending to place themselves as God Himself. There is reason to think that in the last days a similar structure will be built by the same ethnic groups in the same land... and likewise judged.

If we include Canaan himself, we have here a description of 12 tribes of Canaan. They were a fake, imitation Israel; and were to be superseded by the 12 tribes of Israel.

1Ch 1:17 The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether and Meshech-

Wherever these peoples later lived, they were at this time all within the *eretz* promised to Abraham. "Aram" is the word usually translated "Syria". Job lived in the land of Uz. The Meshech of Ez. 38 is to be interpreted as some people within the *eretz* promised to Abraham.

1Ch 1:18 Arpachshad became the father of Shelah, and Shelah became the father of Eber-
"Shelah" like most of the names in this genealogy has a rather negative spiritual meaning; in this case, "missile". The impression given is that spirituality died out over these generations, until God started again with the call of Abram.

1Ch 1:19 To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg; for in his days the land was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan-

This "division" refers not to plate tectonics, but to the division of the earth according to language which we read of in Genesis chapter 11. The division of the *eretz* at Babel is therefore presented here as occurring four generations after the flood; although the Biblical genealogies frequently skip generations, and in this case, they must be compared with the information provided in Genesis 5 and 10.

1Ch 1:20 Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah-

More sons of Joktan are recorded than for any other in this genealogy. Yet his name means "made little"; perhaps we are to understand that the one who was somehow made little was the one who became great, in terms of descendants.

1Ch 1:21 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah-

"Hadoram" meaning "high place", we again get the impression of unspirituality amongst these peoples. This genealogy is explaining how indeed the descendants of Noah were scattered throughout the *eretz* promised to Abraham after Babel; where they later may have migrated to isn't in view here. But it is also noteworthy that the children of Joktan would appear to be located in the Arabian peninsular and what is now Yemen. The southern borders of the *eretz* are hard to define; perhaps we are to include these areas within it.

1Ch 1:22 Ebal, Abimael, Sheba-

Most commentaries focus upon where these tribes ended up living later. But let's remember that we are here reading of how the descendants of Noah were scattered throughout the *eretz* promised to Abraham after the events of Babel. Where they may have migrated to afterwards is not what is in view here.

1Ch 1:23 Ophir, Havilah and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan-

There is a "Havilah" in :9, which may suggest that the lines of Ham and Joktan intermarried. This again would be evidence that the curses of Noah didn't come into effect; for he presupposed that the lines of descent from his sons would be distinct, especially between Ham and the others. According to LXX notes, this "Jobab" is the Job of the book of Job.

1Ch 1:24 Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah-

It should be noted that the Septuagint gives different ages and inserts other generations in genealogies such as this one. Yet the Septuagint is usually the version quoted by the inspired New Testament writers, including for passages where the Masoretic Text reads quite differently. This has large implications for the theory that Adam was created 4000 BC, and the six thousand year plan theory.

1Ch 1:25 Eber, Peleg, Reu-

The genealogies of Genesis 11 reveal how some human lives repeat according to the same outline schema. See on Gen. 11:10,14. Both Arphachsad and Shelah each lived 403 years after the births of the eldest sons.

1Ch 1:26 Serug, Nahor, Terah-

Peleg, Serug and Shelah were each 30 when their first sons were born (Gen. 11:14,18,22). We too can find uncanny similarities between our lives and those of others in the faith; or between our lives and Biblical characters. The same Divine hand is at work. Nahor therefore died at 148 (Gen. 11:25), the shortest liver among the post-flood patriarchs. We wonder why exactly that was... seeing that his grandson Abram was to be the one chosen. It perhaps made Abram reflect upon the brevity of life and the failure of idolatry to offer real salvation. It's a very strange 'co-incidence' (if that's indeed what it is) that Noah, Peleg and Nahor all died in the same year- when Abraham was about 50 years old, living in Ur. Whilst we have no evidence that these men were all living together, it's not impossible that they were. Perhaps they died in some calamity in Ur. So it could well be that the motive for leaving Ur in the first place was therefore mixed- it was fleeing from a material threat more than plain obedience to a Divine command. This would explain why the family settled in relatively nearby Haran, and remained there for so long.

1Ch 1:27 Abram (the same is Abraham)-

The meanings of Abraham's immediate ancestors all have associations with idolatry, confirming the note in Josh. 24:2 that Abram and his ancestors were idolaters. Out of that background, God chose a man who had the potential to be different. Another reading of "Terah" is that it means "One who tarries / remains", which would fit with his remaining in Haran and not going further towards Canaan.

1Ch 1:28 The sons of Abraham: Isaac, and Ishmael-

Ishmael was born before Isaac, but clearly Isaac is presented as Abraham's lead descendant.

1Ch 1:29 These are their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam-

I suggested on :1 that these genealogies were written up at the time of the exile, making them contemporary with the prophecies of later Isaiah about Nebaioth and Kedar being reconciled with Abraham's seed through Isaac and Jacob, and worshipping Yahweh together in a restored, multiethnic Kingdom of God in Israel (Is. 60:7).

1Ch 1:30 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema-

Dumah intermarried with the Edomites (Is. 21:11,12). These 12 tribes of Ishmael make them a pseudo Israel, and yet also, as Paul develops in Gal. 4, representatives of unbelieving Israel after the flesh.

The names of Ishmael's sons make a statement about their final acceptance in God's Kingdom, in language which is picked up in the later prophecies about them in Is. 60:6,7; 43:19,20: "In the high places a powerful people will experience a miracle of God. For they

shall cause sweet odours to ascend, calling His fame to remembrance. Their burden will be lifted, they will become mighty in power, conquerors of the desert, strong in defence, numerous in population, at the forefront of the nations".

1Ch 1:31 Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael-

Ishmael is recorded as having 12 sons, who grew into tribes. This makes them a kind of parallel with the 12 sons and tribes of Jacob. But as noted on :29, one of the purposes of these genealogies was to persuade the exiles against their tendency to racial elitism, and to accept that all the tribes of the *eretz* promised to Abraham were Divinely intended to reconcile around Him in a restored kingdom of God. They were being reminded that they were in fact all very similar in their roots.

Abraham's prayer that Ishmael might be accepted into the covenant was heard [his name means 'God has heard']. The same promises were made to him as to Isaac; his 12 tribes (Gen. 17:20) could also have become some kind of people of God. But in this world, they chose not to; although for Abraham's sake, their latter day representatives will finally be saved.

1Ch 1:32 The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bore Zimran, Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan: Sheba and Dedan-

These records seem to stress the weakness and occasional strength of these children of God. This is one of the major lessons from Chronicles. Every now and then, the list of names is interrupted by a piece of information which indicates God's awareness of their spirituality. For example, the fact some men had more than one wife or a wife from a nation other than Israel is often recorded (1 Chron. 1:32; 2:3,26,35,48; 4:18; 5:1; 7:14; 8:8). The way these interruptions occur in the lists of names stands out. This is surely to indicate two things: that many faithful men (e.g. Abraham and Caleb, 1 Chron. 1:32; 2:46) made mistakes in this area of life, and secondly that all down the centuries God has not forgotten that they married out of the faith, or that they allowed the pressures of their surrounding world to influence them to break away from the ideal one man: one woman standard of Eden. These two facts provide us with both warning and comfort, in that although God is sensitive to failure, He is still able to justify men, to count them as if they are righteous for the sake of their covenant relationship with Him, even though (e.g.) their married life was not completely in order.

1Ch 1:33 The sons of Midian: Ephah, Ephher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah-

Is. 60:6 and Ps. 72:10 envisage Ephah and other children of Keturah as ultimately saved along with Israel in the Kingdom age. The blessing upon Abraham will ultimately come true upon all his seed, by grace alone.

1Ch 1:34 Abraham became the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel-

Isaac had no other recorded children, which is unusual for a wealthy man who lived a long time. This would reflect a great loyalty to Rebekah, in an age of polygamy.

1Ch 1:35 The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam and Korah-

The Eliphaz the Temanite of the book of Job, who it seems eventually came to know God through Job's forgiveness of him and prayer for him. So we see here how relationship with God skipped a generation, as often happens. Reuel is "Friend of God". We wonder if as with Eliphaz, this was another example of a spiritual person emerging from an unspiritual background and genealogy.

1Ch 1:36 The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna and Amalek-

Amalek became a major enemy of Israel; but his father Eliphaz was a believer, if as suggested on :35 he is the Eliphaz of the book of Job. And so we see what is apparent in the records of the kings of Judah; good men have bad sons and bad men have good sons. Spirituality is personal and not inherited; and bad background is not an insurmountable handicap to faith and spirituality.

1Ch 1:37 The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizza-

Reuel, "friend of God", may have been a believer, despite having a father and mother (Gen. 36:10) and maternal grandmother who didn't want the things of the Kingdom promises. The new creation in Christ means that we are free of such background influences if we truly respond to the word of promise. But his sons weren't. For the names of the sons are distinctly unspiritual, especially bearing in mind the Semitic way of giving a name to a person which reflects their character. Respectively, these names mean "declining", "sun rising" and "wasting". Their birth names could have been recorded, but instead the names they were known by later are recorded.

1Ch 1:38 The sons of Seir: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer and Dishan-

Again the names are hardly suggestive of true spirituality; Dishon and Ezer respectively mean "the trampler", "man of treasure". "Dishan" is another form of "Dishon"; it would be likely that Dishon died prematurely and so was as it were replaced by Dishan. Anah could be a female name.

Gen. 36:20 adds: "These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah". The idea is that they were formerly the inhabitants of that land, but were driven out by the Edomites (Dt. 2:12,22), an encouragement to Israel in the wilderness who first heard Genesis to likewise drive out the tribes from their allotted possession as Edom / Esau had done. The sons of Seir are listed amongst the descendants of Esau perhaps on the basis of the idea that Gentile peoples were counted as his descendants, just as was to be true, in a different sense, of Abraham's true seed. As noted on :30, Esau's nation is portrayed as an imitation of the true people of God. Or it could be argued that the similarities are because God chose to bless Isaac's son in this life, but without the eternal and Messianic dimension which was attached to the line through Jacob.

1Ch 1:39 The sons of Lotan: Hori, and Homam; and Timna was Lotan's sister-

"Homam" means "raging anger", continuing the uncontrolled passion of the moment which was seen in Esau. We note the uncommon mention of a woman. Why this special mention of Timna ["restraint"] as being the aunty of "Heman", "raging anger"? Perhaps to continue the theme developed here- that out of all this unspirituality and unrestrained human nature, there were various individuals who were different and rose above their surrounding environment. This is of huge encouragement to us today.

1Ch 1:40 The sons of Shobal: Alian, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi and Onam. The sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah-

Shobal = 'overflowing'; Alian = 'haughty'; Manahath = 'rest / peace'; Ebal = 'naked'; Shephi = 'naked'; Onam = 'strong man'. As noted on :39, in the midst of these names with sexual and other very human connotations, Manahath has a much nicer meaning. Perhaps again we have one spiritual person amongst unspiritual siblings.

1Ch 1:41 The son of Anah: Dishon. The sons of Dishon: Hamran, Eshban, Ithran and Cheran-

Hamran = 'desirable wine' (s.w. Is. 27:2 AV "red wine"); Eshban = 'vigorous growth'; Ithran

= 'excess'; Cheran = 'angry'. We have the same idea as noted on :37,38; in the midst of very unspiritual names, we have one which speaks of something positive, of growth. Out of all this unspirituality and unrestrained human nature, there were various individuals who were different and rose above their surrounding environment. This is of huge encouragement to us today.

1Ch 1:42 The sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan and Jaakan. The sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran-
Bilhan = 'humble'; Zaavan = 'not at peace'; Jaakan = 'twister'. As noted on :41, we again have here one spiritual name in the midst of very unspiritual ones, remembering that names were attached to individuals according to what they were known well for. See on :39.

1Ch 1:43 Now these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel: Bela the son of Beor; and the name of his city was Dinhabah-

This seems a rather irrelevant statement- until it is appreciated that the point is being made that Israel's desire for a king was influenced by the fact the surrounding peoples had them. However, the reference could be to Moses as "king" of Israel effectively (Dt. 33:5), and the idea may simply be that this was how things were before the time of Moses. The list of kings we now have could be a chronological list of those who reigned in the area up until the time of Moses and the book of Genesis being completed.

1Ch 1:44 Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place-
The Septuagint states that Job was the "Jobab" of 1 Chron. 1:44,45, who lived five generations after Abraham. Again we see how individuals amongst the otherwise unspiritual line of Esau did turn to the true God and were accepted in covenant relationship; some of the names and localities of his three friends also occur in this list of Esau's descendants and associates. In this case we marvel at the spiritual growth of Job, coming from such an unspiritual background, with the previous king living in a city called "Robbers' den" (:43).

1Ch 1:45 Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place-
Teman is apparently near Petra and Mount Paran (Hab. 3:3), as is Dinhabah (:43). We can therefore assume that Job lived in that area too.

1Ch 1:46 Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who struck Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place; and the name of his city was Avith-
Israel in the wilderness also smote Midian (Num. 31:8; Josh. 13:21). The fact others had "struck Midian" was therefore recorded as encouragement to them; and we too are intended to be inspired by Biblical history, realizing that our experiences are not totally unique, but in essence are repetitions of Biblically recorded situations and past victories.

1Ch 1:47 Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place-
Masrekah means "vineyards" and we assume he was famed for his wine; contributing to the generally negative spiritual tone found in most of these names. "Samalah" likewise means 'mantle', perhaps a referring to the mantles used in religious rituals.

1Ch 1:48 Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth by the River reigned in his place-
"The river" is the Euphrates, which formed the boundary of the promised land; again the impression is given that the people of Esau chose to live outside the promised land.

1Ch 1:49 Shaul died, and Baal Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place-

Strong offers "possessor of grace" as the meaning of Baal Hanan, which would fit in with the theme of there being occasionally very spiritual people amongst the otherwise unspiritual line of Edom, encouraging us also to rise up against the factors of environment and hereditary; for his father Achbor means 'attacker'. But it could equally mean the Baal or Lord of Canaan, even though they were not in Canaan.

1Ch 1:50 Baal Hanan died, and Hadad reigned in his place; and the name of his city was Pai: and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab- More detail is given about this Hadad. I suggested on :43 that this list of kings could be a chronological list of those who reigned in the area up until the time of Moses and the book of Genesis was completed. Hadad would be "the king of Edom" with whom Israel had dealings in Num. 20:14.

1Ch 1:51 Hadad died. The chiefs of Edom were: chief Timna, chief Aliah, chief Jetheth- There are only 11 recorded here compared to the 14 earlier in this chapter and in Gen. 36. This could be because some were assimilated into others; or because what we now read is a list of their localities rather than of individuals, and there may have been more than one "chief" within the same single locality.

1Ch 1:52 chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon- Oholibamah ['tent of the high places'] was a woman, and I suggested on :38 that Anah was also a female chief. Elah = 'oak tree', associated with pagan shrines; Pinon = 'distracted'. All evidence of paganism and unspirituality.

1Ch 1:53 chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar- Kenaz = 'hunter'; Teman = 'stronger', Mibzar = 'strong hold'; all the language of human strength and prowess. See on :54.

1Ch 1:54 chief Magdiel, chief Iram. These are the chiefs of Edom- Iram = 'wisdom of the city'. The names of the other chiefs in :52 and :53 were all very unspiritual and some have definite pagan hints. Therefore Magdiel, 'precious to God', stands out in its meaning. Again, we are being shown that out of an unspiritual lineage, family and environment, individuals can be transformed and overcome all that to be part of God's covenant purpose. This is significant encouragement for we today who can feel swamped by unspiritual environments.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 2

1Ch 2:1 These are the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun-

This list is not by order of birth, but is split up according to the mothers. It begins with the six sons of the first wife Leah; then the older son of Rachel's handmaid Bilhah; the two sons of the favourite wife Rachel; the other son of Rachel's handmaid Bilhah; and finally the two sons of Zilpah, handmaid of Leah.

1Ch 2:2 Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad and Asher-

We note the inclusion of Dan in the list when he is later excluded in such lists. At this point, the genealogy is a statement of fact rather than theological interpretation.

1Ch 2:3 The sons of Judah: Er, Onan and Shelah; which three were born to him of

Shua's daughter the Canaanitess. Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of Yahweh; and He killed him-

More detail will be given to the children of Judah, because these genealogies were written up for the exiles of Judah in Babylon. And the descendants of Judah are given first. But lest there be any idea that Judah was somehow spiritually superior, the genealogy starts with a clear recollection that Judah was far from a spiritual man.

1Ch 2:4 Tamar his daughter-in-law bore him Perez and Zerah. All the sons of Judah were five-

Gen. 38:29 gives the background: "It happened, as he drew back his hand, that behold, his brother came out, and she said, Why have you made a breach for yourself? Therefore his name was called Perez". The theme of the second born being the chosen one continues. It was accepted that Perez was the one in the line of the Messianic seed and that this pregnancy was of God (Ruth 4:12), even though he was not technically the firstborn. "Made a breach" is literally 'to spread abroad', and is the word used in the promises of how the Messianic seed was to break forth or spread abroad (Gen. 28:14).

1Ch 2:5 The sons of Perez: Hezron, and Hamul-

"Hamul" means 'The one who was spared', which rather suggests he too had sinned like Er and Onan, but was spared by grace. Again, we hardly get a very positive spiritual impression of Jacob's family. They were saved by grace.

1Ch 2:6 The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol and Dara; five of them in all-

Calcol and the other names mentioned in 1 Kings 4:31 as wise men are all mentioned in 1 Chron. 2:6 as sons of Zerah, men of Judah. The idea of 1 Kings 4:30,31 is that Solomon's wisdom exceeded that of famous Gentile wise men, and also of the wise men of Judah. "Ethan the Ezrahite" of 1 Kings 4:31 and Ps. 89:31 is this Ethan; "Ezrahite" is "Zarhite", or descendant of Zerah.

1Ch 2:7 The sons of Carmi: Achar the troubler of Israel, who committed a trespass in the devoted thing-

This is alluded to in Prov. 15:27: "He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house". The initial reference would be to Achan who loved and coveted wealth and thereby troubled Israel and his own house (s.w. 1 Chron. 2:7).

1Ch 2:8 The son of Ethan: Azariah-

The wise spiritual man (see on :6) had but one son, "Yah has helped". Perhaps that was enough for him, or maybe this is the one son who was faithful.

1Ch 2:9 The sons also of Hezron, who were born to him: Jerahmeel, Ram and Chelubai-

The descendants of the younger brother Ram are given first because they include David. "Chelubai" is "Caleb" (:42).

1Ch 2:10 Ram became the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, prince of the children of Judah-

Amminadab, the generous kinsman like Boaz (see on Ruth 4:19), had a descendant called Nahshon, meaning 'snake'. The abrupt juxtaposition is so that we understand

that spirituality is not at all inherited genetically. It is a case of consciously choosing to follow good examples.

1Ch 2:11 and Nahshon became the father of Salma, and Salma became the father of Boaz-

Mt. 1:5 says that Salmon ["Salma"] had Boaz by Rahab. Yet Rahab lived some time earlier. I therefore suggest that Salmon was the ancestor of Boaz [not the literal father], through the child he had from Rahab. This is mentioned to highlight the fact that Boaz was descended from Rahab, and therefore was generous to the strangers and saw nothing wrong with a Moabitess marrying into the congregation of Yahweh.

1Ch 2:12 and Boaz became the father of Obed, and Obed became the father of Jesse-

I noted on Ruth how the nameless relative of Ruth refused to redeem her lest he mar the inheritance for his sons. But that petty materialist remains anonymous, as will countless millions of others like him; whereas Boaz, who was prepared for love's sake to further divide his inheritance, goes down in perpetuity as the ancestor of David and the Lord Jesus.

1Ch 2:13 and Jesse became the father of his firstborn Eliab, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third-

His sons generally have spiritual names, surely reflective of his faith. This contrasts with the genealogy and names of the background family of Saul in 1 Chron. 8,9.

1Ch 2:14 Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth-

Raddai may be the Rei of 1 Kings 1:8, one of David's warriors.

1Ch 2:15 Ozem the sixth, David the seventh-

In 1 Chron. 2:15, David is placed seventh of seven sons, but elsewhere eighth of eight (1 Sam. 14:10,11; 17:12). Perhaps the eighth son was the Elihu of 1 Chron. 27:18. Or perhaps one of the sons died without children, and is therefore not included in 1 Chron. 2:15.

1Ch 2:16 and their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, Joab and Asahel, three-

David several times laments the hardness of heart to be seen in "the sons of Zeruiah". I assumed that Zeruiah was a man- until considering 1 Chron. 2:16, which says that Zeruiah was a sister of David. Joab was his nephew or cousin. The fact that the hardness of those three men seems to be associated with their mother would lead us to conclude that David's sister Zeruiah was an extremely hard woman. Her name "wounded" means that she may have been a hurt person who was therefore hard to everyone else. Inevitably there must have been strands of hardness in David too (consider his treatment of Uriah, his intended massacre of Nabal's encampment, torturing the Ammonites etc.); and yet more often than not, we get the impression that David was a real softy. His experience of life made him progressively more soft, whilst his sister and nephews went the other way. Truly could he comment towards the end of it all: "Your gentleness has made me great". We need to soberly consider the fact that we are either getting harder, or softer. There is no in between status. The softness and gentleness of the Lord Jesus, the great antitype of David, mixed as it was with that firmness of resolve and purpose (remember how He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem!) is surely something to really appreciate about Him, something to

rise up to, to be truly inspired by.

1Ch 2:17 Abigail bore Amasa; and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite-
David's sister therefore had a relationship with a non Israelite. Again we see the theme of spiritual weakness in these genealogies. See on :18.

1Ch 2:18 Caleb the son of Hezron fathered children by Azubah his wife, and by Jerioth; and these were her sons: Jeshar, Shobab and Ardon-
Heb. "took Azubah the wife of Jerioth"; as on :17,21 we have the theme of marital and sexual weakness in the family of Israel, and David in particular at this point. Hezron the grandson of Judah was one of those who went down into Egypt with Jacob (Gen. 46:12,26). Yet Caleb son of Jephuneh was 40 when the people left Egypt (Josh 14:7). So the Caleb in view is not the son of Jephuneh who spied out the land.

1Ch 2:19 Azubah died, and Caleb took to him Ephrath, who bore him Hur-
Ephrath was the early name of David's home town of Bethlehem, named after a woman (cp. Mic. 5:1).

1Ch 2:20 Hur became the father of Uri, and Uri became the father of Bezalel-
This is the Bezaleel who helped make the tabernacle (Ex. 31:2). If Caleb of :19 is indeed the famous Caleb (but see on 1 Chron. 2:18), he was only 40 when he first spied out the land (Josh. 14:7), and Bezaleel was his grandson and made the tabernacle that same year. In this case Bezaleel was little more than a child. This would be typical of how God works through the weak and those considered inappropriate by men. He gave His Spirit to the young Bezaleel, who may have been only 12 years old, and through him built His dwelling place. We can be sure there would have been many older and experienced builders, who had worked for the Egyptian building projects, who would have been far more qualified in secular terms.

1Ch 2:21 Afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he took as wife when he was sixty years old; and she bore him Segub-
As on :17,18 we have the theme of marital and sexual weakness in the family of Israel, and David in particular at this point. From 1 Chron. 7:14 we learn that Machir was Manasseh's oldest son by a Syrian, Gentile woman. It was the Divine intention that marriage should be within the tribes of Israel so as to keep the inheritance which God intended. But here we have Manasseh and Judah intermarrying.

1Ch 2:22 Segub became the father of Jair, who had twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead-

This is the judge of Jud. 10:3,4. Some claim that the Bible doesn't recognize genealogy through women, and find some problem in the Lord Jesus being descended from Abraham and David through a woman. But there are Biblical examples of genealogy being reckoned through a woman. We have one here. Jair's father was of the tribe of Judah (1 Chron. 2:22); yet in Num. 32:41 he is described as "the son of Manasseh", showing that his mother must have been of the tribe of Manasseh. His descent was reckoned for some reason through his mother rather than his father.

1Ch 2:23 Geshur and Aram took the towns of Jair from them, with Kenath, and its villages, even sixty cities. All these were the sons of Machir the father of Gilead-
Heb. "the tent-villages of Jair"; "cities" is used not quite how the word is in modern

English. The record of the loss of inheritance to Gentiles is again an example of spiritual weakness being recorded in the genealogies.

1Ch 2:24 After that Hezron was dead in Caleb Ephrathah, then Abijah Hezron's wife bore him Ashhur the father of Tekoa-

The sense of the Hebrew may be as in LXX "And after Hezron was dead Caleb went in to Ephrath [:19] his father Hezron's wife and she bare him...". Again, we are seeing the record of spiritual weakness, especially in the area of sexual relationships. Hur was Ephrathah's firstborn (1 Chron. 4:4), so Ashhur would have been Hur's younger brother.

1Ch 2:25 The sons of Jerahmeel the firstborn of Hezron were Ram the firstborn, Bunah, Oren, Ozem and Ahijah-

"Ozen and Ahijah" could be as LXX "Ozem his brother. Jerahmeel settled in the south of Judah (1 Chron. 27:10; 30:29).

1Ch 2:26 Jerahmeel had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam-

Again we note the record of weakness in the area of sexual relationships. The point is that out of all this background weakness there arose the people of Judah and David the man after God's own heart. We cannot blame bad background for our lack of spirituality.

1Ch 2:27 The sons of Ram the firstborn of Jerahmeel were Maaz, Jamin and Eker- "Eker" is s.w. Lev. 25:47, and may mean 'a transplanted person', as if this was an adopted Gentile son. All the genealogies, not least those of the Lord Jesus, make the point that there was much Gentile blood in "Israel"; they were identified as God's people by faith and culture, and not on ethnic grounds.

1Ch 2:28 The sons of Onam were Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai: Nadab and Abishur-

"The sons of Shammai" is not in all the manuscripts, in which case Nadab and Abishur are two other sons of Onam.

1Ch 2:29 The name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail; and she bore him Ahban and Molid-

This unusual mention of the wife's name would imply special recognition of her. The Bible is remarkably respectful and inclusive of women when compared to contemporary writings.

1Ch 2:30 The sons of Nadab: Seled and Appaim; but Seled died without children-

To die without children was seen as a curse for unfaithfulness, so maybe this is yet another hint at the weakness of the Jewish fathers.

1Ch 2:31 The sons of Appaim: Ishi. The sons of Ishi: Sheshan. The sons of Sheshan: Ahlai-

In :34 we read that Sheshan had no sons, only daughters. Perhaps Ahlai had died by the point of summary given in :34. Or maybe "Ahlai" was a woman's name, and "sons" means 'descendants' rather than males [there are other examples of this].

1Ch 2:32 The sons of Jada the brother of Shammai: Jether and Jonathan; and Jether died without children-

Israel's sinfulness seems to be emphasized in 'interruptions' in the flowing list of names. Thus it is sometimes stressed that a man did not have many children (e.g. 1 Chron. 2:4,6,16,32,34; 4:27), as if to indicate that God's blessing was not with him (there seems an undoubted connection in Old Testament times between blessing and number of sons).

1Ch 2:33 The sons of Jonathan: Peleth and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel- "Peleth", 'the one who fled', would suggest spiritual weakness; for it was only an Israel who had broken covenant who would flee before their enemies.

1Ch 2:34 Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters-
See on :31.

Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha-

Occasionally there are implications of spiritual strength in the records (e.g. 1 Chron. 4:10). And more than this; several times the apparent weaknesses of men are covered over by God's imputed righteousness, and because God saw the ultimate end. Thus Boaz's marriage to a Gentile is not recorded; simply "Boaz begat Obed" (1 Chron. 2:12), whereas others' marriage out of the faith is recorded in the same chapter (1 Chron. 2:3,34). In harmony with this theme of imputed righteousness, there is no mention of Dan in these genealogies of the tribes of Israel- because the serpent was his symbol? (Dan is likewise omitted in Rev. 7:4).

1Ch 2:35 Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant as wife; and she bore him Attai-

Sheshan was so desperate for a line of descendants that he gave his daughter to a Gentile to marry. Yet again, an indication of spiritual weakness.

1Ch 2:36 Attai became the father of Nathan, and Nathan became the father of Zabad- Possibly the Zabad who was one of the mighty men of David (1 Chron. 11:41).

1Ch 2:37 Zabad became the father of Ephlal, Ephlal became the father of Obed- Zabad is in the 14th generation from the patriarch Judah, and this would make him roughly of the same generation as David.

1Ch 2:38 Obed became the father of Jehu, Jehu became the father of Azariah- "Obed", 'the servant', may mean that he was treated as a family servant because he was the youngest son, or that he was the son of a servant woman- again, an indication of spiritual weakness. And yet he had a son whom he named "Jehovah is he!" ('Jehu').

1Ch 2:39 Azariah became the father of Helez, Helez became the father of Eleasah- We note in this line that the names are generally spiritual or include the 'Yah' prefix or suffix.

1Ch 2:40 Eleasah became the father of Sismai, Sismai became the father of Shallum- It is hard to know with these Hebrew names whether they were really given at birth, or whether the person's subsequent character and life experience became the name by

which they were known. The Hebrew concept of a 'name' would suggest the latter, and even in English, people were known by the name of 'shepherd' or 'smith' or 'joiner' because that was what they did in their lives. But see on :41,43.

1Ch 2:41 Shallum became the father of Jekamiah and Jekamiah became the father of Elishama-

Names like 'Yah will rise' ['Jekamiah'] and 'God of hearing' ['Elishama'] suggest these were names given at birth, in hope and thankfulness on the part of the parents; whereas other names apparently arose in reflection of the person's character and life experience. See on :40.

1Ch 2:42 The sons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel were Mesha his firstborn, who was the father of Ziph. The son of Mareshah was Hebron-

The question is whether this is the same Caleb of the time of Joshua, who appears in view in :49 as the father of Achsah. But it could be a different Caleb, who also had a daughter called Achsah, in imitation of the earlier Caleb. I would think not, if this is the Caleb son of Hezron of :18. Hezron the grandson of Judah was one of those who went down into Egypt with Jacob (Gen. 46:12,26). Yet Caleb son of Jephuneh was 40 when the people left Egypt (Josh 14:7). So the Caleb in view is not the son of Jephuneh who spied out the land. .

1Ch 2:43 The sons of Hebron: Korah, Tappuah, Rekem and Shema-

"Korah" means 'bald', and would support the suggestion made on :40 that some names reflect character and life experience, rather than the birth name given by the parents.

1Ch 2:44 Shema became the father of Raham, the father of Jorkeam; and Rekem became the father of Shammai-

Who would name a child "destructive" ['Shammai'] at birth? I suggest as on :40 that many of these names reflect character and life experience, rather than the birth name given by the parents. And this is the basis upon which we shall be given a unique name in the Kingdom age, only appreciated by us and the Father and Son.

1Ch 2:45 The son of Shammai was Maon; and Maon was the father of Beth Zur-

"Maon", 'residence', and Beth Zur ['house on a rock'] have homes as a common theme. We see the concerns of the family reflected in the choice of names over the generations.

1Ch 2:46 Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza and Gazez; and Haran became the father of Gazez-

These records seem to stress the weakness and occasional strength of these children of God. This is one of the major lessons from Chronicles. Every now and then, the list of names is interrupted by a piece of information which indicates God's awareness of their spirituality. For example, the fact some men had more than one wife or a wife from a nation other than Israel is often recorded (1 Chron. 1:32; 2:3,26,35,48; 4:18; 5:1; 7:14; 8:8). The way these interruptions occur in the lists of names stands out. This is surely to indicate two things: that many faithful men (e.g. Abraham and Caleb, 1 Chron. 1:32; 2:46) made mistakes in this area of life, and secondly that all down the centuries God has not forgotten that they married out of the faith, or that they allowed the pressures of their surrounding world to influence them to break away from the ideal one man: one woman standard of Eden. These two facts provide us with both

warning and comfort, in that although God is sensitive to failure, He is still able to justify men, to count them as if they are righteous for the sake of their covenant relationship with Him, even though (e.g.) their married life was not completely in order. Some of the names given to children seem to hint at a weakness in the parents. One wonders why Caleb called his illegitimate son "Haran", after the city which Abraham left behind in order to attain God's promises. .

1Ch 2:47 The sons of Jahdai: Regem, Jothan, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah and Shaaph-
"Jahdai" is about the closest Hebrew term for 'Judaism', literally a fullness of the things of Judah. We presume this person was one of the offspring of Caleb's various relationships with concubines.

1Ch 2:48 Maacah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah-
"Maacah" means 'depressed', and gives weight to the suggestion discussed on :40 and elsewhere that Hebrew names were often a reflection of character and life experience, rather than the birth name given by the parents.

1Ch 2:49 She bore also Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbena, and the father of Gibeai; and the daughter of Caleb was Achsah-
This makes us think that this is the same Caleb of the time of Joshua, but it could be a different Caleb, who also had a daughter called Achsah, in imitation of the earlier Caleb. See on :18; although this may be a different Caleb.

1Ch 2:50 These were the sons of Caleb, the son of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah: Shobal the father of Kiriath Jearim-
The definition of "Caleb" is made complicated here because there appear to be men of the same name (see on :18), and one of them sought to imitate the earlier Caleb of Joshua's time (:49).

1Ch 2:51 Salma the father of Bethlehem, Hareph the father of Beth Gader-
"Father" here may refer not to having literal children, but to being the founder of towns such as Bethlehem. This is made explicit in :52.

1Ch 2:52 Shobal the founder of Kiriath Jearim was the ancestor of the people Haroeh and half of the people of Menuhoth-
The text is difficult. It could be "Who provided for half the resting-places", as if Shobal set up the resting stations for the caravans which passed through the territory of Judah. Cp. similar details (cp. 1 Chron. 4:21-23). Seraiah was called 'Prince of the resting-places' (Jer. 51:59 Heb.). This may have been of interest to the exiles who may have stopped at these places on their journey into exile.

1Ch 2:53 The families of Kiriath Jearim: The Ithrites, Puthites, Shumathites and the Mishraites; of them came the Zorathites and the Eshtaoites-
The faithful Ithrites (2 Sam. 23:38) were from Kirjath Jearim (1 Chron. 2:53), perhaps converted to a more spiritual outlook by the long presence of the ark amongst them (1 Sam. 7:2).

1Ch 2:54 The sons of Salma: Bethlehem and the Netophathites, Atroth Beth Joab, and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites-
Being a 'father' and having 'sons' here may refer not to having literal children, but to

being the founder of towns such as Bethlehem. This is made explicit in :52. See there for another reading of the text "half of...".

1Ch 2:55 The families of scribes who lived at Jabez: the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, the Sucathites. These are the Kenites who came of Hammath, the father of the house of Rechab-

Jabez was a man from Judah (1 Chron. 4:9). The previous verses have been talking of the towns and settlements founded by men of Judah, so perhaps the idea is that he established a place for the scribes in his home area. The Rechabites were well known at the time of the exile (Jer. 35:2), and here we learn of their origin; as Gentiles from Hammath, Kenites, who came to live with the scribes in a place set up for them by Jabez. And they remained more faithful to the law than Israel did.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 3

1Ch 3:1 Now these were the sons of David, who were born to him in Hebron: the firstborn, Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second, Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess-

"Daniel", 'God is judge', is an understandable name for David to choose at a time when he was under persecution from Saul and opposition from the house of Saul to whom he had been so gracious. He was trying to learn to leave judgment to God, although his imprecatory Psalms seem to struggle at leaving things at that.

1Ch 3:2 the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith-

We note David early in his reign had relations with a Gentile woman, daughter of a Gentile king. It is unsurprising that Solomon repeated this error, also early in his reign, by marrying Pharaoh's daughter. Whilst spirituality isn't genetic, it is true that unspiritual attitudes pass on very easily from fathers to sons.

1Ch 3:3 the fifth, Shephatiah of Abital; the sixth, Ithream by Eglah his wife-

Solomon wished to imitate his father David in every sense; his own real personality only really came out in the Ecclesiastes years, when he took to drink, materialism, women and idolatry. It took the influence of his parents many years to wear off. David had weaknesses for horses (2 Sam. 8:4) and many wives; and Solomon followed in these steps too. Note that David had six sons in seven years by six different women, including Gentiles (1 Chron. 3:3). And in addition to these, David had children by "the concubines" (1 Chron. 3:9). Doubtless Solomon reasoned, albeit deep within his psyche, that such behaviour was legitimate because David his father had done it. David seems to have over interpreted the promises made to him about Solomon and the temple, and assumed that his interpretation was certainly correct. And Solomon did exactly the same. The weaknesses of the parents all too easily are repeated by the children to an even greater extent.

1Ch 3:4 Six were born to him in Hebron; and there he reigned seven years and six months. In Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years-

David was 30 when he became king (2 Sam. 5:4), meaning he lived 70 years. But we must be aware that time periods are often used symbolically or generally. For David, Saul and Solomon are all said to have reigned 40 years. The period of 40 years assigned to Absalom in 2 Sam. 15:7 has to be read less than literally.

1Ch 3:5 These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan and Solomon, four, of Bathshua the daughter of Ammiel-

This could imply that Bathsheba had no other children before those she had by David. This means that she may have been barren until that point; her conception was certainly brought about by God. Was it that they would both have been aware of the unlikelihood of her bearing children, and therefore perhaps more inclined to take a chance?

1Ch 3:6 and Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet-

Eliphelet, "God of deliverance", was to celebrate God's deliverance of David. But he died in childhood (see on :8), perhaps to remind David that God doesn't always deliver as we expect.

1Ch 3:7 Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia-

The lists in 1 Chron. 3:5-8; 14:4-7 mention two more sons than we find in 2 Sam. 5:15, Eliphalet or Elpalet and Nogah. Perhaps they are omitted here because they died in infancy, and that the second Eliphalet was named after his dead brother.

1Ch 3:8 Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet, nine-

The two sons named Eliphelet (:6) presumably means that one died and was replaced by another son of the same name.

1Ch 3:9 All these were the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines; and Tamar was their sister-

See on :3. The repeated reference to the possession of concubines can be read as an indication of Israel's weakness in abandoning the ideal standards of God regarding marriage. Yet we read that even David had concubines- as if to show the extent of Israel's weakness in the area of marriage.

1Ch 3:10 Solomon's son was Rehoboam, Abijah his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son-

The kings of Judah all have, for the most part, the 'Yah' prefix or suffix. Rehoboam stands out as an exception, as does Manasseh and Amon.

1Ch 3:11 Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son-

Ahaziah is Jehoahaz (2 Chron. 21:17), Azariah (2 Chron. 22:6) and Ahaziah (1 Chron. 3:11); a reminder that people carried multiple names, which explains many of the so called contradictions in the genealogies.

1Ch 3:12 Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son-

Azariah is usually called Uzziah.

1Ch 3:13 Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son-

This is a parade example of how a bad king [Ahaz] has a good son [Hezekiah] who has a bad son [Manasseh]. One thing we learn from these genealogies is that spirituality is not genetic. Faith cannot be passed on, in the sense; but each must forge their own unique, individual relationship with the Father, just as today.

1Ch 3:14 Amon his son, Josiah his son-

As noted on :13, we have another example of a bad king having a good son. "Christianity" in its religious sense seems to be generally passed on from parents to children, but we learn from the genealogies that true spirituality cannot be passed on. It has to be personally forged.

1Ch 3:15 The sons of Josiah: the firstborn Johanan, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum-

This is a list of the kings of Judah, so we wonder why Johanan is mentioned when he was never king. Shallum is also known as Jehoahaz (2 Chron. 36:1 cp. Jer. 22:11).

1Ch 3:16 The sons of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son-

"His son" may also mean 'his heir' (see on :17), because Zedekiah was not son but uncle to Jeconiah. "Son" has a wide range of meaning in Hebrew. Jeconiah of 1 Chron. 3:16 is Coniah in Jer. 22:14, and Jehoiachin in 2 Chron. 36:8,9; 2 Kings 24:6. A reminder that people carried multiple names, explaining some of the apparent contradictions in the genealogies.

1Ch 3:17 The sons of Jeconiah the captive: Shealtiel his son-

"The captive" could be translated as AV as the name of another son, "Assir". Jeconiah didn't have sons in the sense that he had no son to succeed him on the throne (Jer. 22:27,30), a reminder that "sons" doesn't always mean literal male children, but descendants who inherited the throne. See on :16.

1Ch 3:18 and Malchiram, and Pedaiah, and Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah-

It is unclear whose sons these were (cp. 2 Kings 24:12,15; Jer. 22:30).

1Ch 3:19 The sons of Pedaiah: Zerubbabel, and Shimei. The sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam, and Hananiah; and Shelomith was their sister-

In Ezra 7, 15 names are listed between Ezra and Aaron- covering about 1000 years. Clearly many generations were omitted. We note there are 26 names listed between Zerubbabel (a generation or two before Ezra) and Nashon a contemporary of Aaron, in 1 Chron. 2:10-15; 3:1-19). Some details of the omitted generations are found in 1 Chron. 9:10,11; Neh. 11:11.

Zerubbabel was son of Shealtiel (Ezra 3:2; Hag. 1:1,2; Lk. 3:27-31). But it seems he was grandson of Pedaiah on his mother's side.

1Ch 3:20 and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah and Jushab Hesed, five-

This separate group of sons may be because they were from a different mother. Jushab-hesed means "Grace is returned", as if reflecting the restoration, by grace.

1Ch 3:21 The sons of Hananiah: Pelatiah and Jeshaiah; the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shecaniah-

The LXX is very different in :19-24, giving six generations between Hananiah and Shemaiah, and accounting for eleven generations from Zerubbabel in this genealogy.

1Ch 3:22 The sons of Shecaniah: Shemaiah. The sons of Shemaiah: Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah and Shaphat, six-

This would make Hattush the great-great-grandson of Zerubbabel. He returned only at the time of Ezra 8:3, so it seems his family had not returned with Zerubbabel.

Shemaiah is the one of Neh. 3:29. He must have been an old man, as his son Hattush had returned to Jerusalem with Ezra (Ezra 8:2,3); again we get the impression of those not naturally adequate to the work still doing it (goldsmiths, perfumers, daughters, administrators and now old men). Whilst we are given talents which we should use in God's service, it is also true that His service is a going against the grain of our natural desires and not a mere reinforcement of our natural aptitudes and personalities; ultimately, we are called to carry the cross of the Lord Jesus.

1Ch 3:23 The sons of Neariah: Elioenai, Hizkiah and Azrikam, three-
Elioenai means "My eyes are towards Jehovah", implying the looking for the restoration.

1Ch 3:24 The sons of Elioenai: Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah and Anani, seven-
Hodaviah (1 Chron. 3:24) may be Abiud (Mt. 1:13) or Juda (Lk. 3:26), (Ezra 3:9; Neh. 11:9; cp. Ezra 2:40; 1 Chron. 9:7).

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 4

1Ch 4:1 The sons of Judah: Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur and Shobal-
Again, "sons of" is being used in a broad sense of 'descendants of', as Hezron was the son of Perez (1 Chron. 2:5), and Shobal was the son of Hur (1 Chron. 2:50).

1Ch 4:2 Reaiah the son of Shobal became the father of Jahath; and Jahath became the father of Ahumai and Lahad. These are the families of the Zorathites-
In 1 Chron. 2:53 the Zorathites appear to be people who lived in Zorah, rather than a descendant of a person called Zerah or Zorah.

1Ch 4:3 These were the sons of the father of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma and Idbash; and the name of their sister was Hazzeleponi-
Whenever a woman is specifically mentioned in these genealogies, it appears she is worthy of particular significance. But we may be reading here of names of places, remembering that the 'daughters of' a town are the villages surrounding it. Etham was a town in Judah (2 Chron. 11:6). People and their towns appear to be united at times, making the genealogies even more difficult to follow from our distance.

1Ch 4:4 and Penuel the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These are the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, the founder of Bethlehem-
Ephrathah was a woman mentioned in 1 Chron. 2:19,24. She is credited for founding the town which was later known as Bethlehem (Mic. 5:1).

1Ch 4:5 Ashhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah-
The note of polygamy is again an example of spiritual weakness being recorded in the genealogies.

1Ch 4:6 Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hepher, Temeni and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah-
"Naarah" is the usual word for 'young woman' or 'girl'. Perhaps Ashhur came to despise the older wife (see on :7) and married a youngster, whom he continued to call

"the girl". His marriage doesn't sound very happy. Polygamy led to no pleasure for him in real terms.

1Ch 4:7 The sons of Helah were Zereth, Izhar and Ethnan-

"Helah" is the usual word translated "scum", and we wonder whether Ashhur called his wife this; for it would hardly have been her birth name. Again we have the theme of weak marriages. Ashhur didn't find any joy in his polygamy but rather came to bitterly despise one of his wives.

1Ch 4:8 Hakkoz became the father of Anub, Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum-

Hakkoz is introduced abruptly, as we find at times happens in the genealogies. But in the context, he must have had some connection with the tribe and inheritance of Judah, and the names mentioned must have been significant to the exiles or whoever was the primary audience of the genealogies.

1Ch 4:9 Jabez was more honourable than his brothers: and his mother named him Jabez saying, Because I bore him with sorrow-

The idea is "But his mother had named him Jabez", meaning 'he brings sorrow'. This is the classic case of the underdog rising up to honour through his faith in God. Hence Jabez prays that he would not bring sorrow (:10), but rather have God's hand with him to enlarge his border, to the joy of others and God's glory. We are all to some extent in some way born under a bad sign, some more visibly than others, i.e. we have many factors against us, bad cards dealt, it seems, by the hand of fortune. But these need not hold us back. That is the inspiration of the example of Jabez. We can rise above all that; see on :13.

1Ch 4:10 Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, Oh that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my border, and that Your hand might be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that it not be to my sorrow! God granted him that which he requested-

See on :9. Jabez just appears on the scene in :9, not "the son of" anyone. His calling "on the God of Israel" may mean he was a Gentile, who through faith came to be associated with the tribe of Judah. Which is why he is mentioned at this point in the genealogy of Judah. He asked that he too would be blessed as a seed of Abraham, who were to be blessed and "multiplied" (s.w. "enlarge"). I noted on :9 that Jabez had the spiritual ambition to rise up above the ties that apparently bind. The land was divided up by God amongst the tribes. But he had the spiritual ambition to ask that his allotment be enlarged. And as we see from comparing the various descriptions of the land's boundaries, the allotments were indeed negotiable and were changed by God over time in accordance with Israel's spiritual ambition. The only other reference to Yahweh's hands being with man is in fulfilment of His promises (Ps. 89:21). This incident is an example of where occasionally there are implications of spiritual strength in the records, amidst many hints of spiritual weakness. The targum on :13 claims that Jabez is Othniel, the nephew of Caleb.

This gives an example of using previous Angelic promises and preparatory work in order to achieve an act of faith. Some of the children of Judah later requested that their border be enlarged, at the expense of driving out neighbouring Canaanite tribes. "Jabez called on the God of Israel (an Angelic term), saying, Oh that Thou wouldst bless me indeed (a reference back to the Angelic blessing of Abraham's seed

with the promise of possession of the land?), and enlarge my coast, and that Thine hand (an Angelic phrase) might be with me, and that Thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested. In passing, is this the basis of "deliver us from evil... (i e.) lead us not into (spiritual) temptation" in the Lord's prayer? In that case our sins are being likened to the tribes which Jabez drove out in faith, and we should believe that our Angel has driven our sins out for us in prospect, so that we might inherit the promises.

1Ch 4:11 Chelub the brother of Shuhah became the father of Mehir, who was the father of Eshton-

This could be the Shuhah of 1 Chron. 2:3; Gen. 38:2.

1Ch 4:12 Eshton became the father of Beth Rapha, Paseah and Tehinnah the father of Ir Nahash. These are the men of Recah-

I have mentioned earlier that people and places appear confused in the genealogies. This appears confusing to modern readers, but the Hebrew audience would have understood the connection between a person and his living place; hence a town had 'daughters', an idiom referring to inhabitants or surrounding villages. And this verse seems an example of this. 'Beth Rapha', house of the giant, seems a typical example.

1Ch 4:13 The sons of Kenaz: Othniel, and Seraiah. The son of Othniel: Hathath-

This may be mentioned at this point because it could be that Jabez of :10 was the original name of Othniel, but he changed his name to Othniel, "force of God", because he had seen God acting with such force in response to his own desire to rise above all the things implied in his birth name.

1Ch 4:14 Meonothai became the father of Ophrah: and Seraiah became the father of Joab the father of Ge Harashim; for they were craftsmen-

AV "the father of the valley of Charashim" suggests that as discussed on :12, we are reading of towns and geographical areas which came to be the names of people. The same thing is reflected in the Anglo Saxon surnames which are also place names, "London", "Essex", "Wales" etc.

1Ch 4:15 The sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh: Iru, Elah and Naam; and the son of Elah: Kenaz-

Othniel is called the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother (Jud. 1:13). This would be possible once we understand the wide elasticity of the Hebrew terms "son of" and "brother".

1Ch 4:16 The sons of Jehallelel: Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria and Asarel-

Ziph was a town in southern Judah (1 Sam. 23:15,19). The reference may therefore be to where the sons of Jehallelel came to settle.

1Ch 4:17 The sons of Ezra: Jether, Mered, Ephraim and Jalon; and she bore Miriam, Shammai and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa-

It is unclear who the "she" refers to, and it may be possible to connect this sentence with the Bithia of :18. Eshtemoa may refer to the town in Judah of that name; see on :12.

1Ch 4:18 His wife the Jewess bore Jered the father of Gedor, Heber the father of

Soco and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. These are the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took-

See on :17. "His wife" would refer to Mered, and Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh is called "the Jewess" because she married Mered from Judah, and was totally accepted as a Jewess, having totally identified with Judah and the hope of Israel. The obvious daughter of Pharaoh whom we think of was the one who saved Moses. Perhaps she, like Moses, resigned from the wealth of Pharaoh and went to live with the Hebrew slaves, and married Mered, a man of Judah. And she renamed herself to Bithiah, "daughter of Yah"- rather than daughter of Pharaoh. She had a daughter called Miriam (:17), which is corroborating evidence for the idea that she was the princess who saved Moses and from the Nile and spoke with Miriam, sister of Moses, at the time. This was one of the most amazing conversions of all Biblical history; but we would never know it, were it not for the Chronicles genealogies. But "Mered" means 'rebel', the word used of Israel's rebellions against Yahweh in the wilderness. It could be that for all her outstanding devotion to Yahweh, the man she married was not worthy of her, and died in rebellion against Yahweh in the wilderness. She will be one we look forward to meeting in the Kingdom.

1Ch 4:19 The sons of the wife of Hodiah, the sister of Naham, were the fathers of Keilah the Garmite and Eshtemoa the Maacathite-
Keilah and Eshtemoa were both towns in Judah, and there may be a geographical reference here as discussed on :12.

1Ch 4:20 The sons of Shimon: Amnon, Rinnah, Ben Hanan and Tilon. The sons of Ishi: Zoheth and Ben Zoheth-
We see how the son of Zoheth ["Ben Zoheth"] was counted as a son of Ishi, although he was his grandson. Again we see the elasticity of the phrase "son of" in Hebrew.

1Ch 4:21 The sons of Shelah the son of Judah: Er the father of Lecah, Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of those who worked fine linen, of the house of Ashbea-

Er was slain by Yahweh for gross wickedness (1 Chron. 2:3). It seems his brother Shelah called his own son Er in memory of his slain brother, perhaps suggesting his disagreement with Yahweh's judgment. Lecah and Mareshah are place names (see on :12).

1Ch 4:22 and Jokim, the men of Cozeba, Joash and Saraph, who had dominion in Moab, and Jashubilehem. The records are ancient-

"Had dominion" can also mean 'married'. Perhaps this is another record of marriage to Gentiles, reflecting the continual and widespread spiritual weakness of God's people. "Jashubilehem" could be translated "who returned to Bethlehem", and this creates a parallel with the family of Naomi; they too married in Moab but returned to Bethlehem. The idea would then be that situations repeat in and between human lives, that we might learn from spiritual history and the hand of God in human history. Indeed the verse can be repointed and read as it is by some Rabbinic commentaries: "Yokim and Cozeba and Yoash and Saraph who married Moabites who returned to Bethlehem"; Yoash and Saraph being understood as Mahlon and Chilion of the book of Ruth. We note they too were from the tribe of Judah. Mahlon and Chilion meaning sickness and pining away are surely names given to the characters, because nobody

would name their boys in that way. Perhaps here in 1 Chron. 4:22 we have their original names.

1Ch 4:23 These were the potters, and the inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah where they lived and worked for the king-

The reference may be to those who worked in preparation of things for the temple in Solomon's time (1 Kings 7:46).

1Ch 4:24 The sons of Simeon: Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah and Shaul-

"The sons of Simeon were Nemuel, Jamin... and Shaul"; but Gen. 46:10 shows that Shaul was Simeon's son by a wrong, casual relationship. Yet this is not recorded in Chronicles, even though so many other weaknesses are. Surely this is to demonstrate how if God imputes righteousness for a repented of sin, there really is no record of this kept by Him. This and other such lessons from Chronicles only come from digging under the surface.

1Ch 4:25 Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son-

The record in Num. 26 implies these were the sons through Shaul. But Shaul was the one born from a wrong, casual relationship with a Gentile (Gen. 46:10). But it was through this that Simeon's line is considered as continuing. Again we see God's working through human weakness, and the fact that Israel were not at all ethnically pure.

1Ch 4:26 The sons of Mishma: Hammuel his son, Zaccur his son, Shimei his son-

"Zaccur" is the word for "remember" often used in the restoration narratives (Neh. 1:8 etc.). Remember that these genealogies were rewritten for the exiles.

1Ch 4:27 Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brothers didn't have many children, neither did all their family multiply like the children of Judah-

Israel's sinfulness seems to be emphasized in 'interruptions' in the flowing list of names. Thus it is sometimes stressed that a man did not have many children (e.g. 1 Chron. 2:4,6,16,32,34; 4:27), as if to indicate that God's blessing was not with him (there seems an undoubted connection in Old Testament times between blessing and number of sons).

1Ch 4:28 They lived at Beersheba, Moladah and Hazarshual-

Beersheba was in Judah, but had been given to Simeon as a shared inheritance (Josh. 19:1,2).

1Ch 4:29 and at Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad-

These are the same 13 cities with five accompanying "cities" / villages (:32) as in Josh. 19:1-9.

1Ch 4:30 Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag-

These towns were all associated with David, and he sent presents of the Amalekite spoil to them (1 Sam. 30:26-31). It seems he wanted them under the control of Judah not Simeon.

1Ch 4:31 Beth Marcaboth and Hazar Susim, Beth Biri and at Shaaraim. These were their cities to the reign of David-

The implication could be that David tended towards a policy of 'Judah for the men of

Judah', and the agreement that Simeonites could live in Judah was then not honoured. This was to come to full term in the tragic division of the kingdom in the next generation.

1Ch 4:32 Their villages were Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen and Ashan, five cities-
The parable of the pounds describes the reward of the faithful in terms of being given ten or five cities (Lk. 19:17). This idea of dividing up groups of cities was surely meant to send the mind back to the way Israel in their wilderness years were each promised their own individual cities and villages, which they later inherited. The idea of inheriting "ten cities" occurs in Josh. 15:57; 21:5,26; 1 Chron. 6:61 (all of which are in the context of the priests receiving their cities), and "five cities" in 1 Chron. 4:32. As each Israelite was promised some personal inheritance in the land, rather than some blanket reward which the whole nation received, so we too have a personal reward prepared. The language of inheritance (e.g. 1 Pet. 1:4) and preparation of reward (Mt. 25:34; Jn. 14:1) in the NT is alluding to this OT background of the land being prepared by the Angels for Israel to inherit (Ex. 15:17 Heb.; 23:20; Ps. 68:9,10 Heb.) . We must be careful not to think that our promised inheritance is *only* eternal life; it is something being personally prepared for each of us. The language of preparation seems inappropriate if our reward is only eternal life.

1Ch 4:33 and all their villages that were around the same cities, to Baal. These were their habitations, and they have their genealogy-
Baal is Baalath Beer (Josh. 19:8). Ezra 2:62 records Judah being 'reckoned by genealogies', using the same Hebrew word which is the hallmark of 1 Chron. (4:33; 5:1,7,17; 7:5,7,9,40; 9:1,22). And in this context, Is. 40:26 compares God's 'bringing out' of Judah from Babylon with His 'bringing out' the stars by their individual names, all wonderfully known to Him. Ps. 87:6 had prophesied something similar about the restoration of Zion's fortunes: "The LORD shall count, when He writes up the people, that this man was born there". The Kingdom of God was to be the restoration of Israel's Kingdom- but they had to actually get on and restore it rather than wait for it to come. This is another reason for understanding Ezekiel's temple as being broadly of the same dimensions as that of Solomon.

1Ch 4:34 Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah the son of Amaziah-
We now have a list of 13 leaders of Simeon who went looking for new territory. These 13 may have been the leaders of the Simeonite communities in the 13 towns in Judah just listed, where the Simeonites had been allowed to live. But it seems they were effectively expelled from those towns by Judah, although they were allowed to live there according to Josh. 19:1-9. And so they went looking for new territory.

1Ch 4:35 Joel, Jehu the son of Joshibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel-
The names of these Simeonite leaders are nearly all spiritual and include the name of Yahweh. It would have been wrong to exclude them from the inheritance in Judah which they had been specifically allowed (:34).

1Ch 4:36 and Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah-
Jeshohaiah ("Yah will empty") and Jesimiel ("Yah will place") could be seen as names expressing faith that God would provide for these displaced Simeonites, and place them in a new inheritance. These men and their faith is being held up to the exiles as their pattern. For in essence they were in a similar situation.

1Ch 4:37 Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah-

We wonder why this one of the 13 Simeonite leaders has his genealogy traced back five generations, unlike the others mentioned.

1Ch 4:38 these mentioned by name were princes in their families; and their fathers' houses increased greatly-

They therefore needed more land, and as discussed on :34, they were effectively pushed out of the special allotment given them within the tribe of Judah. So there was a desperate need to find land.

1Ch 4:39 They went to the entrance of Gedor, even to the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks-

A territory called "Gedor" which matches the description in :40 is hard to locate. So we may consider LXX "Gerar". This was then under Philistine control but was taken from them in Asa's time (2 Chron. 14:14). However this doesn't seem to fit the description of the land as "peaceable" in :40, and :41 says they took this land in Hezekiah's time.

1Ch 4:40 They found fat pasture and good, and the land was wide, quiet and peaceable; for those who lived there before were of Ham-

Perhaps the Simeonites' determination to find and enjoy their inheritance was presented as inspirational to the exiles, who likewise were promised a land of "fat pasture" at the restoration- if they too believed and acted in faith (s.w. Ez. 34:14). Likewise a quiet and peaceable land was promised at the restoration (s.w. Jer. 30:10; Zech. 1:11).

1Ch 4:41 These written by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and attacked their tents, and the Meunim who were found there, and destroyed them utterly to this day, and lived in their place; because there was pasture there for their flocks-

This could suggest that these genealogies were initially written up in the time of Hezekiah, perhaps explaining his regret that he was to die with no descendant; although they were rewritten at the time of the exiles. The motivation however was not to drive out the pagans from Yahweh's land, but because there was pasture there for their flocks. The question of *why* we wish to inherit the Kingdom must be capable of a genuine, spiritual answer; rather than a materialistic and fleshly one.

1Ch 4:42 Some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to Mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi-

Because of their lack of land and removal from the inheritance within Judah they were promised in Josh. 19:1-9, they had to find and make the effort to inherit some new land. They are thereby an example to the exiles, for whom these genealogies were rewritten [under Divine inspiration]. These captains all have God's Name within their names, perhaps meant to imply that they did what they did in faith.

1Ch 4:43 They struck the remnant of the Amalekites who escaped, and have lived there to this day-

Saul was empowered to smite the Amalakites but he didn't completely do this (s.w. 1 Sam. 15:3,7). As often happens, God then passed on the job to another, firstly David (2 Sam. 1:1), and now to these sons of Simeon. We can see His hand working in similar ways today. This seems to be the idea of Esther 4:14. If she had not saved her people, then God would have pursued another plan to the same end.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 5

1Ch 5:1 The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn; but, because he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel; and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright-

These records seem to stress the weakness and occasional strength of these children of God. This is one of the major lessons from Chronicles. Every now and then, the list of names is interrupted by a piece of information which indicates God's awareness of their spirituality. For example, the fact some men had more than one wife or a wife from a nation other than Israel is often recorded (1 Chron. 1:32; 2:3,26,35,48; 4:18; 5:1; 7:14; 8:8). The way these interruptions occur in the lists of names stands out. This is surely to indicate two things: that many faithful men (e.g. Abraham and Caleb, 1 Chron. 1:32; 2:46) made mistakes in this area of life, and secondly that all down the centuries God has not forgotten that they married out of the faith, or that they allowed the pressures of their surrounding world to influence them to break away from the ideal one man: one woman standard of Eden. These two facts provide us with both warning and comfort, in that although God is sensitive to failure, He is still able to justify men, to count them as if they are righteous for the sake of their covenant relationship with Him, even though (e.g.) their married life was not completely in order.

1Ch 5:2 For Judah prevailed above his brothers, and of him came the prince; but the birthright was Joseph's)-

"Prince" or "captain" is God's term for the king of His people (1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1). Israel's true king was to be from Judah, and God therefore didn't accept those of the ten tribe kingdom as the true kings of Israel.

1Ch 5:3 the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi-

Hanoch [s.w. Enoch] was named after the son of Cain (Gen. 4:17) and means "initiated", rather hinting at unspirituality and paganism.

1Ch 5:4 The sons of Joel: Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son-

Gog was an apostate Jew who went away from the God of Israel, attracted by the grazing grounds to the north east of Israel, and who eventually ended up living permanently in the land of Israel's enemies, the land of the Hagarines (sons of Hagar, i.e. the Arabs) and Assyria. The Gog of Ez. 38 may well be an apostate Jew (after the pattern of Rabshakeh) who leads an invasion of his ancient homeland. He attacks because he loves cattle (Ez. 38:11,12)- which was a characteristic of the Gog of 1 Chron. 5.

1Ch 5:5 Micah his son, Reaiah his son, Baal his son-

Naming a Hebrew child "Baal" surely indicates unspirituality and the besetting weakness of idolatry which dogged the generations.

1Ch 5:6 and Beerah his son, whom Tiglath Pilneser king of Assyria carried away captive: he was prince of the Reubenites-

We have to ask why these genealogies were prepared. It is quite likely that they were first formalized in the time of Hezekiah, but I would suggest that they were completed at the time of the restoration, when there was a problem in finding a High Priest and priesthood because it was hard to prove who was descended from Aaron, presumably because the genealogies were destroyed when the temple was burnt. The genealogies give much emphasis to the descendants of Aaron, far more than to the other tribes. There are a number of references to faithless men being punished by invasions (e.g. 1 Chron. 5:6).

1Ch 5:7 His brothers by their families, when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned: the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah-

Ezra 2:62 records Judah being 'reckoned by genealogies', using the same Hebrew word which is the hallmark of the Chronicles genealogies (1 Chron. 4:33; 5:1,7,17; 7:5,7,9,40; 9:1,22). And in this context, Is. 40:26 compares God's 'bringing out' of Judah from Babylon with His 'bringing out' the stars by their individual names, all wonderfully known to Him. Ps. 87:6 had prophesied something similar about the restoration of Zion's fortunes: "The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there". The Kingdom of God was to be the restoration of Israel's Kingdom- but they had to actually get on and restore it rather than wait for it to come.

1Ch 5:8 and Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel, who lived in Aroer, even up to Nebo and Baal Meon-

Aroer was on the east of Jordan, and these areas were always associated with Moab in later scripture. "Nebo" continued to be the name used for that town, and it was the name of an idol. "Baal Meon", habitation of Baal, likewise suggests that these Reubenites were ill advised to go so far into pagan territory in search of material advantage. And they ended up drifting into the Gentile world and losing their identity as God's people. All the time we see this sad drift going on in lives.

1Ch 5:9 and eastward he lived even to the entrance of the wilderness from the river Euphrates, because their livestock were multiplied in the land of Gilead-

This continues the theme of 1 Chron. 4, that the men of Simeon likewise went away from their tribal allotment in search of pasture for their flocks. And it drove them away from the sanctuary and the teaching priests, until they assimilated into the Gentile world on the edges of the land promised to Abraham.

1Ch 5:10 In the days of Saul, they made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand; and they lived in their tents throughout all the land east of Gilead-

God so seeks for faith, and some of the 'flash' victories He granted in the Old Testament were to otherwise unspiritual men who in their desperation turned to Him. He so respects faith that He responded (e.g. 1 Chron. 5:10-20). Perhaps more details follow in :18-22, although that may refer to later conflict.

1Ch 5:11 The sons of Gad lived over against them, in the land of Bashan to Salecah-

The boundaries of Gad appear to in practice encroach upon that given to Manasseh (1 Chron. 5:11 cp. Josh. 13:8,7,11,25,30; Dt. 3:10-13). But the tribe of Manasseh had

extended their borders northward (1 Chron. 5:23). The territory was given to Israel as their intended inheritance in the Kingdom of God; but God was open to some flexibility about this. We think of Caleb and Othniel asking for territory as an inheritance. And so it is with our dialogue with God's and His eternal intentions for us.

1Ch 5:12 Joel the chief, Shapham the second, Janai and Shaphat, in Bashan-LXX "Janai the scribe".

1Ch 5:13 Their brothers of their fathers' houses: Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia and Eber, seven-

These may have been a group of seven who were the effective governing body of the tribe. It is unclear when these people lived, but we could guess they were the leaders at the time of the war with Hagarites in Saul's time (:10, 18-22).

1Ch 5:14 These were the sons of Abihail, the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz-

The seven ruling brothers of :13 were sons of Abihail, and we then have a very long genealogy for that man. To have seven sons who formed the ruling elite of a tribe was a significant achievement, and so his name was Abihail, 'father of might'. But this exemplifies how names were often given to people appropriate to their character and life experience, and are not necessarily their birth names.

1Ch 5:15 Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of their fathers' houses-

Ahi was perhaps the leader in Gilead (:16) whereas Joel was the chief in Bashan generally (:12).

1Ch 5:16 They lived in Gilead in Bashan, and in its towns, and in all the suburbs of Sharon, as far as their borders-

There is no Sharon known on the east of Jordan, although there may have been. If the Sharon near Carmel is intended, then we have the picture of these people so obsessed with their cattle that they herded them from the east of Jordan to territory they controlled in Sharon.

1Ch 5:17 All these were reckoned by genealogies in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel-

Perhaps these kings took a census of their people, in seeking to calculate their military might. This material has been worked into these records. Jeroboam was full of works, of activity in fighting the Lord's battles. He was active in the Truth, as we would say. In 1 Kings 12:32 we read of Jeroboam ordaining a feast "Like unto the feast which was in Judah". He ordained a new feast on the 15th day of the 8th month, no doubt copying the feast of tabernacles, on the 15th of the 7th month. So Jeroboam lacked an attention to detail, despite an appearance of spirituality. 1 Chron. 5:17 says that in Jeroboam's reign, the genealogies we read in the early chapters of Chronicles were written. So in some ways, he gave great attention to detail- when it suited him.

1Ch 5:18 The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, were forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty, that were able to go forth to war-

"Bow" and "sword" often occur together as almost an idiom for human strength (Gen. 48:22; Josh. 24:12; 2 Kings 6:22; 1 Chron. 5:18; Hos. 1:7).

1Ch 5:19 They made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, Naphish and Nodab-

These were all descendants of the twelve sons of Ishmael. These twelve tribes make them a pseudo Israel, and yet also, as Paul develops in Gal. 4, representatives of unbelieving Israel after the flesh. God gave His people victory against them in fulfilment of the promises about Ishmael and His favour for the chosen seed; but not necessarily because the chosen seed at the time were great believers in Him. These are the same peoples we read of in Ps. 83, which appears to be a prophecy of God's latter day conflict with these people, which has as its prototype this victory of a spiritually weak Israel against them, empowered by God by grace.

1Ch 5:20 They were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all who were with them; for they cried to God in the battle, and He was entreated of them, because they put their trust in Him-

This could imply that they began to lose the battle, but as Jehoshaphat cried out to God in the midst of a battle he shouldn't have been fighting and was saved, so it seems these Israelites did. I suggested on :19 that there were reasons for the victory within God's broader narrative. "The war was of God" (:22). Although it began by Israelites wanting more pasture land for their flocks.

1Ch 5:21 They took away their livestock; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of donkeys two thousand, and of men one hundred thousand-

The motive of the war was to find more pasture land. But not only did these Israelites want more *lebensraum*, they also stole a huge amount of cattle. Yet God worked through this because He wanted to vindicate His chosen seed over that of Ishmael. At times victories or blessings can be given to us which are part of a wider Divine narrative, and should not be seen as a blessing upon us for our spirituality.

1Ch 5:22 For there fell many slain, because the war was of God. They lived in their place until the captivity-

There was a wider narrative going on here (see on :19-21). God's Spirit works in human life according to that narrative, and not simply in direct response to faith. The Spirit teaches that in our time of dying, human beings are the same as animals. It is tragically sad that animals are tortured and exterminated. But is there any higher degree of tragedy, in God's sight, in the suffering of unenlightened men? Because the Reubenites cried to God in faith, "there fell down many slain (of the Hagarites), because the war was of God" (1 Chron. 5:22). And consider how millions live and die or die in the womb, with God's full knowledge and allowance, never to have the invitation of the Gospel. Short of believing in a universal 'second chance', we just have to accept that human death does not mean to God what it does to us as men.

1Ch 5:23 The children of the half-tribe of Manasseh lived in the land: they increased from Bashan to Baal Hermon, Senir and Mount Hermon-

"The land" is presumably that taken from the Ishmaelites of :19, east of Jordan. Yet as discussed on :19-22, the blessing of increase was not necessarily in response to their spirituality; for they turned away from Yahweh (:25). We recall how Isaac was greatly blessed with increased flocks immediately after he had lied about his wife and

behaved shamefully. Blessing and cursing do not necessarily come immediately in response to faith or unbelief.

1Ch 5:24 These were the heads of their fathers' houses: even Ephraim, Issachar, Benjamin, Zebulun, Asher, Naphtali, Dan, Gad, Reuben, Joseph, and Judah, mighty men of valour, famous men, heads of their fathers' houses-

They had names reflective of a belief in Yahweh, but worshipped other gods (:25). This was Israel's constant weakness, as it can be ours; to claim to worship God through worshipping the flesh, to mix flesh and spirit.

1Ch 5:25 They trespassed against the God of their fathers, and played the prostitute after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God destroyed before them-

These particular peoples of the land would refer to the land of :23, presumably that taken from the Ishmaelites of :19, east of Jordan. Covenant relationship with Yahweh is as marriage to Him; unfaithfulness to Him is as adultery. And they were not only adulterers, but as Hosea shows, they acted as prostitutes, as if sexually addicted to going after as many other gods as they could. And gods whom they had seen defeated before Yahweh when they took their land in the first place. This is the utter idiocy of idolatry, and yet human nature is not at all logical when it comes to faithfulness to God.

1Ch 5:26 The God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tiglath Pilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and brought them to Halah, Habor and Hara, and to the river of Gozan, to this day-

God worked by stirring up the spirit of Gentile kings. He can work directly on the human mind, placing thoughts and inserting motivations, in order to achieve His will. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit in our minds, if we are open to it. "Stirred up" is s.w. "open the eyes". Our eyes / hearts can be opened, as Lydia's was, through the sovereign and direct operation of God on the human heart. "To this day" suggests these genealogies were rewritten at the time of the exile.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 6

1Ch 6:1 The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath and Merari-

Chronicles pays special attention to the Levites and temple services. These genealogies were produced at the time of the restoration because of the need to show who was a genuine Levite. The temple records may have been destroyed at the destruction of the temple, and so this new list was vitally important. Joshua son of Jehozadak was appointed High Priest at the restoration, and the intention of these lists is to demonstrate his legitimacy. This is why the lists are incomplete and jump many generations. The generations listed would make the period from Moses to the captivity about 440 years, when it was more like 700. This explains why some known High Priests are omitted from the list: Eli, Ahimelech (son of Ahitub), Abiathar, Azariah (of Uzziah)'s time, Urijah (at the time of Ahaz), and Azariah (2 Chron. 31:10).

1Ch 6:2 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel-

"Gershon" means 'expelled', maybe meaning that like Reuben he was expelled from the role of firstborn [he is mentioned first as if he was the firstborn]. This is a theme

of the Genesis record. But perhaps because of these weaknesses, the line to the high priest ran through Kohath.

1Ch 6:3 The children of Amram: Aaron, Moses and Miriam. The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar-

We note the lack of emphasis upon the children of Moses and Miriam, the great wilderness leaders of Israel. There was to be no cult of personality nor nepotism, no riding on the name of a forefather in order to be a leader of God's people. Spiritual leadership in the Bible was intended to be based upon spiritual qualification.

1Ch 6:4 Eleazar became the father of Phinehas, Phinehas became the father of Abishua-

Eleazar's two older brothers, Nadab and Abihu, died without recorded children (Num. 3:4). So as noted on :2, it is the younger son who takes the precedence in God's purpose and not the older sons. To use the weak and marginal has ever been His style.

1Ch 6:5 Abishua became the father of Bukki, Bukki became the father of Uzzi-
Eli [high priest in Samuel's time] is omitted here. See on :1.

1Ch 6:6 Uzzi became the father of Zerahiah, Zerahiah became the father of Meraioth-
"Meraioth", 'rebellious', as surely not the name given to the child at birth. It confirms the suggestion I have often made, that names were given in response to later character and life experience. Sometimes in these genealogies we read the birth names, at others, the names they were given later in life. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 6:7 Meraioth became the father of Amariah, Amariah became the father of Ahitub-

I suggested on :6 that "Meraioth" was indeed "rebellious" as his name means. But if he had been slain as required by the law as the rebellious child (s.w. Dt. 21:18), then the line would not have continued as it did. We see how God works through grace and failure.

1Ch 6:8 Ahitub became the father of Zadok, Zadok became the father of Ahimaaz-
Zadok and Abiathar appear to have been joint high priests in David's time, but the line is developed through Zadok (2 Sam. 8:17; 15:29; 20:25). Probably because Abiathar supported Adonijah's rebellion and was removed from office because of it (1 Kings 2:27,35).

1Ch 6:9 Ahimaaz became the father of Azariah, Azariah became the father of Johanan-

Just as Meraioth was apparently spiritually weak (see on :6,7), so "Ahimaaz" means "brother of anger". It was through the man with an anger problem that the line of high priests was to be continued.

1Ch 6:10 Johanan became the father of Azariah (he it is who executed the priest's office in the house that Solomon built in Jerusalem)-

Psalms 127 is prefaced with the information that it is a Psalm for Solomon- perhaps given by some nameless prophet (Gad? Nathan?) to warn him of where he was going. Verse 1 reminds him that God must be the builder of any house, or else the builders

labour in vain. There is good reason to think that Solomon utterly failed to appreciate this. The records stress time and again that *Solomon* built the temple (1 Kings 6:2,14; 9:10,25; 10:4; 1 Chron.6:10,32; 2 Chron. 8:1,12; 9:3; Acts 7:47); yet the house referred to in the Davidic promises was to be built by God, through David's Messianic Son, the Lord Jesus. Zechariah prophesied at the time of the rebuilding of the physical temple. It is significant, in this context, that Zech. 6:12 reminds Israel that the true temple of God will be built by the Branch, the Lord Jesus.

1Ch 6:11 Azariah became the father of Amariah, Amariah became the father of Ahitub-

Azariah's job would have become most difficult. For Solomon himself quit Yahweh worship, and built temples near to His temple where he could worship the gods of his wives. Amariah was in the time of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 19:11) so there are several generations missed here. See on :1.

1Ch 6:12 Ahitub became the father of Zadok, Zadok became the father of Shallum- Shallum can mean 'bribe' (s.w. Mic. 7:3 about the corruption of the priesthood). Perhaps this was what he was known for. It would continue the theme of spiritual weaknesses in the Chronicles genealogies.

1Ch 6:13 Shallum became the father of Hilkiah, Hilkiah became the father of Azariah-

Hilkiah is well attested as the one who found the lost book of the law (2 Kings 22:8), helped in Josiah's reforms (2 Kings 22:14-20) and arranged the great Passover observance of 2 Chron. 35:1-19. But Hilkiah did all this despite being the son of a High Priest called Shallum (1 Chron. 6:12,13), whose name can mean 'bribe' (s.w. Mic. 7:3 about the corruption of the priesthood). Perhaps this was what he was known for. But his son / descendant rose above that bad background, as we can.

1Ch 6:14 Azariah became the father of Seraiah, Seraiah became the father of Jehozadak-

Seraiah was the last active high priest, and was sent into captivity by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25:18,21; Jer. 52:24-27).

1Ch 6:15 Jehozadak went into captivity when Yahweh carried away Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar-

His son was Jeshua / Joshua, the high priest appointed for the restoration. Compare Neh. 12:10 "Jeshua became the father of Joiakim, and Joiakim became the father of Eliashib, and Eliashib became the father of Joiada". Then in Neh. 12 we have a brief genealogy of the high priest. The list follows right on from this list of high priests in 1 Chron. 6:3-15 which concluded with Jehozadak father of Jeshua / Joshua, who "went into captivity when the Lord carried away Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar".

1Ch 6:16 The sons of Levi: Gershom, Kohath and Merari-
A repeat of :1; see note there.

1Ch 6:17 These are the names of the sons of Gershom: Libni and Shimei-
We note that both Moses and Aaron had sons called Gershom (Ex. 2:22). Such

repetition of names within families and in the same generation was quite common, and is one thing which makes the study of the genealogies difficult in places.

1Ch 6:18 The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel-
A repeat of :2, see note there.

1Ch 6:19 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to their fathers' households-
"Mahli" and "Mushi" mean 'sickly' and 'sensitive' respectively. This confirms the suggestion I have often made, that names were given in response to later character and life experience. Sometimes in these genealogies we read the birth names, at others, the names they were given later in life. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 6:20 Of Gershom: Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son-
This list of seven sons of Gershom appears to be part of the longer list of 13 sons of Gershom in :39-43. There are so many similarities, and the differences may be accounted for on the basis of people having more than one name, as explained on :19.

1Ch 6:21 Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, Jeatherai his son-
Apart from Joah, these three generations have names which are completely secular and not at all spiritual; not as we would expect for the high priests.

1Ch 6:22 The sons of Kohath: Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son-
Korah was the rebel of Num. 16:1.

1Ch 6:23 Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son and Assir his son-
The repetition of "Assir" (:22) shows how similar names were used within families, which explains some otherwise puzzling parts of the genealogies. We can too quickly assume that the occurrence of the same name means the same person. We recall that there was a time when Israel and Judah both had a king called Jehoram (2 Kings 1:17).

1Ch 6:24 Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uziah his son and Shaul his son-
The lists here must be connected with those of :33-37, but clearly some people had more than one name, or variations in the spelling. This it would have read: Tahath, Uriel, Zephaniah, Uziah (also known as Azariah), Shaul (a.k.a Joel), Elkanah, Amasai, Ahimoth (a.k.a. Mahath), Elkanah Zophai (a.k.a. Zuph), Nahath (a.k.a. Toah, Tohu, 1 Sam. 1:1), Eliab (a.k.a. Eliel, Elihu, 1 Sam. 1:1), Jeroham, Elkanah, Samuel (a.k.a. Shemuel), Joel (1 Sam. 8:2).

1Ch 6:25 The sons of Elkanah: Amasai and Ahimoth-
Ahimoth is the Mahath of :35; see on :24.

1Ch 6:26 As for Elkanah, the sons of Elkanah: Zophai his son, and Nahath his son-
The children of Elkanah and Hannah don't have very spiritual names, apart from Samuel. I suggested on 1 Sam. 2 that after the birth of Samuel, Hannah became very bitter and arrogant, and this was perhaps reflected in the naming of her sons. Spiritually she may have been better off remaining barren, as Hezekiah would have

been better off dying when God intended him to, rather than living another 15 years in which he apparently fell away from God.

1Ch 6:27 Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son-

We wonder whether Elkanah, "obtained of God", may have been the name by which he was subsequently known after Hannah 'obtained' Samuel by her prayers. See on :19.

1Ch 6:28 The sons of Samuel: the firstborn Joel and the second Abijah-

This gives the name of the firstborn as Vashni, meaning "weak", rather than Joel as in 1 Sam. 8:2, meaning "Jehovah is God". But this could be a scribal error. If we stick with "Vashni", we have an example of how character and personal history became reflected in the names by which men were remembered by, whereas his birth name was Joel, reflecting parental hope rather than actual reality.

1Ch 6:29 The sons of Merari: Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah his son-

"Mahli" means "sickly", but we see how from the weak and sickly there came a line of priests who all had spiritual names. Again we see how God works through the weak and not the strong.

1Ch 6:30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son-

"Haggiah", feast of Yahweh, may have been born on a feast day. This would be an example of where some names are actual birth names, whereas others were names acquired later in response to life experience and character development.

1Ch 6:31 These are they whom David set over the service of song in the house of Yahweh, after that the ark had rest-

This doesn't conclude the previous section, but begins a new section; these persons are now going to be listed.

1Ch 6:32 They ministered with song before the tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting, until Solomon had built the house of Yahweh in Jerusalem; and they served in their office according to their order-

This could suggest that Solomon's temple meant a change in personnel and organization of the worship. For these served "until Solomon had built the house...".

1Ch 6:33 These are those who waited, and their sons. Of the sons of the Kohathites: Heman the singer, the son of Joel, son of Samuel-

It should be noted that Samuel's son was reckoned as a Kohathite, although Samuel's parents were from Ephraim (1 Sam. 1:1). Perhaps this means that Samuel married a Kohathite. Or that there had been earlier inter tribal intermarriage, meaning that Samuel was both from Ephraim and Levi.

1Ch 6:34 son of Elkanah, son of Jeroham, son of Eliel, son of Toah-

Elkanah is introduced in 1 Sam. 1:1 as a man of Ephraim. Yet here he is presented as a Levite. Clearly there was intermarriage between the tribes, although this was not God's ideal intention.

1Ch 6:35 son of Zuph, son of Elkanah, son of Mahath, son of Amasai-

The lists here must be connected with those of :24-27, but clearly some people had

more than one name, or variations in the spelling. And the order appears to be reversed. This it would have read: Tahath, Uriel, Zephaniah, Uzziah (also known as Azariah), Shaul (a.k.a Joel), Elkanah, Amasai, Ahimoth (a.k.a. Mahath), Elkanah Zophai (a.k.a. Zuph), Nahath (a.k.a. Toah, Tohu, 1 Sam. 1:1), Eliab (a.k.a. Eliel, Elihu, 1 Sam. 1:1), Jeroham, Elkanah, Samuel (a.k.a. Shemuel), Joel (1 Sam. 8:2).

1Ch 6:36 son of Elkanah, son of Joel, son of Azariah, son of Zephaniah-

If this is the Joel of :28, son of Samuel [although the order of the genealogy is the other way around at this point], then we note that there the name is given as Vashni, meaning "weak", rather than Joel as here and in 1 Sam. 8:2, meaning "Jehovah is God". If we stick with "Vashni", we have an example of how character and personal history became reflected in the names by which men were remembered by, whereas his birth name was Joel, reflecting parental hope rather than actual reality.

1Ch 6:37 son of Tahath, son of Assir, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah-

See on :35.

1Ch 6:38 son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, the son of Israel-

"Izhar" means literally 'the anointing oil'. An absolutely appropriate name for a Levite.

1Ch 6:39 His brother Asaph, who stood on his right hand, even Asaph the son of Berechiah, son of Shimea-

Asaph was his brother in the sense only of a relative. Asaph himself composed songs, under the influence of Divine inspiration as a prophet (2 Chron. 29:30).

1Ch 6:40 son of Michael, son of Baaseiah, son of Malchijah-

Malchijah, "Yah is king", would be an abiding recognition that the system of human kingship was far less than idea, and for the faithful, Yahweh remained the king of Israel.

1Ch 6:41 son of Ethni, son of Zerah, son of Adaiah-

"Adaiah", adorned by Yah, would be an appropriate name for any Levite who wore the robes.

1Ch 6:42 son of Ethan, son of Zimmah, son of Shimei-

"Zimmah", wicked / wicked planner, would be a most unlikely birth name for a Levite. This is an example, as discussed on :19, of where subsequent character and life experience gave rise to the name by which a person was known. Indeed this is the whole Hebrew idea of 'naming', and we see it in the idea of the Yahweh Name, which is all about His history, personality and actions according to that character.

1Ch 6:43 son of Jahath, son of Gershom, the son of Levi-

This list of seven sons of Gershom in :20,21 appears to be part of this longer list of 13 sons of Gershom in :39-43. There are so many similarities, and the differences may be accounted for on the basis of people having more than one name, as explained on :19.

1Ch 6:44 On the left hand were their brothers the sons of Merari: Ethan the son of Kishi, son of Abdi, son of Malluch-

Ethan is called Jeduthun in 2 Chron. 35:15. We wonder if the division of singers into groups on the right and left was to reflect the structure of the court of Heaven, where the Angels were thus arranged in 1 Kings 22:19. For the sanctuary on earth was to be a pattern of the things in heaven (Heb. 8:5).

1Ch 6:45 son of Hashabiah, son of Amaziah, son of Hilkiah-

Hilkiah was an appropriate name for a Levite, 'Yah is my portion', or 'Portion of Yah'. For they had no portion or inheritance, just as Israel were Yahweh's "portion" (Dt. 32:9). We are to catch that spirit, as a kingdom of priests (1 Pet. 2:5) whose portion or inheritance is the honour of doing God's work for His people, rather than building up any material inheritance in this world.

1Ch 6:46 son of Amzi, son of Bani, son of Shemer-

Here we have three generations without the name of God or anything spiritual in their names, whereas in :45 we had three generations who all had the name of Yahweh in their names. But having a Godly name was no guarantee that these people were spiritual (cp. Rev. 3:1).

1Ch 6:47 son of Mahli, son of Mushi, son of Merari, the son of Levi-

"Mahli" and "Mushi" mean 'sickly' and 'sensitive' respectively. This confirms the suggestion I have often made, that names were given in response to later character and life experience. Sometimes in these genealogies we read the birth names, at others, the names they were given later in life. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 6:48 Their brothers the Levites were appointed for all the service of the tabernacle of God's house-

Heb. "all the kinds of service...". We can see the various kinds of service in passages like 1 Chron. 15:18-24; 16:37-42; 23:2-32; 25:1-8; 26:1-26.

1Ch 6:49 But Aaron and his sons offered 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-

This language of Aaron making atonement for all Israel raises the question as to whether sin is forgiven purely on the basis of individual repentance and approach to God for forgiveness; or whether there is some dimension whereby the prayers and efforts of another can bring that forgiveness. We seem to have examples of that in Mk. 2:5; James 5:15. But there are invisible limits to it; for no sinner who doesn't want forgiveness nor salvation will have it forced upon them. But for those who do, then there appears to be a component in their salvation, indeed that of all of us, which can depend upon others.

1Ch 6:50 These are the sons of Aaron: Eleazar-

Eleazar's mother was Elisheba daughter of Amminadab, a descendant of Judah through Pharez. Here the priestly and kingly lines met.

Phinehas his son, Abishua his son-

The genealogy of the sons of Korah, the gatekeepers of the temple, is recorded in 1 Chron. 9:17-19. It can be shown from the genealogies that they were brought up by their second cousin, Phinehas. They obeyed the command to leave the tents of their father Korah when he was consumed in the earthquake. Num. 16:27 mentions Dathan

and Abiram's children standing outside their tents at this time, but there is the pointed omission of Korah's children; they had left the tents. We can therefore build up a picture of Phinehas as a zealot for the purity of God's Truth (Num. 25), yet mixed with compassion, as shown by the way he took those children of Korah under his wing, and brought them up soundly in the Truth, with the result that wrote at least 11 of the Psalms and protected the purity of temple worship.

1Ch 6:51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son-

The list here of :49-53 seems to repeat that in :3-8; perhaps because that earlier list was produced at the time of the exile (:15), whereas this one concluding with Ahimaaz (:53) was written at the time of David or Solomon, for Ahimaaz was contemporary with the final part of David's life (2 Sam. 15:27).

1Ch 6:52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son-

"Meraioth", 'rebellious', as surely not the name given to the child at birth. It confirms the suggestion I have often made, that names were given in response to later character and life experience. Sometimes in these genealogies we read the birth names, at others, the names they were given later in life. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 6:53 Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son-

I suggested on :52 that "Meraioth" was indeed "rebellious" as his name means. But if he had been slain as required by the law as the rebellious child (s.w. Dt. 21:18), then the line would not have continued as it did through Zadok. We see how God works through grace and failure.

1Ch 6:54 Now these are their dwelling places according to their encampments in their borders: to the sons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites (for theirs was the first lot)-

With various differences of spelling, this is the same list as in Josh. 21.

1Ch 6:55 to them they gave Hebron in the land of Judah, and its suburbs around it-

In the Hebrew text of 1 Chron. 6:55-60 we have eleven names, but thirteen towns are stated in :60. Juttah and Gibeon were promised (Josh. 21:16,17), but were not possessed. But as also experienced in :81, and as often happens with God's people, they do not take all the blessing that God promised and intended for them.

1Ch 6:56 but the fields of the city, and its villages, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh-

As each Israelite was promised some personal inheritance in the land, rather than some blanket reward which the whole nation received, so we too have a personal reward prepared. But the precise nature of that reward is as it were negotiable by us now, according to our spiritual ambition. Just as Caleb chose Hebron and secured it for himself. See on 1 Chron. 7:29.

1Ch 6:57 To the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of refuge: Hebron; Libnah also with its suburbs, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its suburbs-

The cities of refuge represented salvation in the Lord Jesus (Heb. 6:18). But most of them were situation in remote or mountainous areas, Hebron being an exception. The idea was that those wishing for salvation from sin they had unintentionally committed

must make quite some conscious effort and choice to get there, as is true today. And more such cities were promised, but Israel didn't take up that offer. This would have made salvation more easily accessible, as it were, had they done so.

1Ch 6:58 Hilen with its suburbs; Debir with its suburbs-
Hilen is Holon in Josh. 21.

1Ch 6:59 Ashan with its suburbs and Beth Shemesh with its suburbs-
Ashan is Ain in Josh. 21.

1Ch 6:60 and out of the tribe of Benjamin, Geba with its suburbs; Allemeth with its suburbs and Anathoth with its suburbs. All their cities throughout their families were thirteen cities-
Allemeth is Almon in Josh. 21. See on :55.

1Ch 6:61 To the rest of the sons of Kohath were given by lot, out of the family of the tribe, out of the half-tribe, the half of Manasseh, ten cities-
The parable of the pounds describes the reward of the faithful in terms of being given ten or five cities (Lk. 19:17). This idea of dividing up groups of cities was surely meant to send the mind back to the way Israel in their wilderness years were each promised their own individual cities and villages, which they later inherited. The idea of inheriting "ten cities" occurs in Josh. 15:57; 21:5,26; 1 Chron. 6:61 (all of which are in the context of the priests receiving their cities), and "five cities" in 1 Chron. 4:32. As each Israelite was promised some personal inheritance in the land, rather than some blanket reward which the whole nation received, so we too have a personal reward prepared. The language of inheritance (e.g. 1 Pet. 1:4) and preparation of reward (Mt. 25:34; Jn. 14:1) in the NT is alluding to this OT background of the land being prepared by the Angels for Israel to inherit (Ex. 15:17 Heb.; 23:20; Ps. 68:9,10 Heb.) . We must be careful not to think that our promised inheritance is *only* eternal life; it is something being personally prepared for each of us. The language of preparation seems inappropriate if our reward is only eternal life.

1Ch 6:62 To the sons of Gershon, according to their families, out of the tribe of Issachar, out of the tribe of Asher, out of the tribe of Naphtali and out of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities-
This refers to the half tribe of Manasseh on the east of Jordan.

1Ch 6:63 To the sons of Merari were given by lot, according to their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, out of the tribe of Gad and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities-
Four cities from each of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Zebulun (Josh. 21:7,34-40).

1Ch 6:64 The children of Israel gave to the Levites the cities with their suburbs-
The total of 48 cities (Num. 35:7; Josh. 21:41) is reflected in the summaries here (13 in :60, 10 in :61, 13 in :62 and 12 in :63). But whether those cities were given wholeheartedly and completely is open to question.

1Ch 6:65 They gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, out of the tribe of the children of Simeon and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, these cities which are mentioned by name-

The "lot" was presumably in that the tribes selected some kind of representation of their various cities, and lots were taken as to which cities should be given to the Levites. But this was not exactly how things had been envisaged when the Levitical cities were first defined.

1Ch 6:66 Some of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their borders out of the tribe of Ephraim-

The idea could be that Ephraim had cities on the very border of the territory of Ephraim, perhaps land which Ephraim had not settled and therefore the gift of those cities to the Levites was less costly or significant for them. Which raises the question as to how fairly the "lots" of :65 were arranged.

1Ch 6:67 They gave to them the cities of refuge: Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim with its suburbs; Gezer also with its suburbs-

I noted on :57 that the cities of refuge represented salvation in the Lord Jesus (Heb. 6:18). But most of them were situated in remote or mountainous areas, Hebron being an exception. The idea was that those wishing for salvation from sin they had unintentionally committed must make quite some conscious effort and choice to get there, as is true today.

1Ch 6:68 Jokmeam with its suburbs; Beth Horon with its suburbs-

Beth Horon was in the mountains (Josh. 18:14), called Beth Horon "the upper" (Josh. 16:5). See on :67.

1Ch 6:69 Aijalon with its suburbs and Gath Rimmon with its suburbs-

These cities were in Dan (Josh. 21:23,24), but were given by Ephraim to the Levites (1 Chron. 6:66,69). This continues the theme that the tribes of Israel may have somehow manipulated the lots so that they gave less valuable cities to the Levites, or even cities which weren't theirs, thereby breaking the foundation principle of 2 Sam. 24:24.

1Ch 6:70 and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Aner with its suburbs and Bileam with its suburbs, for the rest of the family of the sons of Kohath-

"Bileam" means 'not of the people', called Ibleam, Jud. 1:27; 2 Kings 9:27, and in Josh. 21:25, Gath-rimmon. Perhaps it is called "Bileam" in 1 Chron. 6:70 because it continues the theme that the tribes of Israel may have somehow manipulated the lots so that they gave less valuable cities to the Levites, or even cities which weren't theirs, thereby breaking the foundation principle of 2 Sam. 24:24. Or perhaps only relatively unwanted cities were added to the list of cities to be divided amongst the three sons of Levi by lot

1Ch 6:71 To the sons of Gershon were given, out of the family of the half-tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan with its suburbs, and Ashtaroth with its suburbs-

Golan was one of the cities of refuge on the east of Jordan. Those cities of refuge could have been increased in number (Dt. 19:9), thereby making salvation that much 'easier' or accessible; but there is no evidence Israel availed themselves of this. Ashtaroth is Beeshterah in Josh. 21:27.

1Ch 6:72 and out of the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh with its suburbs; Daberath with its

suburbs-

This Kedesh is that of Josh. 13:22 called Kishon in Josh. 21:28.

1Ch 6:73 Ramoth with its suburbs; Anem with its suburbs-

Ramoth in 1 Chron. 6:73 is called Jarmuth in Josh. 21:28,29, and perhaps Remeth in Josh. 19:21. Anem of 1 Chron. 6:73 is En-gannim in Josh. 19:21; 21:29.

1Ch 6:74 and out of the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its suburbs; Abdon with its suburbs-

Mashal, Hukok, Hammon and Kiriathaim, are the Mishal, Helkath, Hammoth-dor and Kartan of Josh. 19:35; 21:30-32.

1Ch 6:75 Hukok with its suburbs and Rehob with its suburbs-

See on :74.

1Ch 6:76 and out of the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its suburbs;

Hammon with its suburbs and Kiriathaim with its suburbs-

See on :74.

1Ch 6:77 To the rest of the Levites, the sons of Merari, were given, out of the tribe of Zebulun: Rimmono with its suburbs; Tabor with its suburbs-

Rimmono and Tabor in 1 Chron. 6:77 are in Josh. 21:35 as Dimnah and Nahalai.

1Ch 6:78 and beyond the Jordan at Jericho, on the east side of the Jordan, were given them, out of the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the wilderness with its suburbs;

Jahzah with its suburbs-

Again, Bezer "in the wilderness" suggests it was an isolated outpost which was not of great value. It continues the theme that the tribes of Israel may have somehow manipulated the lots, or the choice of which cities were to be distributed by lot, so that they gave less valuable cities to the Levites. See on :70.

1Ch 6:79 Kedemoth with its suburbs and Mephaath with its suburbs-

Kedemoth was "in the wilderness" (Dt. 2:26). Nearly all these cities gifted to the Levites weren't in good locations. See on :70.

1Ch 6:80 and out of the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its suburbs; Mahanaim with its suburbs-

To give Ramoth Gilead to the Levites was hardly much of a gift, because this town is recorded as so often falling into the hands of Israel's enemies. See on :70.

1Ch 6:81 Heshbon with its suburbs and Jazer with its suburbs-

This list was perhaps how things worked out in practice, because Jokneam and Kartah were also promised (Josh. 21:34). But as often happens with God's people, they do not take all the blessing that God promised and intended for them.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 7

1Ch 7:1 Of the sons of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub and Shimron, four-

Not all of the tribes have their genealogies given, and the detail is far less than for Judah and Levi. The details also varies between the tribes, with Dan getting no mention and Naphtali only one verse. This is because the purpose of these genealogies

was for the exiles of Judah at the time of the restoration. But the call was for the ten tribes to return at the same time, and there were some of the ten tribes who remained in the land after the mass deportation to Assyria. These would have joined with the people of Judah in going into captivity in Babylon. Perhaps just the information relevant to them is recorded.

1Ch 7:2 The sons of Tola: Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam and Shemuel, heads of their fathers' houses, of Tola; mighty men of valour in their generations. Their number in the days of David was twenty-two thousand six hundred-

This may refer to the census taken by David which resulted in wrath upon Israel (2 Sam. 24:1). That census was incomplete because not all Israel wanted to pay the temple tax associated with a census. And so here we just have the number of fighting men [which was what David had wanted to know] of the clan of Tola.

1Ch 7:3 The son of Uzzi: Izrahiah. The sons of Izrahiah: Michael, Obadiah, Joel and Isshiah, five; all of them chief men-

These are all Godly names. Maybe that corroborates the suggestion on :2 that these were those numbered at the time of 2 Sam. 24:1 who paid the temple tax associated with a census. Those who didn't pay it weren't numbered. And it was the more Godly who would have paid it.

1Ch 7:4 With them, by their generations, after their fathers' houses, were bands of the army for war, thirty-six thousand; for they had many wives and sons-

The mention of many wives continues the theme of these genealogies- the moral weakness of the people, especially in terms of marital relationships, is constantly noted.

1Ch 7:5 Their brothers among all the families of Issachar, mighty men of valour, reckoned in all by genealogy, were eighty-seven thousand-

Ezra 2:62 records Judah being 'reckoned by genealogies', using the same Hebrew word which is the hallmark of the Chronicles genealogies (1 Chron. 4:33; 5:1,7,17; 7:5,7,9,40; 9:1,22). And in this context, Is. 40:26 compares God's 'bringing out' of Judah from Babylon with His 'bringing out' the stars by their individual names, all wonderfully known to Him. Ps. 87:6 had prophesied something similar about the restoration of Zion's fortunes: "The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there". The Kingdom of God was to be the restoration of Israel's Kingdom- but they had to actually get on and restore it rather than wait for it to come.

1Ch 7:6 The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher and Jediael, three-

Jediael ("Known to God") is substituted for the pagan Ashbel ("Man of Baal" in Gen. 46:21, following the principle that the name of Baal should be removed from the mouths of God's people (Hos. 2:17).

1Ch 7:7 The sons of Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth and Iri, five; heads of fathers' houses, mighty men of valour. They were reckoned by genealogy twenty-two thousand and thirty-four-

The apparent difference with the list in 1 Chron. 8:3-5 is that we are here reading the numbers of fighting men taken at the time of the census in 2 Sam. 24:1. At the time of a census, the temple tax had to be paid, or else plague would come. Plague was

chosen by God as the punishment for Israel at this time, because many refused to be counted as they didn't want to pay the temple tax. Hence David took false guilt in feeling personally guilty for the plague. But it seems that some paid the tax for others, and so "sons" are counted to them who may not have been their literal sons. See on :11 for an example.

1Ch 7:8 The sons of Becher: Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Eliezer, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth and Alemeth. All these were the sons of Becher-

Some of these are names of places (1 Chron. 6:60; Jer. 1:1), and it seems in all the genealogies there is a confusion between people and places. The settlements around a city are therefore often called the sons or daughters of that city.

1Ch 7:9 They were reckoned by genealogy, after their generations, heads of their fathers' houses, mighty men of valour, twenty thousand two hundred-

The purpose of the census in David's time was to find out how many soldiers there were. But it seems that whilst numbering them, there was also in some cases a note made of their genealogies.

1Ch 7:10 The son of Jediah: Bilhan. The sons of Bilhan: Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish and Ahishahar-

Jediah had only one son, but the sons of his son were counted to him. I suggest this was because he paid the temple tax for them at the time of the census when they were numbered; see on :11.

1Ch 7:11 All these were sons of Jediah, according to the heads of their fathers' households, mighty men of valour, seventeen thousand and two hundred, who were able to go forth in the army for war-

The particular detail given about the men of Jediah reflects how he was willing to pay the temple tax at the time of the census (see on :2). And I suggested on :6 that he had broken free of his weak spiritual background and changed his name to a more Godly name.

1Ch 7:12 Shuppim also, and Huppim, the sons of Ir, Hushim, the sons of Aher-

The addition of others, as if connected with Jediah but not his direct relatives ["Shuppim also..."] could be explained by the suggestion on :2,6, and :11 that Jediah paid the temple tax for these people. Therefore they were numbered under his name, but were not his relatives.

1Ch 7:13 The sons of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer and Shallum, the sons of Bilhah- Naphtali gets only one verse. I suggested on :1 some reasons for this. There would have been few from the far north of Israel, where Naphtali was, amongst the exiles from Judah.

1Ch 7:14 The sons of Manasseh: Asriel, whom his concubine the Aramitess bore. She bore Machir the father of Gilead-

These records seem to stress the weakness and occasional strength of these children of God. This is one of the major lessons from Chronicles. Every now and then, the list of names is interrupted by a piece of information which indicates God's awareness of their spirituality. For example, the fact some men had more than one wife or a wife from a nation other than Israel is often recorded (1 Chron. 1:32; 2:3,26,35,48; 4:18;

5:1; 7:14; 8:8). The way these interruptions occur in the lists of names stands out. This is surely to indicate two things: that many faithful men (e.g. Abraham and Caleb, 1 Chron. 1:32; 2:46) made mistakes in this area of life, and secondly that all down the centuries God has not forgotten that they married out of the faith, or that they allowed the pressures of their surrounding world to influence them to break away from the ideal one man: one woman standard of Eden. These two facts provide us with both warning and comfort, in that although God is sensitive to failure, He is still able to justify men, to count them as if they are righteous for the sake of their covenant relationship with Him, even though (e.g.) their married life was not completely in order.

1 Chron. 2:21 adds: "Afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he took as wife when he was sixty years old; and she bore him Segub". We again have the theme of marital and sexual weakness in the family of Israel. Machir was Manasseh's oldest son by a Syrian, Gentile woman. It was the Divine intention that marriage should be within the tribes of Israel so as to keep the inheritance which God intended. But here we have Manasseh and Judah intermarrying.

1Ch 7:15 Machir took a wife of Huphim and Shuphim, whose sister's name was Maacah; and the name of the second was Zelophehad: and Zelophehad had daughters-

The fact God allows His children to live His truth on different levels needs to be grasped firmly by us, lest we become discouraged that others live on an apparently lower level than we do in some aspects of life. Being surrounded by 'lower levels' ought to inspire us to the higher levels. Zelophehad had only daughters; usually, in his context, a man would have taken concubines in order to produce sons. The record of his only having daughters is presented in the context of genealogies which show that many Israelite men had more than one wife (1 Chron. 7:15). But Zelophehad wasn't dragged down by this; God inspired him to maintain the higher level which he had chosen to live by. He didn't use the principle of Jephthah's vow. And his daughters likewise refused to be limited by their status as females, but obtained an inheritance amongst their brethren (Num. 27:1-7).

1Ch 7:16 Maacah the wife of Machir bore a son, and she named him Peresh; and the name of his brother was Sheresh; and his sons were Ulam and Rakem-

"Peresh" means 'dung' (s.w. Ex. 29:14; Lev. 4:11). Here we have an example of how some names were birth names; and others, like this, were names which reflected life experience and character, and were what others called the person. Which is why people had multiple names.

1Ch 7:17 The son of Ulam: Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh-

This Bedan is perhaps the judge mentioned in 1 Sam. 12:11 about whom we do not read in the book of Judges.

1Ch 7:18 His sister Hammolecheth bore Ishhod, and Abiezer, and Mahlah-

We note the prominence given to this woman. Her name means 'Queen of Molech', the god to whom children were sacrificed. Her infamy is therefore noted, continuing the theme of the genealogies noting the widespread spiritual weakness of the people.

But from her came Abiezer, from whom Gideon was descended. So we are again taught that a man can overcome bad background by response to God's word and His love.

1Ch 7:19 The sons of Shemida were Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam-
Shemida appears out of context here, but Josh. 17:2 says he was also one of the male descendants of Manasseh. Seeing no other pedigree is given, perhaps Shemida was adopted into the tribe, maybe having been a Gentile.

1Ch 7:20 The sons of Ephraim: Shuthelah, Bered his son, Tahath his son, Eleadah his son, Tahath his son-
Called Shuthelah, Becher, Tahan and Eran in Num. 26:35,36.

1Ch 7:21 Zabad his son, Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead, whom the men of Gath who were born in the land killed, because they came down to take away their livestock-

The men of Gath are recorded as slaying some of the men of Ephraim the largest tribe (1 Chron. 7:21), whereas the men of Benjamin, the smallest tribe, slew the men of Gath (1 Chron. 8:13). It is God's way of showing how He works through the small and confounds the things which appear mighty.

1Ch 7:22 Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him-

It is unclear when this skirmish with the men of Gath occurred (:21). It could have been whilst Israel were living in Goshen. For their father Ephraim, the patriarch, was still alive, and his brothers. This means that the Israelites in Goshen were still not converted by their experience of Joseph's grace, and the great beneficence of Pharaoh towards them. They still hankered for more cattle, and raided southern Palestine in order to steal.

1Ch 7:23 He went in to his wife, and she conceived and bore a son, and he named him Beriah, because it went evil with his house-

Ephraim would have been very old by this point. Having a child in old age after the death of adult children... is absolutely psychologically credible. The inspired record is indeed credible at every point.

1Ch 7:24 His daughter was Sheerah, who built Beth Horon the lower and the upper, and Uzen Sheerah-

The context of :23 suggests Sheerah was either the daughter or granddaughter of Ephraim the patriarch. This would confirm the suggestion on :22 that Israel in Egypt had more contact with Canaan than we might imagine. She apparently build settlements there.

1Ch 7:25 Rephah was his son, and Resheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son-
The "he" is either Ephraim himself or Beriah (:23). Rephah and Resheph are names with pagan god associations. But from this background was to come faithful Joshua (:27).

1Ch 7:26 Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son-

Unusually for the genealogies, we have here probably a complete genealogy from Ephraim who entered Egypt with Jacob, to Joshua who came out of Egypt.

1Ch 7:27 Nun his son, Joshua his son-

"Nun" means "to sprout", so Joshua is presented as the shoot; which is a Messianic term in Zechariah. Joshua, with the same meaning as 'Jesus', could potentially have been a Messiah figure, but he failed to live up to the full potential.

1Ch 7:28 Their possessions and habitations were Bethel and its towns, and eastward Naaran, and westward Gezer, with its towns; Shechem also and its towns, to Azzah and its towns-

Gezer is not the more well known Gaza, which was in Judah not Ephraim.

1Ch 7:29 and by the borders of the children of Manasseh, Beth Shean and its towns, Taanach and its towns, Megiddo and its towns, Dor and its towns. In these lived the children of Joseph the son of Israel-

But Beth Shean was in Issachar (Josh. 17:11-13; 1 Kings 4:11,12). Dor was in Asher (Josh. 11:1,2; 12:23; 17:11; Jud. 1:27,28). Taanach was within either Issachar or Asher (Josh. 17:11,12,25; Jud. 5:19). But these towns were also given to Ephraim (1 Chron. 7:29). As each Israelite was promised some personal inheritance in the land, rather than some blanket reward which the whole nation received, so we too have a personal reward prepared. But the precise nature of that reward is as it were negotiable by us now, according to our spiritual ambition. Just as Caleb chose Hebron and secured it for himself.

1Ch 7:30 The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and Serah their sister-

The mention of women in this list is unusual. The names are of those who became heads of family clans within the tribes. So the mention of Serah would mean that she became a head of family; although rare or unknown in the world around them, this was not totally unheard of in the Jacob family and we see in this the respect of women amongst them.

1Ch 7:31 The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of Birzaith-

"Birzaith" is female, and may refer to a place name ["well of olives"]. "Father of" is used about founding cities in 1 Chron. 2:51,52; 4:4,5.

*1Ch 7:32 Heber became the father of Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham and Shua their sister-
Shomer and Hotham of :32 are Shamer and Helem of :34,35.*

1Ch 7:33 The sons of Japhlet: Pasach, Bimhal and Ashvath. These are the children of Japhlet-

The apparently needless repetition of Japhlet as the father may be because as noted on :2,7,11, these names were produced at the time of David's census of 2 Sam. 24:1, and that meant that those numbered had to pay the temple tax or else plague would come. Japhlet perhaps paid the tax for the three sons, and this is stressed. Plague was chosen by God as the punishment for Israel at this time, because many refused to be counted as they didn't want to pay the temple tax. Hence David took false guilt in feeling personally guilty for the plague. But it seems that some paid the tax for others, and so "sons" are counted to them who may not have been their literal sons. See on :11 for an example.

1Ch 7:34 The sons of Shemer: Ahi, Rohgah, Jehubbah and Aram-
Jehubbah ['hidden place'] and Aram ['upland'] appear more appropriate as place names than personal names.

1Ch 7:35 The sons of Helem his brother: Zophah, Imna, Shelesh and Amal-
Shomer and Hotham of :32 are Shamer and Helem of :34,35.

1Ch 7:36 The sons of Zophah: Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah-
This list of 11 sons of Zophah may also include his grandchildren.

1Ch 7:37 Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran and Beera-
Several of the names of the 11 "sons of Zophah" (:36) are known place names, or sound as if they are; e.g. "Bezer" means 'inaccessible place', more appropriate to a place than a person.

1Ch 7:38 The sons of Jether: Jephunneh, Pispah and Ara-
Here and in :39 we appear to have the mention of people (Jether and Ulla) of whom we have no background information. Perhaps they are also "sons of Zophah" of :36.

1Ch 7:39 The sons of Ulla: Arah, Hanniel and Rizia-
Ulla is a female name. Yet she was a household head and mighty soldier (:40). The genealogies are noted for their mention of significant women.

1Ch 7:40 All these were the children of Asher, heads of the fathers' houses, choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. The number of them reckoned by genealogy for service in war was twenty-six thousand men-
In 1 Chron. 12:36 Asher's troops were 40,000, and even more in Num. 1:41; 26:47. The smaller number here is because as explained on :33, this list was compiled at the time of the census of 2 Sam. 24:1. Those numbered had to pay the temple tax or else plague would come. Plague was chosen by God as the punishment for Israel at this time, because many refused to be counted as they didn't want to pay the temple tax.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 8

1Ch 8:1 Benjamin became the father of Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, Aharah the third-

Although the Chronicles genealogies and record tends to focus upon the Levites, the genealogy of Benjamin is perhaps stressed here because it is to provide a backdrop to Saul, whom we will begin reading about when the narrative begins in 1 Chron. 10. But that genealogy will begin specifically at :29. Here we are reading of the Benjamites who lived in Jerusalem (:28). Benjamin was originally in Benjamite territory.

1Ch 8:2 Nohah the fourth and Rapha the fifth-

Gen. 46:21 says that Benjamin had ten sons when the Jacob family moved into Egypt, but here seven of them are in fact his grandsons. Benjamin was hardly a child when the brothers came to buy corn. He was in his 20s, and according to the Hebrew text he had ten sons already, and presumably some daughters; perhaps suggesting that his father's favouritism and obsession with him had not been helpful morally, and had resulted in him having multiple relationships from a young age. However, the LXX lists only three sons, and makes the rest

of the list the sons of Bela. And yet Benjamin would not have been old enough to have been a grandfather. So it could be that he had married a woman who had children of her own who became Benjamin's, or that he somehow adopted these children. There would have been a very large extended family around Jacob, and maybe these children were simply under the care of Benjamin. However, the genealogy in Num. 26:40 appears to support the LXX text here, with Ard and Naaman given as grandsons of Benjamin and not sons. We must remember that genealogies, numbers and dates are not used in Semitic languages in the strictly literalistic way in which they are in European languages. Heb. 7:10 can therefore argue that Melchizedek blessed Levi because he blessed Abraham, and Levi was a descendant of Abraham, "yet in the loins of his father". And this establishes Melchizedek as greater than Levi, and in turn, the priests descended from him. That argument may appear very stretched and even technically inaccurate to European ears. But it had absolute validity in Hebrew thought. And so the grandchildren of Benjamin, yet unborn, could be listed as being in existence when Benjamin went into Egypt, and even be numbered amongst the group at that time. This is why the grandchildren of the maids are counted as if they are the direct children of the maids; see on Gen. 46:9,18. We likewise read that Jacob brought his twelve sons out of Mesopotamia, including Benjamin (Gen. 35:24,26). But Benjamin was born later, in Canaan. But on this basis of being counted as "in the loins of" an ancestor, Benjamin could also be presented as having come out of Mesopotamia. If this kind of thing were better appreciated by Bible readers, it would be better understood that there was no personal pre-existence of the Lord Jesus in actuality, although He is spoken of as existing prior to His birth.

1Ch 8:3 Bela had sons: Addar, Gera, Abihud-

The simple truth is that Benjamin, the "little one" (Gen. 44:20), has more descendants listed to his name than any of the brothers. Is. 60:22 clearly alludes to this- "a little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation". It is the theme of the patriarchal family; the firstborns are deposed, the elder serves the younger, the weak become strong, the little one becomes mighty.

1Ch 8:4 Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah-

These names of Benjamin's sons / grandsons recur in :7. Perhaps the sons of Ehud were named after those of Benjamin / Bela, as a sign of loyalty to the founding fathers of the tribe. There seems another example of this noted on :16. See on :22.

1Ch 8:5 Gera, Shephuphan and Huram-

See on :4. These names, meaning "grain", "serpent like" and "white", hardly reflect much spirituality. Indeed the true Israel of God had very shaky beginnings, and their founding fathers were nothing at all to be proud of in spiritual terms. They were to be God's people by grace alone.

1Ch 8:6 These are the sons of Ehud, who are the heads of fathers' households of the inhabitants of Geba, and they carried them captive to Manahath-

This Ehud appears rather abruptly, and may be the same as "Abihud" of :3. But the judge of Israel, Ehud, was a Benjamite who was son of Gera (Jud. 3:15), and he sounds like the same person. So these men listed as "sons of Ehud" may actually simply be 'relatives of' Ehud, for "sons of" is a very vague phrase in Hebrew. In this case we would be learning that Ehud's family were carried captive to Manahath, a place in Moab. And this would explain his motivation in fighting to free Israel from Moabite domination.

1Ch 8:7 Naaman, Ahijah and Gera. He carried them captive, and he became the father of Uzza and Ahihud-

See on :4. The idea may be that Ehud had two sons after his relatives had been taken captive to Moab. Their names, "strong" and "riddle", may refer to Ehud's being left-handed, and his slaying of Eglon by that strength. See on :8.

1Ch 8:8 Shaharaim divorced his two wives, Hushim and Baara. Later, when he lived in the country of Moab, he married Hodesh-

These records seem to stress the weakness and occasional strength of these children of God. This is one of the major lessons from Chronicles. Every now and then, the list of names is interrupted by a piece of information which indicates God's awareness of their spirituality. For example, the fact some men had more than one wife or a wife from a nation other than Israel is often recorded (1 Chron. 1:32; 2:3,26,35,48; 4:18; 5:1; 7:14; 8:8). The way these interruptions occur in the lists of names stands out. This is surely to indicate two things: that many faithful men (e.g. Abraham and Caleb, 1 Chron. 1:32; 2:46) made mistakes in this area of life, and secondly that all down the centuries God has not forgotten that they married out of the faith, or that they allowed the pressures of their surrounding world to influence them to break away from the ideal one man: one woman standard of Eden. These two facts provide us with both warning and comfort, in that although God is sensitive to failure, He is still able to justify men, to count them as if they are righteous for the sake of their covenant relationship with Him, even though (e.g.) their married life was not completely in order.

But the translation of this verse is very difficult and I suggest we may be intended to understand that Shaharaim ['double dawn'] went into captivity in Moab, and there he had many children. This would then connect with how when Ehud's relatives went into captivity in Moab, he had two sons and vowed to liberate Israel from Moab (:7)- which he did.

1Ch 8:9 his wife and had seven sons: Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam-

These children of his second marriage were a new beginning for Shaharaim, perhaps that is the sense of his name, 'double dawn'. But their names include the god Malcam of Ammon [which was likely also worshipped in Moab where they had been in captivity], which doesn't give the impression of much spirituality.

1Ch 8:10 Jeuz, Shachia and Mirmah. These were his sons, heads of fathers' households-

As noted on :9, these names all tend to have idol or apostate associations. Jeuz = 'departure / apostacy', Shachia = 'captivation', Mirmah = 'deceit'.

1Ch 8:11 By Hushim he became the father of Abitub and Elpaal-

But in :8 we read he had divorced Hushim. Perhaps he remarried her, an abomination under the law. Maybe that is also the reference of his name, 'double dawn'. The theme of spiritual weakness is again continued.

1Ch 8:12 The sons of Elpaal: Eber, Misham and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod with its towns-

The Chronicles genealogies were rewritten for the exiles, to enable them to better locate themselves within Israel's history. These cities featured in the restoration (Ezra 2:33; Neh. 7:37; 11:35). The Targum adds "Which the children of Israel ravaged and burnt with fire, when they made war on the tribe of Benjamin in Gibeah".

1Ch 8:13 and Beriah and Shema, who were heads of fathers' households of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who put to flight the inhabitants of Gath-

This appears in purposeful contrast to how the men of Gath are recorded as slaying some of the men of Ephraim the largest tribe (1 Chron. 7:21), whereas the men of Benjamin, the smallest tribe, slew the men of Gath (1 Chron. 8:13). It is God's way of showing how He works through the small and confounds the things which appear mighty.

1Ch 8:14 and Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth-

From :13,14 we appear to have a new list of Benjamite heads of families. The names from :14 - :27 are divided into five groups: the sons of Beriah (:16), Elpaal (:18), Shimei (:21), Shashak (:25) and Jeroham (:27).

1Ch 8:15 Zebadiah, Arad, Eder-

Arad, "fugitive / exile", is one of several examples of names which sound appropriate to the exiles; see on :18. The message of the genealogies was and is that God's people had been in defeat, exile and captivity before, but had survived.

1Ch 8:16 Michael, Ishpah and Joha, the sons of Beriah-

I suggested on :14 that this is a new list of Benjamite heads of families, separate to that which precedes it. But the names Beriah and Shashak repeat (:16,25) what is in :13,14. It could be the names simply repeat, as we saw on :4, where the sons of Ehud were named after those of Benjamin / Bela, as a sign of loyalty to the founding fathers of the tribe. Perhaps this was a tradition of the Benjamites. See on :22.

1Ch 8:17 and Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber-

We wonder whether these are sons of the same Elpaal of :12. But as suggested on :16, to recycle personal names appears to have been a Benjamite tradition, as it has been in many tribes worldwide.

1Ch 8:18 Ishmerai, Izliah and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal-

These names again, as noted on :15, are examples of names which sound appropriate to the exiles. Ishmerai ("He who will be preserved"), Izliah ("Yah will draw out") and Jobab ("weeper", as the exiles wept by the rivers of Babylon). The message of the genealogies was and is that God's people had been in defeat, exile and captivity before, but had survived.

1Ch 8:19 and Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi-

Names again pertinent to the exile; respectively, "He will raise up / He will remember / He will give".

1Ch 8:20 Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel-

Elienai is "My eyes look towards Jehovah", which was the feeling of the faithful captives in Ps. 123:2.

1Ch 8:21 Adaiah, Beraiah and Shimrath, the sons of Shimei-

"Yah has adorned" (Adaiah) and "Yah has created" (Beraiah) state the parents' faith that what God had promised, to create (Is. 65:17) and adorn (Jer. 31:4) a restored Israel, He had as good as done. For this is the essence of faith- to feel and believe that what is not yet fulfilled has in fact happened, so certain is God to come through with His purpose (Mk. 11:24).

1Ch 8:22 and Ishpan, Eber, Eliel-

Again we see the repetition of the name Eliel (:20). This confirms the suggestion on :4,16,17 that this chapter is not in fact hopelessly jumbled by various editors, but simply reflects a

common tribal tradition of repeating names. We recall how Israel and Judah both had a king called Jehoram at the same time (2 Kings 1:17).

1Ch 8:23 Abdon, Zichri, Hanan-

As noted on :22, many of these names repeat; another Zichri is in :19.

1Ch 8:24 Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah-

Perhaps meaning a person from Anathoth, which was in Benjamin and was a priestly town, where Jeremiah was from (Jer. 1:1). But the form in which it is here means 'Yah answers'.

1Ch 8:25 Iphdeiah, and Penuel the sons of Shashak-

I suggested on :14 that this is a new list of Benjamite heads of families, separate to that which precedes it. But the names Beriah and Shashak repeat (:16,25) what is in :13,14. It could be the names simply repeat, as we saw on :4, where the sons of Ehud were named after those of Benjamin / Bela, as a sign of loyalty to the founding fathers of the tribe. Perhaps this was a tradition of the Benjamites. See on :22.

1Ch 8:26 and Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah-

"Shehariah", "Yah has sought", has relevance to God's seeking of His lost sheep at the restoration, as prophesied in Ez. 34 and often. But they had to seek Him (Hos. 5:15 uses the same word for "sought"); and the meeting of the searching God with the man searching for Him can be electric, the Father meeting the prodigal.

1Ch 8:27 Jaareshiah, Elijah and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham-

There is also a Zichri in :19,23; see on :22. "Elijah", 'Yahweh is the God', would be a challenge to Israel's common idea that they could serve Yahweh through serving the other gods. But their one and only God was to be Yahweh, and that left no space for worshipping any other god.

1Ch 8:28 These were heads of fathers' households throughout their generations, chief men: these lived in Jerusalem-

This appears to begin the summary of the Jerusalem Levites and their division of labour which finishes in 1 Chron. 9:34.

1Ch 8:29 In Gibeon there lived the father of Gibeon, whose wife's name was Maacah-

The following genealogical information on Saul is to provide background for the historical narrative which will begin with the death of Saul in 1 Chron. 10. And it begins with the point that Saul was grandson of the founder of Gibeon, or Gibeah of Saul. When he made out to Samuel that he was from an insignificant family, he was [like us when facing God's call] making desperately untrue excuses.

1Ch 8:30 and his firstborn son Abdon, and Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab-

When a passage is repeated twice, surely God wishes us to perceive something. 1 Chron. 8:30-34 is repeated in 9:36-40. The reason seems to be that the name 'Baal' was used by the leaders of Israel. Gibeon's children included Kish and *Baal*, Kish's son was king Saul, Saul had a son called *Eshbaal* as well as Jonathan, David's beloved friend; and Jonathan had a son called *Meribbaal*. These are not the names as recorded elsewhere; evidently the Chronicles record is highlighting the fact that there was a strand of weakness for idols in the family of Saul, including in Jonathan- who was a type of us in his friendship of David / Jesus. Surely this helps us to better relate to him; his love of David, his appreciation of David's

righteousness, his belief that David would have the future Kingdom, struggled against the fact that the worldly influence of his father and great-grandfather still rubbed off upon him.

1Ch 8:31 Gedor, Ahio and Zecher-

We note that none of the names of the sons of Kish feature the 'Yah' prefix or suffix. Saul didn't come from a spiritual background, and yet the Spirit of God was strong enough to change him and give him "another heart". Just as it can transform secular, irreligious man today.

1Ch 8:32 Mikloth became the father of Shimeah. They also lived with their brothers in Jerusalem, over against their brothers-

The idea is that some of the family lived in Jerusalem, 'opposite', as it were, the family who remained in Gibeah. Jerusalem was originally in Benjamin's territory. Mikloth may refer to another brother of Saul. For the purpose of this genealogy is to introduce us to Saul.

1Ch 8:33 Ner became the father of Kish; and Kish became the father of Saul; and Saul became the father of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab and Eshbaal-

See on 1 Sam. 16:8. 1 Sam. 31:2; 1 Chron. 10:2 read "Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchishua", whereas 1 Sam. 14:49 has "Jonathan, Ishvi and Malchishua". "Ishvi" may be another name for Abinadab; or we may note that the word means "and the second...", which would make sense in 1 Sam. 14:49. The genealogies of 1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39 also mention Esh-Baal or Ishbosheth; perhaps his name mentioning the "Baal" compound was the reason for its exclusion. Having such a name reflects upon Saul's lack of total devotion to Yahweh.

1Ch 8:34 The son of Jonathan was Merib Baal; and Merib Baal became the father of Micah- Merib-baal (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40) could mean 'the shame of Baal', but there is evidence that Saul's daughter Michal had an idol and it is likely that even Jonathan was not free of idolatry. Idolatry has always been a besetting weakness amongst even the best of God's people. He is called "Mephibosheth" in 2 Sam. 9:6, which is apparently a name which would have arisen from changing his original name, Meribbaal 'man of Baal' (1 Chron. 8:34), to something which means 'the dispeller of shame'. i.e. Baal. The suffix 'baal' could suggest that even Jonathan was closer to idolatry than we would like, and at least he didn't use the 'Yah' suffix in the name of his children. But Mephibosheth had perhaps repented of this, renouncing Baal as shameful, and yet still struggled to believe in the extent of Yahweh's grace to him through David.

Tragically, we so often read of Yahweh's people carrying the names of Baal or other gods within their own names- e.g. Merib-baal (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40); Ishbaal (1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39); Baal-yada (1 Chron. 14:7); and perhaps worst of all, Baal-Yah (1 Chron. 12:5). Is our 'name' or personality before God the same tragic mixture of flesh and spirit?

1Ch 8:35 The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz-

Micah may refer to another brother or son of Saul, or possibly to a child of Jonathan. For the purpose of this genealogy is to introduce us to Saul. "Melech", "king", may refer to the son or relative whom Saul favoured to succeed him, as kings often didn't choose their firstborn sons to succeed them. In this case, it reflects his refusal to believe the reality of the fact that David was to succeed him. Men are all the time in denial of God's word and all the evidence that it is going to come true, and act and plan as if sleepwalking or in amnesia, as if it will not.

1Ch 8:36 Ahaz became the father of Jehoaddah; and Jehoaddah became the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth and Zimri; and Zimri became the father of Moza-

Jehoaddah is called Jarah in 1 Chron. 9:42. "Jarah" is the very same word for "honeycomb"

used in the record of how Jonathan ate of a honeycomb after his great victory over the Philistines, and his father Saul sought to kill him for it (1 Sam. 14:27). We are reading here of the relatives of Saul, so it may well be that this child was named in favour of and respect for Jonathan rather than Saul.

1Ch 8:37 Moza became the father of Binea; Raphah was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son-

We may wonder this particular line of Saul's family is recorded. We note that unlike the names of Saul's brothers, the names of this branch generally speak of God or spiritual things. Perhaps the names carried significance to those for whom these genealogies were first prepared. Or maybe the idea is that those who are spiritually minded are the ones whose name is preserved.

1Ch 8:38 Azel had six sons, whose names are these: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah and Hanan. All these were the sons of Azel-

As noted on :37, these are all generally Godly or spiritual names. The fact they are all such names is surely a signpost to the fact that Azel was a spiritual person. And yet Saul's branch of the family didn't have such names. This may be to point up the way that God it seems willfully chose a person from an unspiritual background, when there were more spiritually qualified people even within his own wider family. Because He wished to declare His power of transformation in that man, through the work of the Spirit on his heart; even though Saul was to later refuse to cooperate. But this, it seems, was God's potential plan for him.

1Ch 8:39 The sons of Eshek his brother: Ulam his firstborn, Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third-

Ulam is twelfth from Saul, although generations are often skipped in these genealogies. So seeing that Hezekiah was thirteenth from David, we can conclude that it was Isaiah or Hezekiah who may have first ordered these genealogies to be drawn up, although they were rewritten at the times of the exiles.

1Ch 8:40 The sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, archers, and had many sons, and sons' sons, one hundred and fifty. All these were of the sons of Benjamin-

Saul is likewise described as a "mighty man of valour" (1 Sam. 9:1). The impression is given that he was from a family which included many such people. And yet this would mean that Saul was making excuses when he attempts to turn down Samuel's call of him to kingship; for he therefore wrongly claimed that he was from a small and insignificant, unqualified family in Benjamin. We too can make all manner of dumb excuses and paint a quite wrong self image- in order to avoid God's call.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 9

1Ch 9:1 So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies - they are written in the book of the kings of Israel. Judah was carried away captive to Babylon for their disobedience-

Ezra 2:62 records Judah being 'reckoned by genealogies', using the same Hebrew word which is the hallmark of the Chronicles genealogies (1 Chron. 4:33; 5:1,7,17; 7:5,7,9,40; 9:1,22). And in this context, Is. 40:26 compares God's 'bringing out' of Judah from Babylon with His 'bringing out' the stars by their individual names, all wonderfully known to Him. Ps. 87:6 had prophesied something similar about the restoration of Zion's fortunes: "The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there". The Kingdom of

God was to be the restoration of Israel's Kingdom- but they had to actually get on and restore it rather than wait for it to come.

1Ch 9:2 Now the first inhabitants who lived in their possessions in their cities were Israel, the priests, the Levites and the Nethinim-

"First" here refers to importance rather than first chronologically. The sense is as in Ezra 2:70 "Now those who first returned from Babylon to dwell in Judaea, again, dwelt [not in Jerusalem, but] in their own cities; this did they all whether they were laymen, priests, Levites; or Nethinim". We note that the common "Israelites" are placed first rather than last. The Levites were themselves but servants, and we see here the importance God attaches to the rank and file.

1Ch 9:3 In Jerusalem lived of the children of Judah, of the children of Benjamin and of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh-

The fact some of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh also lived there is omitted by Nehemiah (Neh. 11:4). Perhaps Nehemiah recognized in his edited version that the prophetic intention of Israel and Judah reuniting in Zion hadn't come about as intended. There had been no repentance, and most of them preferred to remain in exile. So he didn't even want to give the impression that the intended restoration had happened in this respect.

1Ch 9:4 Uthai the son of Ammihud, son of Omri, son of Imri, son of Bani, of the children of Perez son of Judah-

From :4-6 we see (as in Num. 26:20) the threefold division of the tribe of Judah (into the children of Perez, Shelah and Zerah).

1Ch 9:5 Of the Shilonites: Asaiah the firstborn, and his sons-

Related not to the town of Shiloh, but to the descendants of Shelah in the line of Judah (Num. 26:20). Shelah had a very shady beginning and might have seemed doomed to spiritual failure (Gen. 38:5,11,14); he was half Canaanite. But from shaky spiritual beginnings, some do make good. And now we are reading of his descendants as those living in Jerusalem as the vanguard of the restoration of God's Kingdom.

1Ch 9:6 Of the sons of Zerah: Jeuel, and their brothers, six hundred and ninety-

Neh. 11:6 says that "All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were four hundred and sixty-eight valiant men". At this point the list in 1 Chron. 9 gives the number of the sons of Zerah as 690. It is clear therefore that neither list is complete. But that is no contradiction.

1Ch 9:7 Of the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, son of Hodaviah, son of Hassenuah-

Better "and Hodaviah the son of Hasenuah", the same person as "Judah the son of Hasenuah" in Neh. 11:9.

1Ch 9:8 and Ibneiah son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, son of Reuel, son of Ibrijah-

Neh. 11:8 adds: "After him Gabbai, Sallai, nine hundred and twenty-eight". These are not mentioned here in the parallel 1 Chron. 9:8 where the chiefs of Benjamin inferior to Sallu are Ibneiah, Elah and Meshullam. There is no contradiction; it's simply that neither of the lists are exhaustive.

1Ch 9:9 and their brothers, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty-six. All these men were heads of fathers' households by their fathers' houses-
"Brothers" is a vague term in Hebrew, and this would account for the slight difference in numbers with Neh. 11:8.

1Ch 9:10 Of the priests: Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jachin-
Those three are names of the priestly orders in 1 Chron. 24:7. In Ezra 7, 15 names are listed between Ezra and Aaron- covering about 1000 years. Clearly many generations were omitted. We note there are 26 names listed between Zerubbabel (a generation or two before Ezra) and Nashon a contemporary of Aaron, in 1 Chron. 2:10-15; 3:1-19. Some details of the omitted generations are found in 1 Chron. 9:10,11; Neh. 11:11.

1Ch 9:11 and Azariah son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, the ruler of God's house-
This might (2 Chron. 31:10,13) or might not (2 Chron. 35:8) refer to the High Priest.

1Ch 9:12 and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, son of Pashhur, son of Malchijah, and Maasai son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah, son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer-
Compare this with Neh. 11:13: "And his brothers, chiefs of fathers' households, two hundred and forty-two; and Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer". AV: "Amashai (R.V. Amashsai) the son of Azareel (R.V. Azarel), the son of Ahasai (R.V. Ahzai), the son of Meshillemoth]". Compare the parallel in 1 Chron. 9:12, "Maasai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith". The same person is in view. Comparing the names we see how the Biblical genealogies omit some names and generations, and also how the same name is rendered slightly differently. This is partly because of the difficulty of transliterating letters from non-Latin languages, especially ancient ones. But there are also substantive differences. Names in non-literate societies were pronounced differently and spelt differently in different contexts.

1Ch 9:13 and their brothers, heads of their fathers' houses, one thousand seven hundred and sixty; very able men for the work of the service of God's house-
Neh. 11:14 "mighty men of valour". Their "valour" was in their ability to serve. For this is the true bravery.

1Ch 9:14 Of the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari-
Hashabiah is called "the son of Bunni" in Neh. 11, but a man could be the descendant of more than one person, understanding "son of" as 'descendant' rather than literally.

1Ch 9:15 and Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, and Mattaniah son of Mica, son of Zichri, son of Asaph-
The Hebrew words can be read differently, either as proper nouns with meanings, or words; hence Neh. 11:17 "Bakbukiah the second among his brethren".

1Ch 9:16 and Obadiah son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah son of Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Netophathites-
These villages were hamlets around Bethlehem (1 Chron. 2:54; Neh. 7:26). Perhaps because of the long term influence of David, who was from there, this area became a source of faithful people (Ezra 2:22; 1 Chron. 27:13,15; Neh. 12:28).

1Ch 9:17 The porters: Shallum, Akkub, Talmon and Ahiman, and their brothers (Shallum was the chief)-

The genealogy of the sons of Korah, the gatekeepers of the temple, is recorded in 9:17-19. It can be shown from the genealogies that they were brought up by their second cousin, Phinehas. They obeyed the command to leave the tents of their father Korah when he was consumed in the earthquake. Num. 16:27 mentions Dathan and Abiram's children standing outside their tents at this time, but there is the pointed omission of Korah's children; they had left the tents. We can therefore build up a picture of Phinehas as a zealot for the purity of God's Truth (Num. 25), yet mixed with compassion, as shown by the way he took those children of Korah under his wing, and brought them up soundly in the Truth, with the result that wrote at least 11 of the Psalms and protected the purity of temple worship. It should be noted that Samuel was a Korahite (6:33-38).

1Ch 9:18 who previously served in the king's gate eastward: they were the porters for the camp of the children of Levi-

This was the gate specially built in the temple by which the king entered (2 Kings 16:18; Ez. 46:1,2).

1Ch 9:19 Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brothers, of his father's house, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the thresholds of the tent. Their fathers had been over the camp of Yahweh, keepers of the entry- When Israel walked with God, "The hosts of the children of Levi" were actually called "the host / camp of Yahweh" (1 Chron. 9:18,19 Heb.). If we each have a guardian Angel, it makes sense that the hosts of God's people on earth are represented by Angelic hosts in the Heavens.

1Ch 9:20 Phinehas the son of Eleazar was ruler over them in time past, and Yahweh was with him-

The allusion may be to how it was at the door of the tabernacle / tent of the congregation that Phinehas stopped the apostasy of Israel. It seems from Num. 25:6-8 that the Midianite woman and the Israelite were having sex within "the tent", the tabernacle. Phinehas was remembered for this by his descendants directing the guards at the door of the tent (1 Chron. 9:19). The actions of the couple were therefore intended to turn the holy place into a place where Yahweh was supposedly worshipped through sex with prostitutes, exactly the way of pagan religions, and which was a problem in the churches at Corinth and Ephesus.

1Ch 9:21 Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter of the door of the Tent of Meeting-

The "porters and singers" at the restoration were Levites (Neh. 7:1). The use of Levites to guard the gates was a conscious attempt to restore the situation in Solomon's temple (1 Chron. 9:17-22; 26:12-19). We should also remember that the Levites and priests accounted for about half the population of Jerusalem (Neh. 11:6-19 cp. 1 Chron. 9:9-22). According to Ez. 44:11-14, the repentant Levites were to be the gatekeepers in the restored temple. But there is no evidence they did repent, indeed the record in Nehemiah shows they were on the side of the Samaritan opposition, intermarrying with them; and so the Kingdom situation possible at the restoration was precluded.

1Ch 9:22 All these who were chosen to be porters in the thresholds were two hundred and twelve-

Compare Neh. 11:19 "Moreover the porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their brothers, who kept

watch at the gates, were one hundred and seventy-two". 1 Chron. 9:22 gives 212. It depends exactly what time 1 Chron. 9 refers to. And guards of the gates may have included others who were not in this particular list of "porters", for as noted several times, neither of the lists are exhaustive.

These were reckoned by genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the prophet ordained-

This gives us an insight into David's mind when he was fleeing from Saul. The last time that Samuel and David are seen together is when David fled for his life from his own house – before Saul was dead and David on the throne.

In their office of trust-

As any employer soon learns, delegation is a risk. We have been "entrusted with the Gospel" (Tit. 1:3 RV); and therefore the world God so wants to love, the world God is appealing to, may never see Him; for He makes His appeal through us, as Paul told the Corinthians. Those who did God's work in the Old Testament temple were similarly given a "trust", they were entrusted with God's work.

1Ch 9:23 So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of Yahweh, even the house of the tent, as guards-

This could imply that the holy and / or most holy place was still beneath a tent; or that it was still called this in recognition of the fact God didn't really want a house at all, but preferred to dwell in a tent.

1Ch 9:24 On the four sides were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south-
Further details are in 1 Chron. 26:14-18.

1Ch 9:25 Their brothers, in their villages, were to come in every seven days from time to time to be with them-

Perhaps it is the villages of the Netophathites which are in view (:16; Neh. 12:28). These were in Bethlehem, not so far from the temple.

1Ch 9:26 for the four chief porters, who were Levites, were in an office of trust, and were over the rooms and over the treasures in God's house-

See on :22. These chambers around the temple court were where the holy vessels and tithes were stored (1 Chron. 28:12; 2 Chron. 31:5,11,12; Neh. 13:4-9). It could be to these rooms which the Lord Jesus alludes when He says that in God's house / temple, there are many such rooms and He will go to die on the cross to prepare them for our use (Jn. 14:1-3). As :33 shows, the Levites at times slept in them. He clearly has in view the temple as a spiritual house, comprised of people not bricks. The idea is that His death achieved for us not only salvation, but eternal service as priests within God's "house", being about God's work and business for the sake of others' salvation and implementing their relationship with God. This is what eternity will be about. And it is in this life which we develop our desire to do these things, so that the Kingdom will be a time when all the frustrations and barriers to such service are removed.

1Ch 9:27 They lodged around God's house, because that duty was theirs. To them pertained its opening morning by morning-

"They" are the four chief porters of :26. We recall how Samuel as a non-Levite was charged with this work.

1Ch 9:28 Certain of them were in charge of the vessels of service; for by count were these

brought in and by count were these taken out-

This could imply that things were at such a low ebb spiritually that there was the possibility of them being stolen, as they would have been made of precious metals.

1Ch 9:29 Some of them also were appointed over the furniture, and over all the vessels of the sanctuary, and over the fine flour, the wine, the oil, the frankincense and the spices-

These were specifically the things required for the daily sacrifices.

1Ch 9:30 Some of the sons of the priests prepared the mix of the spices-

This was forbidden to any others on pain of death (Ex. 30:33,35). This refers to the careful preparation of the incense (Ex. 37:29), which represents how the Lord Jesus fuses together so many different factors in our prayers (Ps. 141:2). For "we know not how to pray as we ought" (Rom. 8:26), and He is the only priest who can put together all the surrounding dimensions which are what God sees as 'prayer'. For prayer before God is far more than the words we think or say.

1Ch 9:31 Mattithiah, one of the Levites, who was the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the office of trust over the things that were baked in pans-

Zechariah is the firstborn of Shallum in 1 Chron. 26:2. These may be the same person, as people often had more than one name. Or "Shallum" may refer not to an individual but to a family.

1Ch 9:32 Some of their brothers, of the sons of the Kohathites, were over the show bread, to prepare it every Sabbath-

Literally, "the pile"; the cakes were piled in two rows on the table of shewbread (Lev. 24:5-8).

1Ch 9:33 These are the singers, heads of fathers' households of the Levites, who lived in the rooms and were free from other service; for they were employed in their work day and night-

These rooms were storerooms but were lived in by the Levites when on duty. As explained on :26, they were understood by the Lord Jesus to symbolize our eternal place in God's purpose. We will therefore be eternally as Levites on duty, "day and night". It is in this life that we attain a taste for that work and a desire to be always about it. If we approach the Lord's service from a minimalist perspective, then such service being done eternally will not be something we really want.

1Ch 9:34 These were heads of fathers' households of the Levites, throughout their generations, chief men. They lived at Jerusalem-

This appears to draw to a conclusion the summary of the Jerusalem Levites and their division of labour which began in 1 Chron. 8:28.

1Ch 9:35 In Gibeon there lived the father of Gibeon, Jeiel, whose wife's name was Maacah-

This genealogical information on Saul is to provide background for the historical narrative which will begin with the death of Saul in 1 Chron. 10.

1Ch 9:36 His firstborn son Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab-

When a passage is repeated twice, surely God wishes us to perceive something. 1 Chron. 8:30-34 is repeated in 9:36-40. The reason seems to be that the name 'Baal' was used by the leaders of Israel. Gibeon's children included Kish and *Baal*, Kish's son was king Saul, Saul had a son called *Eshbaal* as well as Jonathan, David's beloved friend; and Jonathan had a son

called *Meribbaal*. These are not the names as recorded elsewhere; evidently the Chronicles record is highlighting the fact that there was a strand of weakness for idols in the family of Saul, including in Jonathan- who was a type of us in his friendship of David / Jesus. Surely this helps us to better relate to him; his love of David, his appreciation of David's righteousness, his belief that David would have the future Kingdom, struggled against the fact that the worldly influence of his father and great-grandfather still rubbed off upon him.

1Ch 9:37 Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah and Mikloth-

We note that none of the names of the sons of Kish feature the 'Yah' prefix or suffix. Saul didn't come from a spiritual background, and yet the Spirit of God was strong enough to change him and give him "another heart". Just as it can transform secular, irreligious man today.

1Ch 9:38 Mikloth became the father of Shimeam. They also lived with their brothers in Jerusalem, over against their brothers-

The idea is that some of the family lived in Jerusalem, 'opposite', as it were, the family who remained in Gibeah. Jerusalem was originally in Benjamin's territory. Mikloth may refer to another brother of Saul. For the purpose of this genealogy is to introduce us to Saul.

1Ch 9:39 Ner became the father of Kish; and Kish became the father of Saul; and Saul became the father of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab and Eshbaal-

1 Sam. 31:2; 1 Chron. 10:2 read "Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchishua", whereas 1 Sam. 14:49 has "Jonathan, Ishvi and Malchishua". "Ishvi" may be another name for Abinadab; or we may note that the word means "and the second...", which would make sense in 1 Sam. 14:49. The genealogies of 1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39 also mention Esh-Baal or Ishbosheth; perhaps his name mentioning the "Baal" compound was the reason for its exclusion. Having such a name reflects upon Saul's lack of total devotion to Yahweh.

1Ch 9:40 The son of Jonathan was Merib Baal; and Merib Baal became the father of Micah- Merib-baal (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40) could mean 'the shame of Baal', but there is evidence that Saul's daughter Michal had an idol and it is likely that even Jonathan was not free of idolatry. Idolatry has always been a besetting weakness amongst even the best of God's people.

Tragically, we so often read of Yahweh's people carrying the names of Baal or other gods within their own names- e.g. Merib-baal (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40); Ishbaal (1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39); Baal-yada (1 Chron. 14:7); and perhaps worst of all, Baal-Yah (1 Chron. 12:5). Is our 'name' or personality before God the same tragic mixture of flesh and spirit?

1Ch 9:41 The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tahrea and Ahaz-

Micah may refer to another brother or son of Saul. For the purpose of this genealogy is to introduce us to Saul. "Melech", "king", may refer to the son or relative whom Saul favoured to succeed him, as kings often didn't choose their firstborn sons to succeed them. In this case, it reflects his refusal to believe the reality of the fact that David was to succeed him. Men are all the time in denial of God's word and all the evidence that it is going to come true, and act and plan as if sleepwalking or in amnesia, as if it will not.

1Ch 9:42 Ahaz became the father of Jarah; and Jarah became the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth and Zimri; and Zimri became the father of Moza-

"Jarah" is the very same word for "honeycomb" used in the record of how Jonathan ate of a honeycomb after his great victory over the Philistines, and his father Saul sought to kill him

for it (1 Sam. 14:27). We are reading here of the relatives of Saul, so it may well be that this child was named in favour of and respect for Jonathan rather than Saul.

1Ch 9:43 and Moza became the father of Binea, and Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son-

We may wonder this particular line of Saul's family is recorded. We note that unlike the names of Saul's brothers, the names of this branch generally speak of God or spiritual things. Perhaps the names carried significance to those for whom these genealogies were first prepared. Or maybe the idea is that those who are spiritually minded are the ones whose name is preserved.

1Ch 9:44 Azel had six sons, whose names are: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah and Hanan. These were the sons of Azel-

1 Chron. 8:38,39 says that Azel had a nephew called Ulam. Ulam is twelfth from Saul, although generations are often skipped in these genealogies. So seeing that Hezekiah was thirteenth from David, we can conclude that it was Isaiah or Hezekiah who may have first ordered these genealogies to be drawn up, although they were rewritten at the times of the exiles.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 10

1Ch 10:1 Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain on Mount Gilboa-

It is really stressed that Saul and Jonathan "fell" on Gilboa (1 Sam. 31:1,8; 2 Sam. 1:10,12,19,25,27), using a Hebrew word which is often associated with spiritual falling. The fact that "the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons" (1 Sam. 31:2) gives the impression of them fleeing from the Philistine soldiers. This sends the mind back to the Law's warning that an apostate Israel would flee before their enemies (Dt. 28:25). Saul and Jonathan are described in terms representative of apostate Israel; see Am. 2:14,15; Micah 1 and 2 and expositions there. But the fall of Israel was due to the fall of Saul (see on 1 Sam. 28:19); instead of being the king who led to victory as Israel had hoped and as God had enabled, he led to shame and defeat.

Earlier the Philistines had 'fallen down slain' after David's victory over Goliath (same words in 1 Sam. 17:52). That victory had now been reversed; for Saul was the antithesis of David. And yet we have noted that David was spiritually weak at this time. All this was by grace alone, God's grace towards David, because He recognized that beneath all David's weakness there was a heart after His own. Fleeing before enemies and falling down before them is the language of Israel's punishment for breaking the covenant. But David deeply laments the falling down slain of Saul and Israel (2 Sam. 1:19,25 "the beauty of Israel is slain... how are the mighty fallen... how are the mighty fallen... O Jonathan, you were slain on your high places"). We enquire whether Jonathan had slipped away from the covenant, seeing he too fell down slain; he is strongly identified with Saul in 1 Chron. 10:6: "So Saul died, and his three sons; and all his family died together". The curious expression 'on your high places' suggests of course the idolatrous high places, as if Jonathan had been as it were sacrificed on the altar of his own preferred 'high place'. Ez. 6:4 sounds so similar, using the same words for 'falling down' and 'slain': "I will cast down [make to fall down] your slain men before your idols". We see here the danger of the Jonathan choice- to reject coming out for David / Jesus, and instead to choose to remain 'in the world' and appear as of the world, whilst speaking up for David / Jesus at times. It could sadly be that like many who have made the Jonathan

choice, he was caught up in that world and suffered their judgment. Or it could be that we have here an example of how good men can suffer the results of others' breaking of covenant. Although surely it is far from God to slay the righteous with the wicked, as Abraham argued regarding Lot in Sodom. Whatever, David's lament for those judged for breaking covenant makes him even more a man after God's own heart- for the condemnation of the wicked grieves God deeply, and is never done with any smug self satisfaction or lashing out in punishment.

1Ch 10:2 The Philistines followed hard after Saul and after his sons; and the Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchishua, the sons of Saul-

"Followed hard after" suggests the Philistines chased Saul. Just as he had chased David. We could see this as him reaping some poetic justice. Yet it could be that even in these last hours of his life, God was appealing to Saul to understand what he had done to David, and repent. Saul had chased David up a conical hill- and then the arrival of the Philistines had saved David. Now Saul was chased by the Philistines up a conical hill- to death. Saul was being reminded of this, but not as poetic justice for the sake of it, but as a nudge to repentance. For God doesn't give up with man until his last breath, and it's only over when it's over. Likewise we ponder why Saul's sons were slain first, and then he was hit by an arrow (:3). That isolating him alone, having lost his sons [he would have perceived, although wrongly, that all his sons were slain] and therefore all hope of his kingly dynasty continuing, was perhaps also a desperate appeal for his repentance and acceptance that his "kingdom", his dynasty", was not to continue. Or again, we ponder the word used for "archer" in :3. It is the word 'to point out', and is the word more commonly used for a "teacher". Samuel says in 1 Sam. 12:23 that he will not cease to "teach [s.w. "archer"] you the good and right way". Perhaps again there is a hint that even at that final stage, God was appealing for Saul to be teachable. So likewise we ponder how after Saul's sons are killed, he appears to be isolated alone with his armourbearer. And the only other mention of Saul's armourbearer is when we read that this was David's role earlier (1 Sam. 16:21). Was not this also a nudge towards thinking of David, and repenting of how he had abused David his armourbearer? We have no insight into the final psychological moments of those who die after falling away from God, but very likely His efforts with them likewise continue to the end of life. These are only hints, because God makes His appeals subtly and not in a way which would railroad man into repentance. For man is free, created free by God, and He ever respects that human freedom He has granted to man. To railroad to repentance is not His style nor His way in this world.

1 Sam. 31:2; 1 Chron. 10:2 read "Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchishua", whereas 1 Sam. 14:49 has "Jonathan, Ishvi and Malchishua". "Ishvi" may be another name for Abinadab; or we may note that the word means "and the second...", which would make sense in 1 Sam. 14:49. The genealogies of 1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39 also mention Esh-Baal or Ishbosheth; perhaps his name mentioning the "Baal" compound was the reason for its exclusion. Having such a name reflects upon Saul's lack of total devotion to Yahweh.

1Ch 10:3 The battle went hard against Saul, and the archers overtook him; and he was badly wounded by the archers-

This was all such a reversal of fortunes. When the Philistines stopped the Israelites from having metal weapons, they honed their skills as slingers and archers. But now it was Philistine archers who wounded Saul. Tragically, David would use archers to slay Uriah. His words of Ps. 64:7 were being fulfilled: "God shall shoot at them [David's enemies] with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded". But when this happened, David weeps and laments over Saul. The Hebrew for "wounded" may also be rendered "and he was sore afraid" [s.w.

"be in anguish", Dt. 2:25] . This is the final end of the rejected. Fear. Alone with none to help.

1Ch 10:4 Then Saul said to his armour bearer, Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me-

We see again the record present the demise of Saul and the rise of David. For David had earlier cut off the foreskins of 200 Philistines whom he has slain; "For Saul devised to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines" (1 Sam. 18:25). But Saul now faces abuse [of his circumcision?] by the uncircumcised and will himself fall by their hand.

"Lest [they]... mock / abuse me" were to be the very words of Zedekiah (Jer. 38:19). The message for the exiles was that their leadership had indeed acted and been judged as Saul, but there was hope for restoration in a revived David figure.

But his armour bearer would not; for he was terrified. Therefore Saul took his sword and fell on it-

We need to realize that we have more influence upon others than we may think. It can be that an illiterate sister in a male dominated society can think that her attendance at ecclesial meetings cannot encourage anyone. It can be that the Christian stockbroker feels that it is impossible for him to influence those he works with. But we do have influence. Saul's armour bearer would not kill him when he was mortally wounded. Although he was one of Saul's men, in the anti-David camp, yet David's example of not killing Saul must have deeply influenced him. We do make a difference. We have become so humiliated by a shame based society that we can underestimate the value and power of our own personhood.

This man, although close to Saul, had been influenced by the spirit of David who would not lift up his hand against Yahweh's anointed. He may well have been near Saul on the two occasions David had come close to him and had chosen not to slay him. We learn from this that there may be people who think rightly in positions we would not imagine. "Terrified" is literally "he feared", and David uses the word in 2 Sam. 1:10 in asking why the Amalekite did not "fear" to slay Saul as Saul requested. David appears aware of the faithfulness of Saul's armour bearer.

Saul was Yahweh's anointed, but he slew Yahweh's anointed- by killing himself. This was what he had attempted to do to David; and he ended up doing it to himself. And so is revealed a profound principle- that what we would wish to do to others, we ultimately do to ourselves. If we refuse to forgive them, we remain unforgiven. If we judge / condemn them and in our minds exclude them from God's Kingdom, we do the same to ourselves. If we wish our most difficult enemies salvation- we shall be saved. If we hate them and thereby kill them, as the Lord teaches- we hate and slay ourselves.

1Ch 10:5 When his armour bearer saw that Saul was dead, he likewise fell on his sword and died-

Fair attention is given to this man. As noted on :4, he was like Jonathan and many, in that his loyalties were divided. He was personally loyal to Saul, feeling that Saul's death was his death; and yet also loyal to the spirit of David, in that he would not slay Yahweh's anointed, and respected him as that right up to Saul's hopeless end. We may well meet him in God's Kingdom.

1Ch 10:6 So Saul died, and his three sons; and all his family died together-

To all die on the same day was tragic; and recalls the deaths of Eli and his sons at the hands of the Philistines. They died in fulfilment of prophecies that they must be replaced by a faithful priest, of whom Samuel was a potential fulfilment. The situation with the deaths of Saul and his sons was so similar. We see the same Divine hand at work.

"Many of the people" (2 Sam. 1:4) is no contradiction with this or 1 Sam. 31:6, where "all his men" refers to Saul's immediate body-guard.

1Ch 10:7 When all the men of Israel who were in the valley saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook their cities and fled; and the Philistines came and lived in them-

We enquire who is in view when we read that "When all the men of Israel who were in the valley saw that they fled... they fled [also]" (1 Chron. 10:7). The reference to Saul being 'overtaken' in 1 Chron. 10:3 suggests it was Saul and his men who fled. This caused the men of Israel in the valley to flee; and then 1 Sam. 31:7 adds that the men of Israel "on the other side of the valley" [a separate group] fled, when they say that the "men of Israel" in the valley had fled. It was a collapse mentality, led by the fleeing of Saul. David in 2 Sam. 1 presents Saul as gallantly fighting to the end, but he was surely imputing goodness to Saul. True to a man who disobeyed the covenant, he fled before his enemies, according to the curse of the covenant. And this led his men to progressively flee.

The valley of Jezreel is in view in the parallel 1 Sam. 31:7; it was the most fertile part of Israel. The translation may be better "on the side of the valley". The forsaken cities appear to apply only to that valley. "Beyond the Jordan" may mean 'on the river banks'. There is little archaeological evidence that the Philistines possessed the territory east of Jordan for very long. Soon after this, Abner proclaimed Ishbosheth as king at Mahanaim, about twenty miles east of the Jordan (2 Sam. 2:8). So these gains of the Philistines were short-lived, and they lacked the numbers of population to really settle all this territory. But the impression is given of a total Philistine victory in the north of Israel.

'Forsaken cities' is a term often used in the prophets of how Jerusalem and the cities of Judah were forsaken during the Babylonian invasion. The 1 Samuel record was surely written or edited as comfort to the exiles- that under David their prince, a glorious restoration was possible.

1Ch 10:8 It happened on the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa-

The fact this was done the next day suggests the battle continued into the late evening, with Saul fighting literally to the end.

1Ch 10:9 They stripped him, and took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines all around, to carry the news to their idols, and to the people-

This may well have been to allude to what David had done to Goliath many years before, placing his armour in the tabernacle; the sting of which remained with them. But the record mocks how they had to take the news to their idols; unlike Yahweh who sees and knows all things, and even before they happen.

We note they stripped his armour. His crown and bracelet was taken by the Amalekite looter whom we learn of in 2 Sam. 1. The man came to spoil the slain bodies, and finding the crown and bracelet, took them to David, hoping for a reward.

If Saul was stripped, it means his royal robe was stripped off him. He had done this before when he was in the cave, and when he went to the medium. He should have stripped off those robes and given them to David, accepting God's word to him that this must happen. But he refused, and so it was done to him in his final condemnation. We either accept our condemnation now, or we will experience it at judgment day.

The death of Saul was 'published' (AV) by the Philistines. But David uses the word in saying "Publish it not" (2 Sam. 1:20). Perhaps he means that Israel were not to speak of this tragedy; hence he kills the Amalekite who 'published' the news to him (2 Sam. 4:10 s.w.).

1Ch 10:10 They put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the house of Dagon-

1 Sam. 31:10 adds: "They put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan". 1 Chron. 10:12 adds the detail that the bodies of his sons were likewise fastened to the wall. Herodotus writes of a great temple to Venus in Ashkelon.

Clearly the Philistines had in memory how David had brought the head of Goliath to Jerusalem. They were seeking to as it were undo David's work and victory.

1Ch 10:11 When all Jabesh Gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul-

They had been saved by Saul in 1 Sam. 11, maybe 40 years before (Acts 13:21). They had total loyalty to Saul even now at the end, when surely it was clear that David was the king of God's choice and Saul had sinned and failed. Perhaps they set a good example of appreciating the good a man once did or taught, even if in later life he turned away from God. As explained on 1 Sam. 30:23, this was how David treated Saul.

1Ch 10:12 all the valiant men arose and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days-

1 Sam. 31:12 adds: "All the valiant men arose and travelled all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan, and they went to Jabesh and burnt them there". Cremation was not common amongst the Israelites, but perhaps they did this lest his body be abused further, seeing that they were under Philistine domination. We recall how it was beneath a tamarisk tree that Saul had ordered the massacre of the priests of Nob (1 Sam. 22:6). Now it is his bones which are beneath such a tree. But the bones were buried, so only the rest of the bodies were burnt. Or we can read "Burnt for them there", the burning referring to incense rather than the bodies.

1Ch 10:13 So Saul died for his trespass which he committed against Yahweh, against the word of Yahweh, which he didn't keep; and also because he asked counsel of one who had a familiar spirit, to inquire-

"So Saul died for his trespass..." suggests the hand of God in it- "He killed him" (:14). But he committed suicide. Yet God's hand overruled that. It was of Him.

"The word of Yahweh" connects directly with 1 Sam. 15:2, where the same phrase "the word of Yahweh" refers to the divine order to exterminate the Amalekites. Because he didn't want to "hear" God's word in his life, he didn't get to hear it when he desperately wanted to at the end ("Yahweh didn't answer him", 1 Sam. 28:6). Just as with the foolish virgins and their oil. We reflect that "just" for two sins Saul was condemned. There were many others of course, not least his persecution of David or murdering the priests of Nob, which we might consider to have been his greatest sins. But they aren't mentioned. Why? Perhaps in order to again underline to us that "just" one sin warrants condemnation. Or because his disbelief in and disobedience to God's word was the root failing in all his other sins, e.g. in persecuting David. Or possibly because they were the first and last sins of his kingship.

AV "a familiar spirit" is misleading, and many of the modern versions give something like "witch" or [ESV, GNB] "a medium". LXX has "a divining spirit". It doesn't mean she did actually have any such spirit; but that she was considered as having this. Such people were thought to be able to be possessed by the spirit of dead people, and to therefore speak in their name. But the Bible clearly teaches that the "spirit returns to God" (Ps. 146:4; Ecc. 12:7), and that death is unconsciousness. The spirit of dead persons don't enter other people. I would go

so far as to say that the record of the witch at Endor, who supposedly had a "familiar spirit", is deconstructing this belief. For Samuel himself appears, and speaks directly to Saul, and not through the "medium". The woman therefore screamed in shock when Samuel actually appeared. He was resurrected, briefly, in order to give God's final message to Saul. The people claiming to have "familiar spirits" lay on the ground and mumbled hard to understand words in a voice seeking to imitate the dead person (Is. 29:4) but Samuel appeared in person and spoke clearly to Saul, directly. We also note that Samuel appeared to Saul standing upright, because Saul bowed before him: "Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and showed respect" (1 Sam. 28:14). This was quite different to how the mediums lay on the ground and mumbled words into the dust.

David felt preserved by God from Saul and his other enemies (1 Sam. 30:23; 2 Sam. 22:44), because he had preserved or obeyed [s.w.] God's ways (2 Sam. 22:22,24; Ps. 18:21,23); whereas Saul didn't obey / preserve them and was destroyed (1 Sam. 13:13,14; 1 Chron. 10:13). Hence Ps. 145:20: "Yahweh preserves all those who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy".

1Ch 10:14 and didn't inquire of Yahweh. Therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom to David the son of Jesse-

Just before his final fight with the Philistines, "Saul enquired of the Lord (but) the Lord answered him not" (1 Sam. 28:6), and therefore he went to a witch. But in God's final analysis of Saul, Yahweh says that He smote Saul because Saul sinned against God's word by *not* enquiring of God, but of a witch (1 Chron. 10:13,14). But Saul *did* enquire of God (see 1 Sam. 14:37 s.w. 1 Sam. 28:6), but God didn't answer him (note how often in the records it is stated that David enquired successfully of Yahweh). The point is that although Saul prayed to God and enquired of His word on the surface, in his heart, he did nothing of the sort; and therefore his prayer and enquiry was reckoned never to have happened. And we must ask how much of our prayer and Bible study is seen by God as being only spoken and read on a surface level. This was exactly the problem of natural Israel. "They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled (in prayer) upon their beds" (Hos. 7:14). "Though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him" (Hos. 11:7). We have here a powerful challenge to our prayer life. For we can enquire of God on a surface level, as a kind of formality, to soothe the religious conscience which is somewhere in every man. But this is not to really enquire of Him.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 11

1Ch 11:1 Then all Israel gathered themselves to David to Hebron saying-

This was to enter the covenant which Abner had persuade them to make (see on 2 Sam. 3:21). We noted earlier that God had told David to go up to Hebron and it seems that is where God intended David to be king from. But it was David who preferred Jerusalem and possibly transferred that desire onto God.

Behold, we are your bone and your flesh-

Eph. 5:30 alludes here and makes the amazing statement that even now, "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones". In a very detailed study of this language, Henricus Renckens concluded: "In Israel, in order to say that someone was a blood relation, one said: 'He is my flesh and my bones' (Gen. 29:14; Jud. 9:2; cp. Gen. 37:27; 2 Sam. 5:1; 19:13 ff.; Is. 58:7)". This is how close we are to the Lord Jesus- blood relatives. This language could in no way be justified if Jesus were God Himself in person.

1Ch 11:2 In times past, even when Saul was king, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. Yahweh your God said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of My people Israel, and you shall be prince over My people Israel'-

The mutuality between God and David is often brought out. Yahweh was his shepherd (Ps. 23:1), and he was to shepherd Israel). All Israel recognized that David had always been Israel's saviour, and Saul generally had failed to experience the Divine potential for him to be this. The people may possibly be alluding to Gen. 49:10 "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs. To him will the obedience of the peoples be". And so the people gathered to David, the king chosen from Judah, the shepherd who had a staff. Although for them it now seemed so logical that a shepherd man from Judah should be their king, God's choice of Saul of Benjamin shows that He sees His purpose as capable of multiple different paths of outworking. This is why the interpretation of prophecy can never be conducted dogmatically, because there are various possible outcomes- depending upon human freewill response.

1Ch 11:3 So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and David made a covenant with them in Hebron before Yahweh; and they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of Yahweh by Samuel-

This is the covenant which Abner had engineered in 2 Sam. 3:21, aimed at providing total amnesty and assurance to all those who had once supported Saul. David had already been anointed by Samuel, but this was stating that all Israel approved of that and wanted to work with God's plan rather than against it. It was a covenant of amnesty and forgiveness, the past was to be the past. And this looks forward to the situation when the Lord is finally enthroned king at His return.

1Ch 11:4 David and all Israel went to Jerusalem (the same is Jebus). The Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, were there-

Defining the Jebusites as "the inhabitants of the land" may be another mark left by the inspired editing of these records for the exiles. Such explanatory notes would have been unnecessary for the primary readership. The encouragement to them was that restoration of Israel's fortunes was indeed possible, under a new David.

Hebron was a priestly city and Jerusalem the kingly city, so maybe this is intended to present David as a king-priest, beginning his kingship at the same age as the priests began their service (2 Sam. 5:4). But I have suggested that Yahweh's command in 2 Sam. 2:1 was for David to be king in Hebron ["David inquired of Yahweh saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? Yahweh said to him, Go up. David said, Where shall I go up? He said, To Hebron"], but he chose Jerusalem [partly in Judah, partly in Benjamin] for political purposes and God went along with that.

1Ch 11:5 The inhabitants of Jebus said to David, You shall not come in here-

2 Sam. 5:6 gives more detail: "The king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David saying, Unless you take away the blind and the lame, you shall not come in here; thinking, David can't come in here". "Thinking, David can't come in here" continues a theme in the Samuel records- that human thoughts are so significant to God. This is what they thought, and therefore from the abundance of their hearts, their mouths spoke. A person who feels they are somehow a nice guy and worthy of invitation will be the one who tends to consider others as unworthy of invitation to the Kingdom. He or she who perceives their own desperation will eagerly invite even those they consider to be in the very pits of human society. The lame, blind etc. were not allowed to

serve God under the law (Lev. 21:18), nor be offered as sacrifices (Dt. 15:21), nor come within the holy city (after 2 Sam. 5:6-8). The Lord purposefully healed multitudes of lame and blind (Mt. 15:30), and allowed them to come to Him in the temple (Mt. 21:14). His acted out message was clearly that those who were despised as unfit for God's service were now being welcomed by Him into that service. The lame and blind were despised because they couldn't work. They had to rely on the grace of others. Here again is a crucial teaching: those called are those who can't do the works, but depend upon grace.

Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion. The same is the city of David- The contrast is with how Saul's tribe of Benjamin had failed to drive out the Jebusites (Jud. 1:21). Jerusalem was originally in Benjamin, but David's capture of the city made it "the city of David" and therefore in Judah. We see here how different potential futures could have worked out. If Benjamin had taken and inherited their possession and Saul had 'worked out' as he could have done, then Jerusalem would have been in Benjamin. We see here how God's plans are flexible, reflective of His great respect of human freewill and initiative.

The "city of David" was not a city, it is defined here as a stronghold, and elsewhere the term is used specifically of the burial places of the Davidic kings. It was a hill southeast of Jerusalem. In the wilderness Psalms, David so often talks of Yahweh as his stronghold, his fortified tower. And we think of 2 Sam. 22:1-3: "David spoke to Yahweh the words of this song in the day that Yahweh delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: and he said, Yahweh is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, even mine; God, my rock, in Him I will take refuge; my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge. My saviour, You save me". But once he settles in Jerusalem, we repeatedly read of the city / stronghold of David, the area he built a fortification around, the "milo". Again we see his spiritual decline once he settled down and we must beware of this. He himself and his fortified home fortress was his own stronghold rather than Yahweh.

It can be inferred that the Jebusites surrendered when the blind and lame were so cruelly slain. There is no mention of any battle; and Araunah the Jebusite is living and owning part of the future temple mount nearby at the time of 2 Sam. 24.

1Ch 11:6 David said, Whoever strikes the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain. Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, and was made chief-

If David was indeed Jonathan's armourbearer in 1 Sam. 14, he would have seen how God had punished the pride of the Philistines when they thought likewise. For Jonathan had shinned up an almost vertical cliff, with the Philistines mocking him- and slew them. This inspired David with the possibility that someone of similar faith and bravery could climb up the sewer line into Zion and do the same. Jonathan's example, from some decades earlier, inspired faith in this later situation. And so will all Godly examples. The fact it was Joab who rose up to this example means that he must surely have had some faith as well as bravery, despite his rather unspiritual ways.

But the Hebrew of David's words in the parallel in 2 Sam. 5 reads like a kind of song, which could be translated:

Whosoever smites the Jebusite,
let him hurl down the precipice
both the lame and the blind,
hated of David's soul.

We sense here a bitterness and lack of respect of the human person, which maybe resulted in his not being allowed to build the temple later. To murder the handicapped was unethical, but David's bitterness and desire for power led him to command it. Hence LXX

"Whosoever smiteth the Jebusite, let him slay with the sword both the lame and the blind who hate David's soul".

There are echoes of Saul's offer at the time of the fight with Goliath. Chronicles records: "Whosoever smites the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain". And thus Joab was restored to being chief of the army.

We note that the exclusion of blind and lame in Lev. 21:18-20 only applied to "the seed of Aaron" not being able to officiate with sacrifices. And lame and blind sacrifices weren't to be offered (Dt. 15:21). But this is being twisted by David's extremism and anger issues into a general prohibition of lame and blind people coming into sacred space. The Jebusites were making typical pre-battle taunts- and David falls deeply for it. The words lodged in him and he got furiously angry. But Lev. 21:21,22 was clear that disabled priests were allowed to eat the holy things although not to offer them: "he shall not come near to offer the food of his God. He *shall* eat the food of his God, both of the most holy, and of the holy". That holy food was to be eaten in the holy place, beside the altar (Lev. 6:16,26; 7:6; 10:12,13; 24:9- all very different from the attitudes of other religions at the time which stigmatized disability and wouldn't have allowed any disabled priests). So David was quite wrong to demand that no disabled person come into the temple. The Lord healed the blind and lame and allowed them to enter the temple, as if undoing this whole law and principle (Mt. 21:14 "the blind and the lame came to him in the temple and he healed them"). Jacob was lame but Yahweh is so often stated to be his God. There is no grace in David's position, nor in those who upheld it. The reason is given that the lame and blind were hated of David's soul. Hardly a great basis morally. And yet, as ever, David's feelings are nuanced- because he shows huge grace to the lame Mephibosheth and has him live within his house and eat at his table (2 Sam. 9:13). We all have these contradictory feelings and positions, where anger struggles against grace. We think of his expressed hatred for Saul in the Psalms, and yet his love and grace to him in practice. This is not the same as hypocrisy, it is what it is to be a spiritually flawed human. And the promise of the new covenant is that specifically the blind and lame are those who will come to Zion: "I will bring them in from the northland, gather them from the ends of the earth—the blind and the lame among them, those with child together with those in labour—in a vast throng they shall return here" (Jer. 31:7). Indeed the law of Moses taught respect for the disabled- the deaf were not to be reviled, and no stumbling hazard placed where blind people were (Lev. 19:14), because "I am Yahweh". David's attitude is completely opposite to this; he is presented as plain wrong right from the get go of his establishment in Zion. But soon after he receives the amazing grace of the promises of 2 Sam. 7. Rather like directly after Abraham and Isaac are weak in faith regarding their wives- they receive the promises and material blessings.

1Ch 11:7 David lived in the stronghold; therefore they called it the city of David-
Jerusalem was particularly loved by David. He thereby moved the city into Judah's possession from Benjamin's; see on :5.

1Ch 11:8 He built the city all around, from Millo and all around; and Joab repaired the rest of the city-

Literally "the Millo" or "filling up", referring to the defences of the citadel. Perhaps it refers to a place where armour was kept or a tower. "Repaired the rest" can be translated "spared / kept alive" (cp. Ex. 1:17). Maybe the reference is to the Benjamites who lived there, as well as the remaining Jebusites (cp. Jud. 1:21).

1Ch 11:9 David grew greater and greater; for Yahweh of Armies was with him-
Yahweh's hosts of Angelic armies were with David's armies on earth. This is the same phrase

as used in David's protestation of humility in Ps. 131:1: "Nor do I concern myself with great matters, or things too wonderful for me". 'To go' ["concern myself"] with 'great things' is the phrase used of David in the parallel 2 Sam. 5:10; he "went on [s.w. "concern myself"] and grew great" [s.w. "with great matters"]. So the idea of Ps. 131:1 may be that David didn't pay attention to these things so as not to become proud. And yet this humility was mixed with the bitterness noted on :6. We are all strange mixtures of spiritual strength and weakness. And we need to remember that in our interactions with others at their points of weakness.

2 Sam. 5:12 adds: "David perceived that Yahweh had established him king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for His people Israel's sake".

He realized that the promises of Samuel so long ago had finally come true, despite all the times when it had seemed they could not come true (see on 1 Sam. 27:1). But this sense of fulfilment led him to take yet more wives (:13), which is surely to be read negatively in spiritual terms. Yet he realized that his establishment was located in a wider context than just for himself; it was for the sake of His people Israel.

2 Sam. 5:13 continues: "David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron; and there were more sons and daughters born to David". This is hard to read in a positive light spiritually; for Israel's king was not to multiply wives (Dt. 17:17). He seemed to feel the need to prove himself established by having more wives and children, but this was itself a failure to appreciate that Yahweh had established him (:12). He did perceive this, but only on one level. David in Ps. 119 says that he studied God's law day and night. But he like us can miss the totally obvious and filter out the direct personal relevance. David was acting as monarchs did- having children by women from his chosen capital city, to establish his dynasty and establish himself as king there. Yet by doing this, David is breaking Divine principle by marrying multiple wives, for the sake of his political agenda rather than love marriage. And if the women were from Jerusalem, they were likely Gentiles / Jebusites as Jerusalem had not been in Israel's hands in recent times.

1Ch 11:10 Now these are the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who showed themselves strong with him in his kingdom, together with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of Yahweh concerning Israel-

Here we have an equivalent list to the "thirty" mighty men or "captains" of David in 2 Sam. 23. But there are more than 30 listed here. "Captains" is a form of the word translated "thirty" used in 2 Sam. 23:23, and is evidence that the "thirty" are not to be read as a literal number; in any case, 37 names are given for the "mighty men" in 2 Sam. 23, not 30. And there are more here in the parallel record in Chronicles.

1Ch 11:11 This is the number of the mighty men whom David had: Jashobeam, the son of a Hachmonite, the chief of the thirty; he lifted up his spear against three hundred and killed them at one time-

As noted on :10, "the thirty" is not a literal number. Likewise "hundred" need not be taken literally as 100, rather like the term "legion", and can refer to a military group.

1Ch 11:12 After him was Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, who was one of the three mighty men-

He "defied" the Philistines (2 Sam. 23:9). "Defied" is the word used of how Goliath had defied Israel (1 Sam. 17:10,25,26,36,45). Later Philistine defiance is described with the same word (2 Sam. 21:21). David's victory over Goliath was inspirational to other Israelites, just as the Lord's triumph on the cross should be to us.

1Ch 11:13 He was with David at Pasdammim, and there the Philistines were gathered

together to battle, where there was a plot of ground full of barley; and the people fled from before the Philistines-

It seems from 1 Chron. 11:13,14 that soon after the fight with Goliath, there was another skirmish with the Philistines at Pas-Dammim [RVmg. 'Ephes-Dammim' - the same place where David fought Goliath]. Again, the men of Israel fled, but those who held fast were given a "great deliverance" ["salvation", RVmg.], just as David is described as achieving. Those men who stayed and fought were doubtless inspired by David; just as we should be, time and again, by the matchless victory of our Lord on Golgotha. See on 1 Sam. 17:1. "Plot of ground" is the same phrase used in Ruth 2:3, and again, it was full of Barley. And Ruth and Boaz were the ancestors of David.

He defended the field of barley because it was valuable to the Israelites. And in this we have a corroboration of the record with how Absalom had burnt Joab's field of barley (2 Sam. 14:30). We may wonder why Joab slew Absalom. It could have been that to lose a field of barley was to lose food for many months or even a year. It was therefore a major loss to Joab. As Shammah defended a field of barley with his life, so Joab was so vengeful at the loss of his field of barley that he later slew Absalom.

1Ch 11:14 They stood in the midst of the plot, and defended it, and killed the Philistines; and Yahweh saved them by a great victory-

David's men 'delivered' God's land, and He delivered them (s.w.). There is a mutuality between God and man. Defended" or "delivered" is the word used for David's victories (1 Sam. 17:37; 30:8,18,22) which were clearly so inspirational to his men, as the Lord's victory should be to us. The record continually gives the glory to Yahweh for working through His willing workers. They did not achieve these victories in their own strength alone. The very phrase is used in 1 Sam. 19:5 describing how Yahweh gave David the great victory over Goliath. This was clearly inspirational to David's men in their own battles, just as the Lord's victory on the cross should not be seen simply as a historical achievement for us, but an abiding inspiration to us to in essence do likewise.

Joab apparently murdered because his field of barley was burnt down, showing the value of the field. To lose it would mean starvation.

1Ch 11:15 Three of the thirty chief men went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the army of the Philistines were encamped in the valley of Rephaim-

Not literally thirty; see on :10. The giants of the Philistines were in the valley of the giants. And they even had a garrison in David's home town (:16). They appeared insuperable. This refers to an incident during the campaign of 2 Sam. 5:17.

1Ch 11:16 David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem-

The hideout of 2 Sam. 5:17. The rock or hill of Adullam was surrounded by valleys fully viewable from the top of the hill, making it a strong position. Yet despite the obvious tactical advantages of the place, David's Psalms repeatedly describe Yahweh as his rock, stronghold and fortress.

1Ch 11:17 David was thirsty and said, Oh that one would give me water to drink of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!-

This has absolute psychological credibility. A leader of partisans sitting with his men in a cave, bitterly reflecting that the enemy have placed a garrison in his home village... would indeed make such a passing, under his breath comment like this.

1Ch 11:18 The three broke through the army of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David. David would not drink of it, but poured it out to Yahweh-

We see here the intense personal loyalty to David which is a theme throughout the record. It looks forward to that which there is to be between the Lord Jesus and we who follow Him in these outlaw days of our generation.

1Ch 11:19 and said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this! Shall I drink the blood of these men who have put their lives in jeopardy? For they risked their lives to bring it. Therefore he would not drink it. The three mighty men did these things-

Despite the intense personal loyalty which David inspired, he is to be commended for not allowing this to turn into a mere personality cult. He poured out that water to Yahweh, feeling unworthy to drink it. We note that water represented blood. This is a warning against being too literalistic in requirements concerning the elements of the breaking of bread service.

David perceived the spirit of the law about drink offerings, and "poured [water] out to Yahweh" (:18) in a cave, not being a Levitical priest, and far from the sanctuary.

1Ch 11:20 Abishai, the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three; for he lifted up his spear against three hundred and killed them, and had a name among the three-

"Hundred", like "legion", need not be read literally; it could refer to a group or military subdivision. Again the idea of singularly attaining victory against a multitude is a replication in spirit of David's victory over Goliath.

1Ch 11:21 Of the three, he was more honourable than the two, and was made their captain: however he didn't attain to the three-

This apparently means that he was demoted. This happened several times, as David considered that military valour was not the prime qualification for the post of army general, but rather perceiving grace and not shedding the blood of war in peace. Because Joab clearly failed to understand grace, David replaced him with Amasa- whom Joab later murdered out of jealousy.

1Ch 11:22 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, had done mighty deeds-

Benaiah was one of David's senior military commanders (2 Sam. 8:18; 1 Chron. 27:5), and the Hebrew of 2 Sam. 23:20 can be translated "Benaiah the son of Jehoiada the priest, as head", i.e. of a group of David's mighty men. The Jehoiada in view as his father would therefore be Jehoiada the priest. The idea is that priests were also military leaders within David's army, indeed it seems there were a large group of them as ordinary soldiers in 1 Chron. 12:27. This shows how priesthood was not understood as abstract spirituality, but that spirituality was articulated in practice. And this, along with the hints in the names of the mighty men that some were Levites, is significant in that the Levites were not numbered as they were exempt from military service (Num. 1:47). But these chose to do it. See on 2 Sam. 24:5.

He killed two lion-like men of Moab. He went down also and killed a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow-

Benaiah killed a lion in order to prepare him for killing two lionlike men. For other examples of repetition in Biblical narratives see 2 Kings 7:9,11,16; 1 Chron. 7:22 [cp. Jacob being comforted by his sons over the loss of Joseph]; Benaiah killed a lion in order to prepare him for killing two lionlike men (1 Chron. 11:22); Peter, James and John were asleep at the

transfiguration, but became “fully awake” and therefore beheld the Lord’s glory (Lk. 9:32)- they feel asleep in Gethsemane, and didn’t learn from the transfiguration experience.

2 Sam. 23:20 has: "He killed the two sons of Ariel of Moab: he went down also and killed a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow". Perhaps this incident occurred at this time of the campaign in 2 Sam. 8:2. Although that campaign was not David and his men at their spiritual best; see note there. We see him following the path of David, whose victory over a literal lion gave him courage to fight Goliath. So Benaiah was inspired by David personally to kill a lion, and then kill two lion like men (AV) of Moab. The lion would have been driven by the cold from the forests, and was preyed upon people. Benaiah therefore risked his life for the sake of his people, and slew the lion. See on :46.

1Ch 11:23 He killed an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits high; and in the Egyptian's hand was a spear like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear- Again this is a repeat of the spirit of David's victory over Goliath, coming to Goliath with a staff and sling, and slaying him with his own weaponry. The point is repeatedly made that like the Lord's victory on the cross, David's over Goliath was programmatic for the inspiration of his followers to be like him.

1Ch 11:24 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did these things, and had a name among the three mighty men-

As noted on :21, there seems to be the idea that some of these men were demoted. Thus Benaiah was both amongst the three, but didn't attain / remain amongst them (:25). "The three" is likely not to be read too literally, but may be a technical term for a group office, like "the thirty"; see on :10,11.

1Ch 11:25 Behold, he was more honourable than the thirty, but he didn't attain to the three; and David set him over his guard-

The numbers "three" and "thirty" are not necessarily to be taken literally. A form of the word for "thirty" is used of the "captains", see on :10,11, and of Pharaoh's captains (Ex. 14:7; 15:4); in any case, in 2 Sam. 23, 37 names are given for the "mighty men", not 30.

Heb. 'David appointed him to his audience', he was a member of David's inner circle of advisers on the basis of his faith shown in personal life, and not because of any possession of only theoretical wisdom.

1Ch 11:26 Also the mighty men of the armies: Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem-

Elhanan had also replicated David's victory over Goliath; see on 2 Sam. 21:19.

1Ch 11:27 Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite-

This Shammoth was "Shammuth the Izrahite" of 1 Chron. 27:8. "Izrahite" there could be "the Zarhite" a man descended from Zerah the son of Judah. But he was from Harod, near mount Gilboa in the north. Perhaps he was given this name because he had done something valiant for Saul in the last fateful battle he fought in that area against the Philistines.

1Ch 11:28 Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the Anathothite-

We get the impression that many of these men were living outside the territory of their native tribes. That could have been for various reasons, but perhaps we are to conclude that the men who supported David were [as with us and our loyalty to Jesus] those who had had non standard personal lives which left them isolated from their home areas. Anathoth was a priestly town in Benjamin. Perhaps he too was a priest; see on 2 Sam. 23:20.

1Ch 11:29 Sibbecai the Hushathite-

Mebunnai of 2 Sam. 23:27. He was a descendant of Zerah of Judah (see also on :27) (1 Chron. 4:4; 27:11).

Ilai the Ahohite-

Zalmon the Ahohite of 2 Sam. 23:28. There is only one Hebrew letter different. This would be an example of slight errors in copying which are found in the Hebrew text, although overall it is Divinely inspired.

1Ch 11:30 Maharai the Netophathite, Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite-

This was near Jerusalem and the Levitical singers lived there after the exile (Ezra 2:22; Neh. 11:28); so he too may have been a Levite living in Judah. See on :22.

1Ch 11:31 Ithai the son of Ribai of Gibeah of the children of Benjamin-

He was from Saul's birthplace, and so would have rejected Saul for David, although David was not from his tribe. He did what was counter instinctive and countercultural, as all David's followers did. And as do the followers of his greater Son.

Benaiah the Pirathonite-

Pirathon was in Ephraim (Jud. 12:15), and there was always antipathy between Judah and Ephraim. So here again was a man who stepped out from his surrounding cultural expectations in loyalty to David.

1Ch 11:32 Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite-

Beth Arabah was a small settlement right out in the desert (Josh. 15:61; 18:22), therefore also called Arabah (Josh. 18:18). From such a poor and obscure place there arose a man who was attracted to David's cause (2 Sam. 23:31), just as the Lord calls all manner of unusual people to Himself today.

1Ch 11:33 Azmaveth the Baharumite-

Coming from Bahurim, he would have been aware of David's shameful behaviour there (see on 2 Sam. 3:16) and yet he still followed David. He would have seen David's actions to Michael and Paltiel as out of character with David generally, and didn't allow his loyalty to be fazed by them.

Eliabha the Shaalbonite-

Eliabha was from Shaalabbin in Dan in the far north, very far from David's origins (2 Sam. 23:32; Josh. 19:42). But somehow he encountered David, and loyally followed him. We marvel at the extent of those who followed David; they were from all over Israel. In those days of limited communication, we wonder how he came to know David well enough to give his life to his cause. But it is the same marvel as we reflect how people are called to the Lord Jesus today.

1Ch 11:34 the sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shagee the Hararite-

As explained on :35, "Jonathan the son of Shammah, the son of Agee the Hararite".

1Ch 11:35 Ahiam the son of Sacar the Hararite, Eliphal the son of Ur-

Compare with 2 Sam. 23:33 "Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Ararite". To reconcile this with the record in Chronicles, we may need to read Shammah as one of the sons of Jonathan of the preceding verse. We could then read this verse along with the last part of 2 Sam. 23:32 as "Jonathan the son of Shammah, the son of Agee the Hararite".

1Ch 11:36 Hopher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite-

"The Maacathite" (2 Sam. 23:34). Beth-Maachah was a town in Naphtali (2 Sam. 20:14), confirming the impression that David's closest supporters were not just local family friends, but men providentially drawn to him from all over Israel.

1Ch 11:37 Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai the son of Ezbai-
2 Sam. 23:35: "Hezro the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite".

Arab is in Judah whereas Carmel is in northern Israel. The juxtaposition of the two confirms the impression that David's supporters were from all over Israel. The way they were all united together around this man from Bethlehem is amazing, and points forward to the gathering of the disparate followers of the Lord Jesus around Him today."

1Ch 11:38 Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the son of Hagri-

2 Sam. 23:36 has "Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah". Chronicles has "Joel the brother of Nathan" but Igal and Joel in Hebrew are very similar. Igal would have been a Syrian from Zobah, perhaps one of the soldiers who fought against David (2 Sam. 10:6) and then converted to him. The Gittites who followed David were likewise Philistines from Gath who were once his enemies but converted to his God, and devoted themselves zealously to Him. This is an incredible witness to the power of Yahweh to convert, because such willing defections of individuals to the people and God of their enemies, and being zealously committed to Him, was unheard of in their society.

1Ch 11:39 Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armour-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah-

As noted on :38, the one time enemies of David such as Zelek the Ammonite became his most committed followers. Or perhaps his conversion was a result of the one time friendship between David and Ammon, and the support for David by Shobi (2 Sam. 17:27). Likewise Naharai was from Beeroth, which although counted to Benjamin (2 Sam. 4:2) was inhabited by Gentile Gibeonites, whom Saul had persecuted.

1Ch 11:40 Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite-

The faithful Ithrites (2 Sam. 23:38) were from Kirjath Jearim (1 Chron. 2:53), perhaps converted to a more spiritual outlook by the long presence of the ark amongst them (1 Sam. 7:2).

1Ch 11:41 Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai-

2 Sam. 23:34 adds "Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite".

Eliam was the father of Bathsheba, making Ahithophel her grandfather. We can more readily understand why he turned against David after his shameful behaviour with his granddaughter.

1Ch 11:42 Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a chief of the Reubenites, and thirty with him-

This confirms the suggestion on :10,11 that "thirty" is not to be read as a literal number, but as a group of captains or some other military division.

1Ch 11:43 Hanan the son of Maacah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite-

The names in :43-47 don't occur in the list of mighty men of 2 Sam. 23. I suggest that many of them were Gentiles who converted to the cause of David and remained faithful to him; see on :38,39.

1Ch 11:44 Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel the sons of Hotham the Aroerite-

This is not the Aroer on the river Arnon, but some smaller settlement in southern Israel, the one listed in 1 Sam. 30:28 as having supported David during his wilderness years. “Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hothan the Aroerite” were amongst David’s mighty men; we conclude that David hid in the area whilst on the run from Saul, and these two men went off with him. It has been observed that Ashterathite and Aroerite are Gentile nouns, Aroer being far east of Jordan (Josh. 13:16,25), as if here we have more examples of Gentiles converting to David's cause and remaining faithful, as suggested on :38,39.

1Ch 11:45 Jedaiel the son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite-

The location of Tiza or Tits is unknown, but I suggested on :43 that these were Gentiles who converted to the cause of David and remained faithful to him; see on :38,39.

1Ch 11:46 Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai, and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite-

This Moabite would have been another case of former enemies converting to David's cause (see on :38,39), impressed by the power of Yahweh. We note that one of David's mighty men had killed Moabites (:22), so we have here in Ithmah a man who totally reoriented himself from his natural background towards that of God's people. As all must do who are true converts to the Israel of God and the hope of Israel.

1Ch 11:47 Eliel, and Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite-

"Metsobajah", 'found of Yah', might confirm the above suggestions that this final group of names are of Gentiles who converted to the cause of David and remained faithful to him; see on :38,39.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 12

1Ch 12:1 Now these are those who came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself in secret because of Saul the son of Kish; and they were among the mighty men, his helpers in war-

David was given Ziklag to live in by the Philistines, and he was there 16 months, hemmed in by Saul's men on the Israelite side of the border. The theme developed now is that in that apparently hopeless situation, living with his one time enemies the Philistines for fear of Saul- all manner of people came forward to identify with him. We can understand David at this time as in the position of the Lord Jesus now, before the establishment of His Kingdom. And we are the men who come out to Him, when His cause appears hopeless in a secular sense. He was hemmed in by Saul, but we will now read in :2 that Saul's own family came to support David.

1Ch 12:2 They were armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left in slinging stones and in shooting arrows from the bow. They were of Saul's brothers of Benjamin-

This continues the theme developed on 1 Chron. 11:38,39, that there was something in David and his cause which attracted his enemies to come over to his side. And so it is with the cause of the Lord Jesus in our age. The Philistine monopoly on iron and metalwork meant the Israelites had to become skilled in archery and slinging, just as David had. So there was an immediate sympathy between these men and David, who was known surely as the greatest Israelite slinger of all time, after his victory over Goliath.

1Ch 12:3 The chief was Ahiezer; then Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite, and Jeziel, and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth, and Beracah, and Jehu the Anathothite-
These are the men of Saul (:2) who came over to David; some were from "Gibeah of Saul", the home town of Saul. But they were joined by men from the priestly town of Anathoth, and so develops the theme that David's supporters were from widely different backgrounds, as are the Lord's followers, but cemented together around him and his cause of the Kingdom.

1Ch 12:4 and Ishmaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty, and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Jozabad the Gederathite-
"The thirty" is not a literal number, as "captains" and "thirty" are similar words. "The thirty" of 1 Chron. 11 and 2 Sam. 23 are not literally 30; there are more than 30 listed in 1 Chron. 11. "Captains" is a form of the word translated "thirty" used in 2 Sam. 23:23, and is evidence that the "thirty" are not to be read as a literal number; in any case, 37 names are given for the "thirty... mighty men" in 2 Sam. 23, not 30.

1Ch 12:5 Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite-
Tragically, we so often read of Yahweh's people carrying the names of Baal or other gods within their own names- e.g. Merib-baal (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40); Ishbaal (1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39); Baal-yada (1 Chron. 14:7); and perhaps worst of all, Baal-Yah ("Bealiah", 1 Chron. 12:5). Is our 'name' or personality before God the same tragic mixture of flesh and spirit?

1Ch 12:6 Elkanah, and Isshiah, and Azarel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korahites-
These "Korahites" are not the Levitical ones, but rather the descendants of Caleb through a man called Korah (1 Chron. 2:43), and they would therefore have been men of Judah.

1Ch 12:7 and Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of Gedor-
Jeroham was a Benjamite (1 Chron. 8:27) living in Gedor of Judah (1 Chron. 4:4), perhaps because of his disagreement with the ways and cult of Saul.

1Ch 12:8 Of the Gadites there separated themselves to David to the stronghold in the wilderness, mighty men of valour, men trained for war, that could handle shield and spear; whose faces were like the faces of lions, and they were as swift as the roes on the mountains-
David's ecclesia in the wilderness had faces "like the faces of lions" (Angel-cherubim language?), being "a great host, like the host of God"- David's host became increasingly in line with God's Heavenly Hosts of Angels, the four living creatures. We are to reflect the court of Heaven on earth. The Gadites were marauders (Gen. 49:19; 1 Chron. 5:19-22), and exemplify the kind of rough people who came to David with their own agenda, and yet were transformed by him into men of the Kingdom; pointing forward to the work of the Lord Jesus.

This verse explains how the situation of :1 came about. These men were firstly with David in the wilderness, and then came to him in Ziklag. Coming to David, as with coming to Jesus, meant they had to "separate themselves". They left their tribal homeland east of the Jordan, and had come to "the stronghold", perhaps the cave of Adullam, or the place of 1 Sam. 23:14.

1Ch 12:9 Ezer the chief, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third-
These names all have trust in God as part of their meaning. So the rough, marauding types of Gad became known for their spirituality as a result of being with David.

1Ch 12:10 Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth-

Mishmannah, 'one who became fat', stands out from the others as not having a very spiritual name (s.w. Dt. 32:15; Neh. 9:25; Jer. 5:28). It confirms the suggestion I have often made, that names were given in response to later character and life experience. Sometimes in these lists of names we read the birth names, at other times, the names they were given later in life. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 12:11 Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh-

"Eliel", 'God is God', could have come to this conclusion from experience with David; see on :10.

1Ch 12:12 Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth-

These names surely reflect their experience with David; "Yahweh's grace" and "Yahweh has bestowed".

1Ch 12:13 Jeremiah the tenth, Machbannai the eleventh-

"Yahweh will raise up" (Jeremiah) shows faith in the future elevation of David and those who had taken his side in these outlaw years.

1Ch 12:14 These of the sons of Gad were captains of the army: he who was least was equal to one hundred, and the greatest to one thousand-

The similarity in language to Lev. 26:8; Is. 30:17 could suggest that they were in covenant relationship with God and therefore one of them chased a much larger group.

1Ch 12:15 These are those who went over the Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all its banks; and they put to flight all them of the valleys, both toward the east, and toward the west-

This was the month of the snow melt (cp. Josh. 3:15). They had crossed from Gad, east of Jordan, to be with David in Ziklag. Those in the valleys who were loyal to Saul may have tried to stop their passage on the east to west route they were taking, but they put them to flight.

1Ch 12:16 There came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the stronghold to David-

David was naturally fearful that his ranks would be infiltrated by Saul's Benjamite supporters.

1Ch 12:17 David went out to meet them and responded to them: If you have come peaceably to me to help me, my heart shall be knit to you; but if you have come to betray me to my adversaries, since there is no wrong in my hands, may the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it-

We sense David's great mental unity with those who sincerely followed him. They would experience his heart, which was after God's own heart, knit with theirs. And that is the promise of the spirit of Jesus to those who likewise sincerely come out to Him in this life. But he warns of the fearful consequences of conscious betrayal of him, after the pattern of Judas to the Lord Jesus. If we are not in that category, then we have the assurance of the gift of the spirit / heart of Jesus united with us.

1Ch 12:18 Then the Spirit came on Amasai, who was chief of the thirty, and he said, We are yours, David, and on your side, you son of Jesse. Peace, peace be to you, and peace be to your helpers; for your God helps you. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band-

This Amasai is likely "Amasa" (2 Sam. 17:25; 19:13). They had observed that God was really with David, having witnessed or heard of David's amazing escapes from Saul, and how God was clearly preserving David for a purpose. Perhaps this protestation of sincerity was supported by some activity of the Spirit, so that David would no longer be sceptical of their professions of loyalty to him (see on :17).

1Ch 12:19 Of Manasseh also there fell away some to David, when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle; but they didn't help them-

To go and fight God's people, specifically with Saul, Yahweh's anointed, was exactly against David's previous principles. But because he had lied about fighting and killing Israelites, he was now told to go and do it. He was being taught that boasting about things you haven't done is still counted as if you have done them. And he was now being forced to a position where he has to quit his sinful situation.

For the lords of the Philistines sent him away after consultation, saying, He will fall away to his master Saul to the jeopardy of our heads-

The Philistines recalled how David had carried the head of Goliath to Saul (1 Sam. 17:57). To carry the heads of a king's enemies was a way to get the king's favour, as in Jud. 7:25; 2 Sam. 4:8; 16:9; 20:21; 2 Kings 10:6-8. Again we see the inspired, historical record has consistency. It would have required a clever editor to insert this theme of beheading to curry a leader's favour throughout the entire Biblical record. But the histories were clearly written at different times; a later hand would not have thought of all these realistic touches to sprinkle so consistently throughout it. The internal harmony of the Bible is to me the greatest indication that it is what it claims to be, the Divinely inspired word of God, evidencing His editing throughout.

This was the grace of Divine intervention. As discussed above, David got into it by his own weakness of faith. But God saved him from it now at the last minute by an unforeseen situation. The Philistines refused to have David and his men anywhere near the battle.

1 Sam. 29:5 adds: "Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, 'Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands?'" If indeed Saul reigned literally 40 years (Acts 13:21), this celebration would have been quite some time previously. But the memory of that great humiliation was still very much alive amongst the rank and file of the Philistines. Achish seems so out of touch with these feelings that we wonder if he was himself actually a Philistine, or some non-Philistine who had taken power.

David had 600 soldiers and their families with him- a large entourage of probably a few thousand people. He had apparently run a protection racket involving Nabal, guarding sheep and isolated farmsteads. He was a military force to be reckoned with, as shown by his behaviour whilst with Achish. Saul had 3000 men under his command, David had 600. We pause to enquire whether David was solely a pious shepherd boy who was fleeing from Saul's obsessive persecution. He was a considerable chieftain, with a strong military reputation. And we enquire whether as time progressed, he was not in some way thinking of taking the throne from Saul by force, whilst sparing Saul's life. And Saul correctly perceived this. Again we wonder at the contrast between this historical David, and the David of Ps. 119 and elsewhere who is waiting patiently in faith for God's word of promise to him to come true. At the same time as having that faith, he was certainly giving the appearance of trying to make it come true in his own strength. This may account for his self talk at this time, that Saul would one day win, and therefore he offered himself to Achish as a mercenary [rewarded, as mercenaries often were, with a land grant, of Ziklag]. There is further evidence from 1 Chron. 12 that David was joined by some of Saul's disillusioned warriors, and that David's intention was to use this large force "to make war against Saul": "The following joined David at Ziklag while he was still in hiding from Saul son of Kish; these were the warriors who gave support

in battle; they were armed with the bow and could use both right hand and left hand to sling stones or shoot arrows with the bow; they were kinsmen of Saul from Benjamin... Of Manasseh also there fell away some to David, when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle; but they didn't help them; for the lords of the Philistines sent him away after consultation, saying, He will fall away to his master Saul to the jeopardy of our heads" (1 Chron. 12:1,2,19). This seems to imply that David was fully intending to go with the Philistines to attack and kill Saul, and then to be made some kind of vassal king of Judah on behalf of the Philistines. This was politics at its worst, and a far cry from the David who twice refused to slay Saul and instead wanted to wait for God's word of promise to come true.

1Ch 12:20 As he went to Ziklag, there joined him of Manasseh, Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu and Zillethai, captains of thousands who were of Manasseh- These names generally have God's name within them. It was the more spiritually minded who came over to David.

1Ch 12:21 They helped David against the band of rovers; for they were all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the army-

These "rovers" are the Amalekites who attacked Ziklag in 1 Sam. 30. "Band" is the same word used there in 1 Sam. 30:8,15. "Were captains" is better "became captains". They were promoted for their valour at the time of the battle with the Amalekites. Even though at the time, the men had spoken of stoning David.

1Ch 12:22 For from day to day men came to David to help him, until there was a great army, like the army of God-

David's host increased, until it became "a great host", "like the host of God" (1 Chron. 12:22 AV)- the parallel between David's men and the Angelic hosts is clear. Significantly, the Angelic armies that destroyed the Syrians are called 'a great host' in 2 Kings 7:6. Asa and his army defeated the Ethiopians- and it's described as them being "destroyed before Yahweh and before His host" (2 Chron. 14:13). Again, the hosts of Israel become the hosts of God. We too are the manifestation of God's heavenly system upon earth.

1Ch 12:23 These are the numbers of the heads of those who were armed for war, who came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of Yahweh-

The word of Yahweh was that David would become king. The men who came to David to support him in this were therefore doing God's will and word, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they were acceptable with Him. For even wicked men can be used to fulfil God's word.

1Ch 12:24 The children of Judah who bore shield and spear were six thousand eight hundred, armed for war-

This seems a relatively small number for Judah, who were David's tribe. Perhaps initially it was a case of a prophet not being without honour, except amongst his own people. We note that the numbers of soldiers who came to David from the tribes in the north, and especially those from the tribes east of Jordan, are very high. The southern tribes, Judah, Simeon, Levi and Benjamin, total 25,200. But the men from Zebulun, Naphtali, Dan and Asher total 155,600. But later in David's reign, an incomplete census of soldiers gave 800,000 "men who drew sword" (2 Sam. 24:9). David's support base was perhaps driven at this stage by those who had been marginalized by Saul, who seemed to what to concentrate power with his tribe of Benjamin. And perhaps these more peripheral peoples had suffered economically from

Saul's abusive reign. So as with those who come to Christ today, the push factors are sometimes initially greater than the pull factors and the 'matter of principle' issues.

1Ch 12:25 Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour in war, seven thousand one hundred-

The tribes are listed as from South to North.

1Ch 12:26 Of the children of Levi four thousand six hundred-

The Levites had soldiers and were not simply absorbed with religious matters.

1Ch 12:27 Jehoiada was the leader of the household of Aaron; and with him were three thousand seven hundred-

Benaiah was one of David's senior military commanders (2 Sam. 8:18; 1 Chron. 27:5), and the Hebrew of 2 Sam. 23:20 can be translated "Benaiah the son of Jehoiada the priest, as head", i.e. of a group of David's mighty men. The Jehoiada in view as his father would therefore be Jehoiada the priest. The idea is that priests were also military leaders within David's army, indeed it seems there were a large group of them as ordinary soldiers in 1 Chron. 12:27. This shows how priesthood was not understood as abstract spirituality, but that spirituality was articulated in practice. Jehoiada was not high priest, but "leader" of the Levitical soldiers; the same word is used in 1 Chron. 9:11 of the "captain" of the temple.

1Ch 12:28 and Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty-two captains-

In :17 he appears to have the function of Jehoiada in :27. Perhaps he was his successor.

1Ch 12:29 Of the children of Benjamin, the brothers of Saul, three thousand; for hitherto the majority of them had kept their allegiance to the house of Saul-

AV "kept the ward of the house of Saul". The number of Benjamites is understandably small, as they still hoped to remain the kingly tribe even after Saul's demise.

1Ch 12:30 Of the children of Ephraim twenty thousand eight hundred, mighty men of valour, famous men in their fathers' houses-

This is a very small number compared to the northern tribes, seeing Ephraim were likely the largest tribe at the time. Clearly support for David followed factors other than supporters per head of population. Support was highly localized.

1Ch 12:31 Of the half-tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, who were mentioned by name, came and made David king-

This appears to refer to the half of Manasseh on the west side of the Jordan river.

1Ch 12:32 Of the children of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their heads were two hundred; and all their brothers were under their command-

This is a small number, but they are defined as men who understood life, spiritually wise men (Est. 1:13; 1 Chron. 29:30; Ps. 31:15).

1Ch 12:33 Of Zebulun, such as were able to go out in the army, who could set the battle in array, with all kinds of instruments of war, fifty thousand, who could command and were not of double heart-

The idea seems to be, men old enough to handle weapons, rather than boys. But this is a rather sad contrast with the faith of David when fighting Goliath, who was considered too

young to fight, and who apparently couldn't manipulate the armour and weaponry he was offered by Saul- but instead fought Goliath in faith. To not be "of double heart" meant to be "of one heart", for God and David in faith (2 Chron. 30:12).

1Ch 12:34 Of Naphtali one thousand captains, and with them with shield and spear thirty-seven thousand-

This could suggest that they had "shield and spear", weaponry in abundance compared to the other tribes.

1Ch 12:35 Of the Danites who could set the battle in array, twenty-eight thousand six hundred-

Each tribe has a slightly different description for the nature of their soldiers. The idea here may be as in GNB "trained men", soldiers who had undergone military training.

1Ch 12:36 Of Asher, such as were able to go out in the army, who could set the battle in array, forty thousand-

GNB "ready for battle". Each group of soldiers is described differently.

1Ch 12:37 On the other side of the Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half-tribe of Manasseh, with all kinds of instruments of war for the battle, one hundred and twenty thousand-

This appears to be a rough number, assuming 40,000 to each tribe, as 40,000 came from Asher (:36). Sometimes the Bible is very vague. There are times when the Spirit uses very approximate numbers rather than exact ("about the space of four hundred and fifty years", Acts 13:20 cp. 1 Kings 6:1). The reference to "seventy" in Judges 9:56 also doesn't seem exact. Seven and a half years (2 Sam. 2:11) becomes "seven years" (1 Kings 2:11); three months and ten days (2 Chron. 36:9) becomes "three months" (2 Kings 24:8). And here 1 Kings 7:23 gives the circumference of the laver as "thirty cubits", although it was ten cubits broad. Taking 'pi' to be 3.14, it is apparent that the circumference would have been 31.4 cubits; but the Spirit says, summing up, "thirty". Surely this is to show that God is God, not man, and as such He's not on the back foot, writing under the fear of criticism. His word is not contradictory, but on the other hand, God has more spiritual culture than to sink down to the level of a man who wanted to foresee all criticism in writing something which could stand all petty criticism. He has a spiritual culture much higher than this. And this is the answer to many of the petty objections about 'Bible contradictions' which are raised by critics.

1Ch 12:38 All these being men of war, who could order the battle array, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel. All the rest of Israel were also of one heart to make David king-

The state of their hearts is twice emphasized, and this has always been of critical importance in the Divine record of men. It was David's heart which is described with the term "a perfect heart" (1 Kings 11:4; 15:3 s.w.). The idea is that they were of one mind and spirit with David. And as noted on :17, David's spirit was eager to be united with their spirit. It all speaks of the spiritual relationship between the Lord Jesus and His people. See on 1 Chron. 13:4.

1Ch 12:39 They were there with David three days, eating and drinking; for their brothers had made preparation for them-

This was the kind of religious meal which ratified a covenant, as in Gen. 31:46,54. It looks

ahead to the breaking of bread meeting as a confirmation of the covenant between the Lord Jesus and those who have come out of this world to support His cause and Kingdom.

1Ch 12:40 Moreover those who were near to them, as far as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on donkeys, and on camels, mules and oxen, food of meal, cakes of figs, and clusters of raisins, and wine and oil, and cattle and sheep in abundance; for there was joy in Israel-

The religious meal of :39 was supported in spirit by those even in the far north, who sent food to be consumed at this feast. The provision of clusters of raisins [a form of wine] along with bread confirm the religious nature of the meal, and the way [as noted on :39] it looks ahead to the breaking of bread. The same was to be seen in 1 Sam. 25:18; 30:12; 2 Sam. 16:1.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 13

1Ch 13:1 David consulted with the captains of thousands and of hundreds, even with every leader-

2 Sam. 6:1 says thirty thousand attended. "Thousand" may refer to families or squadrons. They were "chosen" or 'shown as tested / approved'. It was a reunion gathering of all those who had been faithful to David over the years. This was a huge number of people to gather together, given the problem of providing food and lodging for them. This was why battles were fought swiftly in those days, for the men were needed on their farms, and the supply of food was difficult to arrange over longer periods. So this huge effort reflects the importance David attached to bringing up the ark.

1Ch 13:2 David said to all the assembly of Israel, If it seems good to you, and if it is of Yahweh our God, let us send abroad everywhere to our brothers who are left in all the land of Israel, with whom the priests and Levites are in their cities that have suburbs, that they may gather themselves to us-

It seems the invitation was particularly to the Levites and priests wherever they were. We note that there had been obedience to the idea of the Levites not having inheritance but living in allotments from the other tribes. This was really an appeal for all the priests and Levites to assemble.

1Ch 13:3 Let us bring again the ark of our God to us; for we didn't seek it in the days of Saul-

This was hardly David's fault, as he had spent the majority of the "days of Saul" on the run from in exile. But he graciously speaks of "we" being at fault. We wonder at the unspirituality of the priesthood in Saul's time, and wonder why Samuel had not emphasized the need to have the ark in worship. Perhaps it had been kept somewhere out of sight, at Saul's command. It may even have become badly thought of, or feared.

I have discussed on 1 Sam. 4:3 how there was always a tendency to use the ark as a talisman; and God was against that. The religious eclipsed the spiritual as regards the ark, several times in Israel's history. And I suggest David was not immune to this. He brings the ark to Zion without any Divine command to do so and without consultation with Him [David earlier asks God for guidance about his decisions in 2 Sam. 5, but not in the context of the ark]; and there was the disaster with Uzzah the first time he attempted it. This is to be

compared to Israel's defeat when they took the ark with them into battle against the Philistines in the time of Eli. David clearly also veered towards seeing the ark as a talisman. It was almost as if he wanted to underwrite his own enthronement in Jerusalem by having Yahweh enthroned there also over the ark. Likewise David's desire to permanently locate the ark in a physical temple in Jerusalem can be seen as a desire to legitimate the enthronement of his dynasty in that city. But on the other hand, David often 'gets it' about the lack of need for the ark's physical presence. His psalms speak of how he lived permanently beneath the shadow of the cherubic wings, as if he lived on the mercy seat, on the sprinkled blood. In 2 Sam. 15:24-29 he flees from Absalom, and refuses the suggestion he take the ark with him. But, so true to real spiritual life, he also had tendencies towards needing the physical and religious when it came to the ark. Just as we pine for the religious at times, whilst also rejoicing in God's presence in our hearts quite regardless of religious context.

David wrote at least two Psalms about bringing the ark to Zion, Ps. 68 and Ps. 132. Ps. 68 clearly expects God to bring victory to Israel because of the ark's presence in Zion, and Ps. 132 seems to reason that once the ark is in Zion it will be there forever. This wasn't to be the case. But we see in David's reasoning that he still considered the ark as some kind of physical guarantee of God's presence, and the legitimization of his own enthronement in Jerusalem- and that of his dynasty after him, as he imagined. He was proven wrong- the ark disappeared, his dynasty was cut off, Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. But God's spiritual presence in human hearts continued and became the stronger after these things. We marvel at how God works through human weakness to achieve His wider purposes. The Chronicles record hints at political reasons for David's wanting the ark when we read David saying "let us lead the ark of our God back to us" (1 Chron. 13:3). David wanted it firmly under his control and his motive for bringing the ark to Zion was clearly to centralize religious as well as political power in his chosen capital city.

1Ch 13:4 All the assembly said that they would do so; for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people-

We sense as discussed on 1 Chron. 12:38 that the people were of one mind with David, sharing his spirit and he theirs.

1Ch 13:5 So David assembled all Israel together, from Shihor the brook of Egypt even to the entrance of Hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim-

This widespread support continues the impression we get from 1 Chron. 12:39,40, where people from even the far north sent large numbers of men and much food to be consumed at the feast which celebrated a declaration of loyalty to David. The entering in of Hamath is a technical term for the Orontes river. The definition of the land between two rivers would be an appeal to the promises to Abraham, of a land with rivers as boundaries.

1Ch 13:6 David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath Jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of Yahweh God who dwells between the cherubim, that is called by the Name-

Baalah, or Kirjath-Baal, "the city of Baal" was the old Canaanite name of Kirjath-jearim (Josh. 15:9,60). David's bringing up / going up / ascending of the ark (2 Sam. 6:2) recalls how the ark did not go up into Canaan in Num. 14:44 (s.w.); for the land was not to be given to Israel. But when the time came, the ark was brought up into Canaan (Josh. 4:16,18 s.w.). And so now, the land was being given to them again. David felt as if he was as Joshua reconquering Canaan in fulfilment of the promises. This may explain why Paul in Acts 13:21 parallels the 40 years wandering of Israel with the 40 year reign of Saul; and he may speak of

Saul reigning 40 years because of this, even if it was not literally true. It creates big chronological problems if we read that 40 year reign of Saul literally. Solomon imitated David's bringing up of the ark to Zion in 1 Kings 8:1,4. He lived out his father's faith and devotion, but only on an external level. He in due course was to turn away from Yahweh to idols, and descend into the nihilism of Ecclesiastes.

"David went up... to bring thence the ark of God the LORD that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it" (AV). The unusual phrase 'God the LORD' may imply 'the Angel the Yahweh', as if recognizing that the Angel had God's Name, as we know the Angel which lead Israel was given by God. Thus in this context David goes on to say about the ark of the Lord "whose Name is called on it". When Uzzah died it is stated "there he died before God" (:10), as if he died in the presence of an Angel- i. e. the Angel present inside the ark which he touched. See on Ps. 78:60

1Ch 13:7 They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart-

There were very specific laws about the transportation of the ark. It was to be carried on poles on the shoulders of not just Levites but specifically the sons of Kohath (Num. 4:15); and Abinadab's family were not the right people to carry it. David claims in Ps. 119 to have studied God's law all the day whilst on the run from Saul, reciting it to himself. Perhaps he forgot these details. But I suggest because he came to see that God wanted the spirit and not the letter of the law to be followed, he came to totally place himself above Divine law. We face the same temptation. And it was this which led David into his sin with Bathsheba. Shaving off bits and pieces of God's laws and principles, on the basis that we are above His law, leads to the final catastrophe of David's sin with Bathsheba. Instead of following God's laws about the transportation of the ark, it seems David instead followed the pattern of the Philistines, who also transported the captured ark on a cart (s.w. 1 Sam. 6:10,11). And considered that having built a new cart, never used before, he was in his own way showing respect to it. Uzzah walked at the side, whilst Ahio went before the oxen to guide them. The Divine cameraman is zoomed in close upon the scene.

David was influenced by others' behaviour and treatment of the ark rather than God's word; he failed to learn from history. He surely reasoned that the Philistines had transported the ark on a cart, so why shouldn't he. David here reflects his religious approach to the ark rather than a spiritual one. During the wilderness years, he felt that he was as it were dwelling on the mercy seat, between the cherubim, covered by the blood of atonement. But he has slipped down from that spiritual peak, now hankering for the physical ark, sliding back from the spiritual to the merely religious. In Saul's time, the ark was not enquired of ("let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul", 1 Chron. 13:3). Ps. 132:6 likewise hints at its obscurity: "Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood" (Baale-Judah, the woods of Judah). David is now looking to be religious, when he had been driven to personal spirituality by his exclusion from formal religion whilst on the run from Saul.

1Ch 13:8 David and all Israel played before God with all their might, even with songs, harps, stringed instruments, tambourines, cymbals and trumpets-

The actual fact of making music and praise to God doesn't necessarily mean our acceptability before Him; the very experience of music and its effect can lead us to think that our participation means our acceptability before God. But all this praise was made whilst God was extremely angry with them for how they were treating the ark.

Many of the brief Psalms exhorting all kinds of music to be used in praising Yahweh were probably composed at this time. This description is very similar to those of how holy

objects / idols were brought on beds by the state treasurer to Sargon II of Assyria. Offerings and music were made in front of the objects in order to placate and please the god thought to be in the object. But of course the ark was not a god in itself; David and his people have veered towards the religious rather than the spiritual. Just as most kings once established built a temple to their patron deity, and David also wants to do this to Yahweh. Perhaps the huge punishment on Uzzah reflected God's anger at the religious dominating the spiritual, as if the ark as a box was being worshipped rather than Him. The scene is also similar to that of Assurbanipal's return of Marduk's statue from Assur to Babylon: "Just as Assurbanipal's army participated in the return of Marduk to his new sanctuary, so David's army participated in the return of the ark of Yahweh. Just as Marduk's journey was accompanied by music and rejoicing, so was the ark's. Moreover, just as the Assyrians offered sacrifices every double mile from the quay of Assur to the quay of Babylon, so David offered an ox and a fatling after every six steps" (Miller & Roberts, *The Hand of the Lord: A Reassessment of the "Ark Narrative" of 1 Samuel*, JHNES (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977)).

The death of Uzzah is one of a number of incidents studded throughout the Biblical record which remind us that sin is serious and a felt offence by God, and provokes His wrath and the necessary death penalty. We think of Eve taking the fruit having been deceived; the prophet of 1 Kings 13 who ate something; Ananias and Sapphira. Whilst otherwise God appears to tolerate sin, this doesn't mean that every sin isn't felt by Him. His feelings are those of Hosea regarding Gomer's continued unfaithfulness.

1Ch 13:9 When they came to the threshing floor of Chidon-

1 Chron. 13:9 has "the threshing floor of Chidon" and 2 Sam. 6:6 has "of Nacon". I suggest Nacon was the name of the owner, and Chidon was the location. A threshing floor has associations with Divine judgment, and this is what happened.

Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark-

We wonder if Paul has this in mind when he praises the Lord Jesus for not trying to grasp hold of equality with God (Phil. 2:6). In this case, Uzzah is being accused of playing God by what he did. And yet this appears to be a very harsh reading of motives into a quite simple and natural, well meaning reaction. But this is the point; we cannot judge or know human motivations or thoughts. Who knows what was really in Uzzah's mind. For all we know he was cussing the ark as it wobbled on the cart. Only God knows, and we should respect His judgment and our own inability to judge. The other possible issue which arises from this is that we are to accept that there are huge implications to our apparently harmless, surface level sins. Only God can judge them. But He does extrapolate the implications of human thoughts and actions. The whole incident is a test of our humility before God, a test David initially failed.

For the oxen stumbled-

"Stumbled" is s.w. "threw down" (2 Kings 9:33; Ps. 141:6). It seems the ark itself was thrown down onto the ground, despite Uzzah trying to stop it.

He did what was instinctive to do- but doing what is naturally instinctive can lead to Divine condemnation. Here we see for all time that human action is not OK just because it seems and feels right, instinctive, obvious and logical to the human mind at the time.

1Ch 13:10 The anger of Yahweh was kindled against Uzza, and He struck him, because he put forth his hand to the ark; and there he died before God-

Yahweh had likewise struck down (s.w.) those who had earlier failed to respect the ark (1 Sam. 5:6,9; 6:19). And they had imitated the transport of the ark upon a new cart. The failure of man to learn from Biblical history is one of the greatest tragedies. We may consider this

incident as parallel with the sin of Adam and Eve in Eden, whereby an apparently small failure lead to huge consequences. But these incidents are placed in Biblical history to help us humble ourselves before God, and not to fall into the assumption that God is not serious about His principles. Yahweh's anger being kindled is a phrase used multiple times about His anger with Israel for breaking the covenant. The sin of Uzzah personified all that was wrong with Israel. They had assumed that they could serve Yahweh on their terms and not His, and that this was just a mere surface level failure which He should overlook. All this is so challenging for us, who are tempted to think in just the same way.

Samuel appears to have slept next to the ark, and in 1 Sam. 5:1 the Philistines manhandled it on a long journey of 60 km. Uzzah was slain but they weren't. Again we see how boundaries of holiness are relative, and God looks at the heart; something clearly was very wrong in Uzzah's heart, in a way it was not wrong in the hearts of the child Samuel or these Philistines. Attitude and heart are paramount in God's judgment of men.

Uzzah was a son or grandson of Abinadab (:3), in whose house the ark had been kept for some years (perhaps from 1 Sam. 7:1, where the ark is taken to the house of Abinadab, to 2 Sam. 6:3, where the ark is taken from Abinadab's house). Perhaps he felt he knew the ark well and had probably touched it before. But he was slain for the sin of familiarity with God leading to contempt. Perhaps he cursed the ark box as it fell. Or perhaps "he reached out his hand to the ark" [Heb.] or as in 1 Chron. 13:10 "he put his hand to the ark" was in fact part of a prearranged plan to grab the ark and make a sanctuary for it there at the threshing floor. Clearly there was far more going on than a simple breaking of Divine law.

1Ch 13:11 David was displeased, because Yahweh had broken forth on Uzza; and he called that place Perez Uzza, to this day-

David was "displeased" with God because He had slain a man who was trying to assist David's pet project of bringing the ark to Zion (2 Sam. 6:8,9). Do we not again see the anger and irrational emotion of David flaring up? For the Hebrew for "displeased" really means "anger", and is the same word used of Yahweh's anger in :7. God was fiercely angry, and David was likewise fiercely angry with God for being angry. Whilst on one level this is a terrible example of human pride, David's response could be argued to reflect a closeness with God which enabled him to feel like this. The exiles were warned that all who are "incensed" against God must be humbled and ashamed before the ark could, as it were, come to Zion and Israel be restored (s.w. Is. 41:11; 45:24). The exiles, who were also angry with God for His anger with them, were to go through the humbling process David went through over the next three months.

The Old Testament body of Christ was based around Israel, and thus when the Lord made a breach upon Uzzah, David could say that the Lord "made a breach upon us" (1 Chron. 13:11; 15:13). Just as Saul's persecution of the body of Christ was persecuting the Lord Jesus personally.

However we could read this another way. David was angry, but he was afraid of Yahweh (:12). Possibly his anger was therefore with himself.

We note David's surprise at judgment for touching the ark, as with the men of Bethshemesh earlier when they opened the ark. Perhaps this was because the ark had been regularly touched earlier. For example, surely they manhandled the ark onto the wagon without incident; and how did Obededom handle it without being struck down? And now, it seemed, God was suddenly deciding to apply an applicable law which usually He seemed to disregard. David presents as the child who is shocked and hurt when for once, he isn't allowed to get away with regularly breaking a requirement or law. The law in Num. 4:15-20 was clear; the Kohathites were to deal with the ark and even they must handle it properly

"that they may live, and not die, when they approach to the most holy things". The Chronicles record labours how the second attempt to bring the ark to Zion 'worked' because David was careful to follow the Mosaic precepts about handling the ark. And this perhaps is the point: All sin merits death and Divine wrath, but only occasionally is this truth revealed by God in practice. His grace operates in shielding man from His wrath, but this doesn't mean His wrath and sense of sin and infringement of His holiness isn't there. God's feelings about sin were reflected in Hosea's raging anger against Gomer, mellowed by his amazing love and grace for her. Or it could be that Uzzah cursed the ark as it fell, or had some hidden heart position about it which led to God's wrath. And the lesson in that case would be that the innermost private thoughts of man are seen and judged by God and provoke His wrath as well as His pleasure.

1Ch 13:12 David was afraid of God that day saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?-

There is a similarity, surely intentional, with the situation in 1 Sam. 6:20: "The men of Beth Shemesh said, Who is able to stand before Yahweh, this holy God?". These were now David's feelings when Uzzah was slain for also not being respectful to the ark. Circumstances repeated, and David failed to learn the lesson. We wonder if indeed David consciously repeated the words of the men of Beth Shemesh. I suspect he didn't, but rather his words are recorded in a similar way, to show to us readers the similarity. We are intended to learn from history, even though so few do. This is why so much of the Bible is history.

"How can I bring the ark to *me*?" surely reflects poor motivation. David wanted the ark to come to himself. He has no concept of going up to Yahweh at the ark. It was starting to get all about him. He clearly saw the ark as something he personally could possess ("to *me*... to *us*") and which centralized political power in him.

1Ch 13:13 So David didn't move the ark to him into the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite-

This was a huge showdown, for David had assembled a huge number of people to this ceremony; see on :1-5. And now he was revealed as a man who had not paid due attention to the requirements of the God whom he had invited all Israel to come to worship. It was very humbling for him. We note he "carried it aside", having it carried on poles as the law required and not on a cart.

1Ch 13:14 The ark of God remained with the family of Obed-Edom in his house three months; and Yahweh blessed the house of Obed-Edom, and all that he had-

As it took David some months to realize his sin with Bathsheba, so here it took David three months to humble himself before God, and to perceive that His blessing is related to obedience and respect of Him, and not assuming we can serve Him on our terms and ride roughshod over His principles. David and his house had also been promised blessings, but he was being taught that these blessings were related to obedience and respect of God. And the fact a Philistine from Gath, perhaps an Edomite, indeed an Edomite servant [for so his name means] received these blessings... was to teach him that his pedigree counted for nothing compared to humble respect of Israel's God.

The care of the ark was given over to the Levites. But Obed-Edom wasn't a Levite nor was he a Hebrew, he was a Philistine or Edomite servant from Gath. And he was blessed for caring for the ark. This contrasts sharply with the striking of Uzzah. It serves to point up the fact that Uzzah was not necessarily slain because he wasn't a Levite, nor specifically one of the sons of Kohath who were to carry the ark. That breach of Divine law wasn't the issue;

likewise David acts as a priest with an ephod when he too wasn't a Levite. Rather it was a matter of the heart and attitude, which is a persistent theme in the record. For David and Saul sinned in parallel ways, but David's heart attitude was different. 1 Chron. 15:18,24 lists Obededom amongst the Levites who were porters and "doorkeepers for the ark". But he wasn't a Levite. Just as David wasn't. But they could act as Levites because of their attitude of heart.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 14

1Ch 14:1 Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and masons, and carpenters, to build him a house-

The way Solomon also used him, or probably another Hiram, for the same trees reflects again how Solomon sought to live out his father. But he had no real spirituality, and over time he revealed that he had no personal faith, turning away to idols in his old age and coming to the nihilism of Ecclesiastes.

Psalms 30 was written at the dedication of a house by David, and we assume it was this house. But that Psalm reveals David had been very ill. He seems not to have had robust health although he was physically strong and lived a long life. There is ample evidence for a breakdown of his health after the sin with Bathsheba.

1Ch 14:2 David perceived that Yahweh had established him king over Israel; for his kingdom was exalted on high, for His people Israel's sake-

He realized that the promises of Samuel so long ago had finally come true, despite all the times when it had seemed they could not come true (see on 1 Sam. 27:1). But this sense of fulfilment led him to take yet more wives (:3), which is surely to be read negatively in spiritual terms. Yet he realized that his establishment was located in a wider context than just for himself; it was for the sake of His people Israel.

1Ch 14:3 David took more wives at Jerusalem; and David became the father of more sons and daughters-

See on :2. This is hard to read in a positive light spiritually; for Israel's king was not to multiply wives (Dt. 17:17). He seemed to feel the need to prove himself established by having more wives and children, but this was itself a failure to appreciate that Yahweh had established him (:2). He did perceive this, but only on one level.

1Ch 14:4 These are the names of the children whom he had in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon-

These were the sons of Bathsheba. We note that they had a son called Nathan, perhaps in respect of the prophet of that name who had rebuked David for his sin with Bathsheba. And it was through him that the Lord Jesus was descended back to David (Lk. 3:31).

The lists in 1 Chron. 3:5-8; 14:4-7 mention two more sons than we find in 2 Sam. 5:15, Eliphalet or Elpalet and Nogah. Perhaps they are omitted here because they died in infancy, and that the second Eliphalet was named after his dead brother.

1Ch 14:5 Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet-

The lists in 1 Chron. 3:5-8; 14:4-7 also mention two more sons, Eliphalet or Elpelet and Nogah. Perhaps they are omitted here because they died in infancy, and that the second Eliphalet was named after his dead brother.

1Ch 14:6 Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia-

We know nothing of these sons, nor indeed of most of David's children. This would indicate perhaps that David was not a very good spiritual father to his children.

1Ch 14:7 Elishama, Beeliada and Eliphelet-

Tragically, we so often read of Yahweh's people carrying the names of Baal or other gods within their own names- e.g. Merib-baal (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40); Ishbaal (1 Chron. 8:33; 9:39); Baal-yada (1 Chron. 14:7); and perhaps worst of all, Baal-Yah (1 Chron. 12:5). Is our 'name' or personality before God the same tragic mixture of flesh and spirit? We wonder whether the naming of Baal-yada ("Beeliada") was done by one of David's wives who worshipped Baal; we know that Michal his wife also had pagan images in their home.

1Ch 14:8 When the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David. David heard of it, and went out against them-

They must have felt bitterly betrayed by David. He had lived with them in Ziklag and Gath for some time and claimed he was on their side against Judah. His lack of integrity would have deeply riled them, and was a poor advertisement for the God of Israel. Yet David in his Psalms so often protests his own integrity, and how he wishes judgment upon those who lack integrity. He clearly failed to personalize the conviction of sin which is throughout God's word, and this is all the backdrop to his sin with Bathsheba.

2 Sam. 5:17 says that David "went down to the stronghold". The stronghold in view may have been the cave of Adullam (2 Sam. 23:13,14), where God had previously delivered David from Saul. Perhaps he went there to pray. It was at this time that he wished to drink of the water from the well in Bethlehem, and his men broke risked their lives to get it for him. We see the extent of their dominance, in that they had overrun Bethlehem, David's home village, and placed a garrison in it (2 Sam. 23:14).

1Ch 14:9 Now the Philistines had come and made a raid in the valley of Rephaim-

The record of David's battle with the Philistines here has certain similarities with the exploits of 1 Sam. 14:8-11; as if, years later, David replicated Jonathan's early adventure of faith. This would be understandable if he had been Jonathan's armourbearer in that incident. Situations repeat in our lives; what we learn in youth becomes tested later on in life.

They perhaps chose the valley of the giants as the battleground because they still recalled his victory over Goliath, and wanted to reverse it.

1Ch 14:10 David inquired of God saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand? Yahweh said to him, Go up; for I will deliver them into your hand-

This recalls how he asked Yahweh when Saul died whether he should go into Judah, and to which city there. A man of lesser humility and closeness to God would have just gone ahead with assumptions he was right. His questions also recall the questions he asked [and answers received] about the situation in Keilah (1 Sam. 23:11,12). He retained this desire for guidance, and showed he had learned from his previous experiences. He overcame the natural tendency to assume that we are doing what seems the logical way at the time, and meaning his request: "Teach me Thy way" (Ps. 27:11 etc.). Yet this commendable humility before God was at the same time as his quite wrong taking of many wives in Jerusalem noted earlier in this chapter. This spiritual schizophrenia is surely in all men, apart from the Lord. And yet David realized the need to serve Yahweh with our whole heart, as he states so often in the

Psalms. We surely can all identify with him... wanting to serve with our whole heart and yet our self examination revealing that we still have both flesh and spirit active within us.

1Ch 14:11 So they came up to Baal Perazim, and David struck them there; and David said, God has broken my enemies by my hand, like the breach of waters. Therefore they called the name of that place Baal Perazim-

This means the place of breaches. What happened has been explained as follows: "It was the rocky height on the north of the valley of Rephaim. David must, therefore, have stolen round the army of the Philistines, creeping, probably by night, up to this ridge of Ben-Hinnom, and thence at the dawn of day have rushed down upon the camp. And his onset was sudden and irresistible, like the rush of the waters of some mountain lake when, swollen with rains, it bursts through the opposing dam, and carries hasty destruction to everything that lies in its way". This means that just like the second attack, David circled around and came at the Philistines from behind (:14). But this is exactly how a dog attacks. David in his low moments had felt himself as a desert dog (1 Sam. 17:44 LXX; 24:14). When we are weak, then we are strong. Perhaps God played along with David's low feelings by saying that if he indeed felt as a dog, then He would use him to achieve victory as a dog does. This is not to justify David's view of himself, but to show rather how God interacts with man in a mutual way.

1Ch 14:12 They left their gods there; and David gave commandment, and they were burned with fire-

2 Sam. 5:21 adds: "They left their images there; and David and his men took them away". Chronicles seem to present a far more positive take on the history, omitting all reference to the Bathsheba incident. They should have destroyed them immediately, according to the law of Moses which David professed such love for in Ps. 119. Perhaps they justified it by saying they were doing to the Philistines as they had done to the ark; for the Philistines took the ark as a sign they had triumphed over Israel's God. But Yahweh clearly punished them for that, and David's men might have boasted that the Philistine gods didn't do that to them. Such is the quasi spiritual reasoning of our flesh. 1 Chron. 14:12 however explains that finally, they were burnt. Possibly what happened is that they did take the gods away but later pulled back and repented, and burnt them. It's so hard to pull back from a wrong path, and David is to be commended for doing so.

1Ch 14:13 The Philistines yet again made a raid in the valley-

This was soon afterwards, implying David's men hadn't slain that many of the Philistines.

1Ch 14:14 David inquired again of God; and God said to him, You shall not go up after them. Turn away from them, and come on them opposite the mulberry trees-

The Father and Son are constantly seeking to lead us in "newness of life". David didn't get victory by the mulberry trees the same way each time. God changed the method. But as noted on :11, David was still to circle around and attack from behind, like a dog. "Mulberry" is Hebrew *baca*, and could refer to the valley of Baca, or weeping, of Ps. 84:6. Hence RV "valley of weeping". Perhaps David was in depression at this time, and was being comforted that his weeping was to be his strength. For God loves to use the weak to achieve His victories. According to the curses for disobedience to the law, turning backs to the enemy was a sign of curse. David was being asked to act as if he had sinned; and it was that recognition of sin that led to his victory. This is what is so necessary in spiritual life: acceptance of our sinfulness and desert only of condemnation.

1Ch 14:15 It shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then you shall go out to battle-

This sound was the marching of the Angels. They are called Yahweh's hosts or armies, and the idea was that David's army was a reflection on earth of the heavenly armies above him. This was necessary to teach that Israel were not winning these victories in their own strength, but by following the Angelic hosts above them.

"When thou (David) shalt hear a sound of going (like the noise of the Angel cherubim in Ezekiel 1?) in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then shalt thou go out to battle; for God (the Angels) is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines" (AV). So once the Angels had physically moved forward and David had heard them doing this, he too could move ahead in doing the human part in bringing God's purpose about. David alludes to this as a regular experience when he speaks of God 'going out' with the hosts / armies of Israel (Ps. 60:10 RV). His hosts were as the hosts of God (1 Chron. 11:22)- he walked in step with the Angel Cherubim above him, as Ezekiel was to do later. It seems that great stress is placed in Scripture on the Angels physically moving through space, both on the earth and between Heaven and earth, in order to fulfil their tasks, rather than being static in Heaven or earth and bringing things about by just willing them to happen. See on Gen. 18:10; Rev. 21:12. We too are to "walk in step with the Spirit".

For God has gone out before you to strike the army of the Philistines-

The people wanted a king to "go out before us and fight our battles" (1 Sam. 8:20), but they were disappointed in Saul ultimately. For it was effectively David who went out before the people to fight their battles (s.w. 1 Sam. 18:13,16). And David was only successful because he recognized that it was Yahweh who 'went out before' to fight his battles (s.w. "gone out"), rather than any human king or leader.

1Ch 14:16 David did as God commanded him; and they struck the army of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gezer-

Gibeon is directly on the road from the valley of Rephaim to Gaza. The continual consistency of the geographical references in the record is yet another reflection of the utter credibility of it as Divinely inspired. Any group of human writers would have made mistakes in this area, given the lack of detailed maps and geographical knowledge.

1Ch 14:17 The fame of David went out into all lands; and Yahweh brought the fear of him on all nations-

"Fame" is the word for "name". Names were reflective of achievement, life experience and developed character, with the Name of Yahweh being the parade example. They were developed, as God's Name is, both over human history and within the experience of individuals.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 15

1Ch 15:1 David made himself houses in the city of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched a tent for it-

This uncomfortable parallel between building his own house, and simply pitching a tent for the dwelling of God... remained with David. And surely the thought began even at this stage to build a "house" for the ark, i.e. a temple. But that thought was not

motivated so much by any sense of God's glory, but rather guilt at his own extravagance in building a house for himself which became effectively an entire citadel, "the city of David". And this wrong motivation led to God's disagreement with his suggestion.

1Ch 15:2 Then David said, No one ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites; for Yahweh has chosen them to carry the ark of God-

David had been "displeased" with God's judgment of Uzzah for steadying the ark, and according to 2 Samuel, it took him quite some time to come to want to deal again with the ark. He finally accepts that he had been wrong to allow the ark to be carried as *he* thought best, rather than as instructed in God's law.

And to minister to Him forever-

Perhaps David correctly reasoned that the Levitical priesthood had to end, and he liked to think that that time had already come, and therefore he could dispense with the commandments about the Levites carrying the ark. But now he accepts he had gone too far away from God's stated word, in seeking to justify doing things as he wished and effectively creation a religion on his own terms rather than God's.

1Ch 15:3 David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of Yahweh to its place, which he had prepared for it-

David had done this before, and it had ended up as a showdown because Uzzah had been slain and God was clearly displeased rather than pleased. It had taken David a long time to live this down.

1Ch 15:4 David gathered together the sons of Aaron and the Levites-

The assembly of "all Israel" (:3) may have been in that the sons of Aaron represented "all Israel".

1Ch 15:5 of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, and his brothers one hundred and twenty-

The differing numbers for each branch of the tribe may have been reflective of how responsive the families were to David's invitation.

1Ch 15:6 of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, and his brothers two hundred and twenty-

We note how most of these numbers are to the nearest ten. There are times when the Spirit uses very approximate numbers rather than exact ("about the space of four hundred and fifty years", Acts 13:20 cp. 1 Kings 6:1). The reference to "seventy" in Judges 9:56 also doesn't seem exact. Seven and a half years (2 Sam. 2:11) becomes "seven years" (1 Kings 2:11); three months and ten days (2 Chron. 36:9) becomes "three months" (2 Kings 24:8). And here 1 Kings 7:23 gives the circumference of the laver as "thirty cubits", although it was ten cubits broad. Taking 'pi' to be 3.14, it is apparent that the circumference would have been 31.4 cubits; but the Spirit says, summing up, "thirty". Surely this is to show that God is God, not man, and as such He's not on the back foot, writing under the fear of criticism. His word is not contradictory, but on the other hand, God has more spiritual culture than to sink down to the level of a man who wanted to foresee all criticism in writing something which could stand all petty criticism. He has a spiritual culture much higher than this. And this is the answer to many of the petty objections about 'Bible contradictions' which are raised by critics. .

1Ch 15:7 of the sons of Gershon, Joel the chief, and his brothers one hundred and thirty-

"Gershon" means 'expelled', maybe meaning that like Reuben he was expelled from the role of firstborn. He is mentioned first in some lists as if he was the firstborn, but in terms of the priestly work Kohath is usually mentioned before him. This replacement of the firstborn is a big theme in scripture.

1Ch 15:8 of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, and his brothers two hundred- Elizaphan was son of Uzziel (:10; Ex. 6:22) and yet is mentioned before him. It seems that this list is somehow graded in terms of importance, with Kohath mentioned first as the priestly division of the sons of Levi.

1Ch 15:9 of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, and his brothers eighty- Hebron and Uzziel (:10) were sons of Kohath, but are mentioned independently because of the importance attached to the priesthood. Therefore Kohath, although not the firstborn, is mentioned first in this list.

1Ch 15:10 of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, and his brothers one hundred and twelve-
See on :9.

1Ch 15:11 David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel and Amminadab-

Zadok and Abiathar appear to have both been high priests at the same time, though Zadok and is always mentioned first and Abiathar was deposed by Solomon (2 Sam. 8:17; 15:29,35, 19:11; 20:25). To have more than one high priest was not in keeping with the spirit of the law of Moses but was not explicitly forbidden, and the dual priesthood shows how the law was open to a wide range of interpretation in practice.

1Ch 15:12 and said to them, You are the heads of the fathers' households of the Levites. Sanctify yourselves, both you and your brothers, that you may bring up the ark of Yahweh, the God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it-
David's bringing the ark to the place which he had prepared is the basis of the Lord's words in Jn. 14:1-3. Clearly the Lord saw David as Himself, and us as the ark. The 'bringing up' or 'lifting up' of the ark (1 Chron. 15:12,22 RVmg.) to a perpetual dwelling place has evident reference to the resurrection. And when the ark was finally brought or lifted up to Zion, David / Jesus dealt bread and wine to the people (1 Chron. 16:3). One practical encouragement from this typology is that the memorial feast is a celebration that in fact we, the ark, have in prospect already been brought or lifted up into the eternal place prepared for us in the Kingdom.

1Ch 15:13 For because you didn't carry it at first, Yahweh our God broke out against us, because we didn't seek Him according to the ordinance-

Because David omitted to enforce the Law's requirements concerning the transport of the tabernacle, a man died. His commission of good didn't outweigh his omission here (1 Chron. 15:13). To omit to hate evil is the same as to commit it (Ps. 36:4). The Jews were condemned by the Lord for building the sepulchres of the prophets without erecting a placard stating that their fathers had killed them.

The Old Testament body of Christ was based around Israel, and thus when the Lord made a breach upon Uzzah, David could say that the Lord “made a breach upon us” (1 Chron. 13:11; 15:13). Just as Saul's persecution of the body of Christ was persecuting the Lord Jesus personally.

1Ch 15:14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of Yahweh, the God of Israel-

The sanctification would have been in terms of sacrifices and abstaining from contact with things which could have made them unclean.

1Ch 15:15 The children of the Levites bore the ark of God with its poles on their shoulders, as Moses commanded according to the word of Yahweh-

There were very specific laws about the transportation of the ark. It was to be carried on poles on the shoulders of not just Levites but specifically the sons of Kohath (Num. 4:15); and Abinadab's family were not the right people to carry it. David claims in Ps. 119 to have studied God's law all the day whilst on the run from Saul, reciting it to himself. Perhaps he forgot these details. But I suggest because he came to see that God wanted the spirit and not letter of the law to be followed, he came to totally place himself above Divine law. We face the same temptation. And it was this which led David into his sin with Bathsheba. Shaving off bits and pieces of God's laws and principles, on the basis that we are above His law, leads to the final catastrophe of David's sin with Bathsheba. Instead of following God's laws about the transportation of the ark, it seems David instead followed the pattern of the Philistines, who also transported the captured ark on a cart (s.w. 1 Sam. 6:10,11). And considered that having built a new cart, never used before, he was in his own way showing respect to it.

1Ch 15:16 David spoke to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brothers the singers, with instruments of music, stringed instruments and harps and cymbals, sounding aloud and lifting up the voice with joy-

Several of the Psalms (Ps. 96,105,106) and the text we have in 1 Chron. 16 would have been sung at this time. Those texts recount the failures of Israel and triumph in God's abiding presence and forgiveness. The "joy" was therefore the joy at forgiveness.

1Ch 15:17 So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brothers, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brothers, Ethan the son of Kushaiah-

These played some undefined role in the musical presentation of :16. The next verses define roles in more detail, so we assume that these names were those who led the service and procession, as the next in the list are "of the second degree" (:18).

Heman was Samuel's grandson (a Kohathite; 1 Chron. 2:6). Samuel was faithful, his sons weren't, but his grandson was. So often faith skips a generation.

1Ch 15:18 and with them their brothers of the second degree-

This could imply that the names of :17 were of a 'first degree' status, but "second" can also mean that they were a mirror image of those of :17, they may have been a 'double' of them.

Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom and Jeiel, the doorkeepers- Literally, the openers or dividers of the gates. The word is also translated "porters". The idea is that the ark was considered to represent an enthroned person. And that invisible person was Israel's God Yahweh. This was in stark contrast to the processions of other nations, who carried the idols representing their gods, enthroned on great decorated thrones. But Yahweh had just a throne, the humble small box known as the ark, which was carried. He Himself was to be imagined, by faith. This was the scene of Ps. 24:7 "Lift up your heads, O gates [gatekeepers]... you everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in". But that King of glory was invisible and His glory only perceived in the minds of thoughtful believers, just as today.

1Ch 15:19 So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were given cymbals of brass to sound aloud-

Ethan and Heman are mentioned together in 1 Kings 4:31 as men whom Solomon's wisdom exceeded; and in 1 Chron. 15:19 they are both singers whom David appointed. We can assume that they were famed for their wisdom; but Solomon's wisdom exceeded theirs. And their wisdom was here expressed in their music.

1Ch 15:20 and Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah and Benaiah, with stringed instruments set to Alamoth-

Alamoth is the music title of Ps. 46. It means literally "the girls", and may refer to soprano parts.

1Ch 15:21 and Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel and Azaziah, with harps tuned to the eight-stringed lyre, to lead-

Or "on the sheminith" (as AV), which may have been a musical term as "alamoth" in :20.

1Ch 15:22 Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was over the song: he instructed about the song, because he was skilful-

"Instructed" implies to teach by repeated repetition. All this would have been rehearsed many times, and he led the rehearsals.

1Ch 15:23 Berechiah and Elkanah were doorkeepers for the ark-

"Doorkeepers" can also mean "porters", so perhaps these were those who carried the ark, and those of :18 opened the gates for the ark. See on :18.

1Ch 15:24 Shebaniah, and Joshaphat, and Nethanel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, blew the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-Edom and Jehiah were doorkeepers for the ark-

See on :18,23. They may have been either the porters of the ark, or those who opened the gates.

1Ch 15:25 So David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh out of the house of Obed-Edom with joy-

True joy can only come from repentance and humbling ourselves before God. A prouder man would have just given up with this apparently over sensitive, hard to please God of Israel. But Yahweh is not really like that; but He rightly requires our

humility to Him and His principles. It was the Edomite servant, Obed Edom, who taught David this. Several of the Psalms (Ps. 96,105,106) and the text we have in 1 Chron. 16 would have been sung at this time. Those texts recount the failures of Israel and triumph in God's abiding presence and forgiveness. The "joy" was therefore the joy at forgiveness. .

1Ch 15:26 It happened, when God helped the Levites who bore the ark of the covenant of Yahweh-

GNB "They sacrificed seven bulls and seven sheep, to make sure that God would help the Levites who were carrying the Covenant Box".

That they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams-

If sacrifices were offered every six paces from the house of Obed Edom to Zion (2 Sam. 6:13), the road to Zion would have been a stream of sacrificial blood, looking ahead to the way to Golgotha. I suggest on 2 Sam. 6:17 that these were sin offerings. It demonstrated the deep sense of sin and need for atonement which David felt. It was this true repentance which was the basis for his ecstatic joy. 2 Sam. 6:13 LXX "And seven choruses accompanied him, bearing the ark, and a calf and lambs as a sacrifice".

1Ch 15:27 David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites who bore the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song with the singers; and David wore an ephod of linen-

I suggested on 1 Sam. 2:18,19 that the child Samuel, a non Levite from Ephraim, was doing the priestly work because Eli's family refused to do it, or perhaps just told him to do it. The Hebrew words for "robe" and "ephod" in there only occur together in the descriptions of the "robe of the ephod" worn by none other than the High Priest (Ex. 28:4,31; 29:5; 39:22). The young Samuel apparently did the work of the High Priest. His example and spiritual ambition inspired David, who he was to anoint, to likewise wear such a robe and ephod (s.w.).

As we go through the life of David, it is evident he went along roads few others have travelled. For example, who else would offer his sacrifice upon the altar and then start strumming his harp in praise as he watched the animal burn (Ps. 43:4 Heb.)? This was a new paradigm in Israelite worship. Like Job, David had no precedents in past spiritual history from which he could take comfort (Job 5:1). David knew God well enough to act like the High Priest even when he was not a Levite (2 Sam. 6:13-20; and 2 Sam. 19:21 = Ex.22:28), he came to understand that God did not require sacrifices, he came to see that the Law was only a means to an end. David's sons, although not Levites, were "priests" (2 Sam. 8:18 RV). He could say that the Lord was his inheritance [a reference to how he as the youngest son had lost his?], and how he refuses to offer the sacrifices of wicked men for them (Ps. 16:4,5; 119:57)- speaking as if he was a Levite, a priest, when he was not. He knew that the ideal standard for married life was one man: one woman, and yet he was somehow able to flout this and still be a man after God's own heart. He broke explicit Mosaic commandment by marrying Saul's wives and also his daughter, he airily waived the Mosaic law concerning bloodguiltiness (consider the implications of 2 Sam. 14:4-11), and the need to stone rapists (2 Sam. 13:21). When others tried to do these kind of things, they were severely punished by a God who insisted upon serious obedience to His Law. Consider how Saul was condemned for offering sacrifice instead of a priest (1 Sam. 13:10-13); and Uzziah likewise (2 Chron. 26:16-19). When the woman of Tekoah basically suggested that the Mosaic laws about the rights of the revenger of blood be repealed, David seems to have agreed. When Amnon seeks to rape his sister

Tamar, she suggests that he ask David to allow them to marry- and surely, she says, he will agree. Yet this too would have been counter to the spirit of the Law about marriages to close relatives. Yet David went beyond the Law so often; and it is this which perhaps led him to commit the sin of presumption in his behaviour with Bathsheba. Right afterwards he comments about the man who stole his neighbour's sheep, that it must be restored fourfold; whereas the Law only stipulated double, David felt he so knew the spirit of the Law that he could break the letter of it- in any context. And this was his [temporary] downfall.

1Ch 15:28 Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, sounding aloud with stringed instruments and harps-

David is portrayed as in religious ecstasy before the God whom three months before he had been furiously angry with (see on 2 Sam. 6:8). This indeed reflects the almost bi-polar nature of David. But it also shows the power of true repentance and seeking to put things right with God (see on 2 Sam. 6:13), and the joy of good conscience resulting from that.

1Ch 15:29 As the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out at the window, and saw king David dancing and playing; and she despised him in her heart-

As Goliath despised David (1 Sam. 17:42), so did Michal. The same word is used here. God reads the heart and what He finds there is so significant to Him. That woman's silent thoughts have been recorded for millennia in the record, and they are still in God's memory. We have a parade example here of the huge significance God attaches to our thoughts. Despising others for their spirituality is especially abhorrent to Him. We recall that Michal had an idol in her home soon after her marriage to David, and we wonder if it was Yahweh whom she also despised. And all this made her no better than Goliath.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 16

1Ch 16:1 They brought in the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it. They offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God-

The usual pattern for the offerings was sin offering, burnt offering [dedication to God on the basis of being reconciled from sin] and then peace offerings, celebrating the resultant peace with God. I suggested on 2 Sam. 6:13 that the mass of animals sacrificed on the road to Zion were sin offerings.

1Ch 16:2 When David had made an end of offering the burnt offering and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Yahweh-

As noted and discussed on 1 Chron. 15:27, this was again David acting as high priest, blessing the people in Yahweh's Name.

1Ch 16:3 He dealt to each one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, a portion of meat and a cake of raisins-

See on 1 Chron. 15:12. 1 Chron. 16:8-22 is the Psalm written by David when the ark was brought to Zion, but it reappears within Ps. 105:1-15, which is clearly an appeal for the exiles to repent so that God's salvation history might continue with them. So we see how David's original Psalms were reworked and reapplied in later contexts, under Divine inspiration. By

the time of the exiles in Babylon, it seems the ark had been lost. But such external religious symbolism was unimportant; the essence was that the people of God were to come to Zion, just as the ark had done.

We see here an ancient anticipation of the bread and wine [raisins] of the breaking of bread meeting. That meeting is essentially a peace offering, a celebration of the peace with God achieved through the Lord's sin offering, our promise of dedication to Him in the burnt offering, and then the celebration of the resultant peace with God. See on :1.

Israel's mixture of Yahweh worship with Baal worship is demonstrated by the reference to their being "lovers of raisin cakes" (Hos. 3:1). According to this passage, these cakes appear to have been part of the legitimate worship of Yahweh- and yet in Song 2:5 they are referred to as an aphrodisiac. There was a heady mix of Yahweh worship with participation in the sexual rituals of the Baal cult. It was this mixture which was so abhorrent to God- and time and again, in essence, we likewise mix flesh and spirit.

1Ch 16:4 He appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of Yahweh, and to celebrate and to thank and praise Yahweh, the God of Israel-

The sense of the Hebrew behind "celebrate" is "to call to mind" or remember (1 Chron. 16:12). David wanted this occasion to be recorded. The production of psalms to be sung for perpetuity afterwards would be the equivalent of our taking photographs or video recordings of such an incident.

1Ch 16:5 Asaph the chief, and second to him Zechariah, then Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom and Jeiel, with stringed instruments and with harps; and Asaph with cymbals, sounding aloud-

Asaph is particularly noted, although he was just one many recorded musicians in the company (1 Chron. 15:19). Perhaps special note is made of him because he was the author of some of the Psalms which the exiles were to sing at the restoration.

1Ch 16:6 and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually, before the ark of the covenant of God-

Jahaziel is Eliezer of 1 Chron. 15:24. People had more than one name. Perhaps one of these was his birth name, and the other that by which he became known. Benaiah was also one of David's "mighty men". They would have had one trumpet each.

1Ch 16:7 Then on that day David led the giving of thanks to Yahweh, by the hand of Asaph and his brothers-

The idea is that David gave the following hymn into the hands of Asaph and his brothers to sing. Hence Adam Clarke: "David delivered first this psalm...".

1Ch 16:8 Oh give thanks to Yahweh! Call on His name. Make His deeds known among the peoples-

The first half of this song of praise (1 Chron. 16:8-22) recurs in Ps. 105:1-15, the second (1 Chron. 16:23-33) in Ps. 96:1-13, and the conclusion (1 Chron. 16:34-36) in Ps. 106:1; 106:47,48.

The Truth of the Gospel of the cross is the only way to come to salvation. All other religions apart from true Christianity will not give salvation nor a relationship with God. Realizing this, David pleads with his people to be a missionary nation: "Give thanks unto Yahweh, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people... for great is Yahweh, and greatly to be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods. *For* all the gods of the people are idols; but Yahweh made the heavens" (1 Chron. 16:8,25,26). The more we realize the pathetic

fallacy of human religion, indeed the whole and utter vanity of life under this sun, the more we will preach Yahweh's Truth to a tragically wandering, aimless world.

This is an appeal to the Gentile "peoples" to hear about God's work and praise Him; and to praise a deity in those days meant to accept that deity. Not because they were forced to by military conquest, but because they had considered God's work which had now been told to them. 1 Chron. 16:8-22 is the Psalm written by David when the ark was brought to Zion, but it reappears within Ps. 105:1-15, which is clearly an appeal for the exiles to repent so that God's salvation history might continue with them. So we see how David's original Psalms were reworked and reapplied in later contexts, under Divine inspiration. By the time of the exiles in Babylon, it seems the ark had been lost. But such external religious symbolism was unimportant; the essence was that the people of God were to come to Zion, just as the ark had done. And David wants to use the presence of the ark in Zion as a reason to invite the Gentiles to come and worship Yahweh before it.

1Ch 16:9 Sing to Him, sing praises to Him. Tell of all His marvellous works-

Heb. 'His wonders'. Wonder leads to worship, to that flame of praise which is the worship "in spirit and in truth" which the Father seeks. But wonder adds awe and reverence to that worship. And we have to ask how much of that there is in much popular worship today, be it in starchy hymns or rock music. 1 Chron. 16:9 makes the connection between wonder and worship quite plain: "Sing unto him, sing praises unto him; talk of all his wonders". Likewise Ps. 9:1: "I will praise you O Lord; I will show forth all your wonders".

David was very much involved in Israel his people. He saw himself as their representative. When he sung Psalms, he invited them to come and sing along with him (Ps. 105:2; 107:22; 111:1). And yet this can also be read as an appeal to the Gentile peoples of :1 to hear of Yahweh's works, believe them, accept Him as their God, and then in turn tell others of "His marvellous works".

1Ch 16:10 Glory in His holy name. Let the heart of those who seek Yahweh rejoice-

The Bible continually stresses the critical importance of the heart, the mind. Our minds should glory in God's Name which is His characteristics, as articulated in His "works" (:9) in history. And this leads us to "seek" Him and His face, which I suggest on :11 refers to repentance. Worship is a matter of the heart rather than musical ability. It's tragic that "praise and worship" has been made equal to musical performance. Praise is not necessarily music; the essence of praise and worship is in the heart.

1Ch 16:11 Seek Yahweh and His strength. Seek His face for evermore-

To seek Yahweh's face is an idiom for repentance (Hos. 5:15), and is specifically used by Daniel in the context of the exiles (2 Chron. 7:14; Dan. 9:3). This is therefore an appeal for the exiles to repent, so that God may continue to lavish His saving grace upon them, as He had upon their forefathers.

To seek Yahweh's face is to seek the unattainable in this life; although the end is that we shall see God's face as Revelation concludes. We therefore die not having achieved peak spirituality. Seeking Yahweh's strength refers to seeking unto or worshipping the ark, which is called "the ark of Your might / strength" (Ps. 132:8). The captivity of the ark is spoken of as God's might / strength going into captivity (Ps. 78:61). So David seems to be veering towards worshipping the ark of itself just as Judah effectively did later. A sad contrast with his attitude that he was dwelling beneath the cherubim wings when in the wilderness, thus obviating the need for any physical ark. Likewise in :31, David seems to reason as if Yahweh is reigning in that the ark is now on Zion. And he likes to imagine that therefore all the Gentiles are rejoicing. This is logically questionable, for the rulership or dominion of

Yahweh was not contingent upon the ark being in Zion. His idea was that they would come to the ark and worship.

1Ch 16:12 Remember His marvellous works that He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth-

The Hebrew idea of 'remembering' is not necessarily related to 'remembering' as opposed to 'forgetting'; rather does it have the flavour of celebrating, and thus being aware of in gratitude and praise. As God was "mindful" of David and thereby all men in Israel through the victory granted over Goliath, so David urged that in response, they should be "mindful" of God (Ps. 8:4 s.w. 1 Chron. 16:12,15).

1Ch 16:13 you seed of Israel His servant, you children of Jacob, His chosen ones-

David was clearly the "chosen one... My servant" (Ps. 89:3), but these very terms are applied to Israel as a whole (Ps. 105:6,43; 106:5) and to the "servant" of later Isaiah, who refers to both Israel and their Messiah as their embodiment (Is. 42:1; 45:4). David's path of sin, repentance and restoration was intended to be that of all God's people, as he himself recognizes in Ps. 32. But the exiles refused to repent and therefore their restoration was precluded. They were not therefore treated as His "chosen one".

1Ch 16:14 He is Yahweh our God. His judgments are in all the earth-

The exiles were to believe the prophetic word, that all the nations in the *eretz* promised to Abraham were to experience God's judgments; the judgments of "our God", Yahweh, the God of Israel.

1Ch 16:15 Remember His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations-

The parallel in Ps. 105:8 has "He has remembered". God remembers the covenant always and we are to always remember. This is the picture of relationship with God.

The real import of the covenant-relationship with God which we have is brought out by David in 1 Chron. 16:15-18: "Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance". The covenant, the promise that God's people really will inherit the land, becomes a law, a "word which he commanded", something which should be thought about all the time. The sure promise of entering the Kingdom, the knowledge that by grace, according to the covenant, 'we will be there', cannot be accepted passively. The covenant-certainty of that great salvation becomes a command to action.

Jeremiah, Zechariah, Hosea and Ezekiel point out to Judah that they had broken the old covenant; their only basis of connection with God was therefore on the basis of the new covenant He was offering, which was based upon the promises to Abraham. That word of promise was unconditional, to all who wanted to believe it. It was therefore eternal, "to a thousand generations". It would therefore never be abrogated, unlike the old covenant based on the law of Moses.

1Ch 16:16 the covenant which He made with Abraham, His oath to Isaac-

The "oath to Isaac" must refer to the repetition of the promises to Abraham to Isaac in Gen. 26:3, where the same word for "oath" is used. But the context of that repetition of the covenant oath to Isaac was in commanding him not to seek material prosperity in Egypt, but rather to remain in the famished land of Israel, then experiencing famine. This was relevant to

the exiles, many of whom preferred to remain in Babylon, seeing that Malachi, Ezra and others record serious famine in the land of Judah at that time.

1Ch 16:17 He confirmed the same to Jacob for a statute, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant-

The "statute" doesn't refer to the law of Moses, but to the covenant with Abraham of :16. The covenant with Abraham was an unconditional offer of eternal inheritance of the land; all that was and is required is that this great salvation be believed. But it became and becomes a "statute" or "law" in the same way as grace reigns or is a ruler over us (Rom. 5:21). If we believe in God's unconditional covenant of salvation, then this becomes a law of our lives, the guiding principle in all our thinking, worldviews and perceptions. It is in this sense that "the grace of God... teaches us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and Godly lives" (Tit. 2:11,12). Grace is grace, but the wonder of it, when believed, is such that it naturally elicits changed behaviour, and in this sense is a "statute" or law.

God wanted to make a covenant with David, by His grace, rather than demand gifts and obedience for the sake of obedience. Yet grace of itself means that we cannot be passive to it. The covenants with Abraham and Isaac are spoken of by David as a law, in the sense that they required certain things of those within those covenants (1 Chron. 16:15-19). And those same covenants are binding upon all baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27-29), and the hope of the Kingdom which they bring likewise becomes a 'law' governing our behaviour. Ez. 20:37 speaks of "the bond of the covenant"- and "bond" is literally a fetter, a tie that binds, that restricts. To be in covenant relationship therefore means that we are not free to do as we like; there is an element of regulation in our lives, but of course it has a purpose- to bring us to God's Kingdom and keep us within the sphere of relationship with Him. But a covenant is a two way thing. This tie that binds applies to God too; hence the wonderful, oft-repeated idea of His chesed, His covenant faithfulness to us His people. He likewise carries a kind of responsibility to us.

1Ch 16:18 saying, 'I will give you the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance;'-
As discussed on :17, the promise of eternal inheritance of Canaan was unconditional, by grace. It just had to be believed.

1Ch 16:19 when you were but a few men in number, yes, very few, and foreigners were in it-
God rejoices to work with the small and feeble. The "few men" must refer to how Jacob's family only numbered about 70 people when they went into Egypt. The same phrase "few men in number" is exactly that used by Jacob in lamenting how very small his tribe was compared to the aggressive tribes amongst whom they lived in Canaan (Gen. 34:30). And it is the phrase used of how when Israel were to be judged for their sins in exile, they would be left "few men in number" (Dt. 4:27). The exiles are being encouraged to see the similarities between them and Jacob's family in Egypt, the original 'Israel' at its first beginnings.

1Ch 16:20 They went about from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people-
This seems to refer, in the context, to the journeyings of the patriarchs amongst the peoples of Canaan, Philistia and Egypt. Although they suffered at the hands of those peoples, they were miraculously preserved; and so would God's people be despite their current exile in Babylon / Persia.

1Ch 16:21 He allowed no man to do them wrong. Yes, He reprov'd kings for their sakes-
In this we see God's absolute grace. For both Abraham and Isaac were rightly reprov'd by the

Abimelech kings for lying about their wives, and yet God reproved those kings. He was openly showing His passionate love and preference for His people; they were rightly reproved by the kings (Gen. 20:16), but those kings were reproved by God for their sins of ignorance. And it was this same grace which was available to the exiles. "Wrong" was indeed done to the exiles (s.w. Jer. 50:33; Hos. 5:11), as it was done to the historical Jacob; but the point is being made that it was not ultimately allowed because there was the final restoration of Jacob's fortunes, as there would be ultimately for God's people- but in God's own way and time.

1Ch 16:22 Don't touch My anointed ones! Do My prophets no harm!-

This refers to how Abraham and Isaac were not harmed despite lying to Abimelech (see on :20). It definitely doesn't mean that God's visible public servants are beyond criticism; for Abraham and Isaac most definitely are reproved for their actions in the Biblical record. The point is that they, weak as they were and deserving of "harm", were preserved from ultimate harm by God's grace. And they are cited as an example to the exiles, who were all "anointed ones" (Lam. 4:21), they had a special purpose before God; just as all in Christ, the anointed one, are likewise "anointed ones" (2 Cor. 1:21). So this doesn't give pastors or church leaders special privilege of being beyond criticism, as this verse is misused to teach.

1Ch 16:23 Sing to Yahweh, all the earth! Display His salvation from day to day-

This is the outcome of believing we will be saved according to the promises to Abraham- to display that salvation to all the earth. This certainty of salvation is the basis of our witness. The LXX uses the word *evangelion* concerning how daily we should "show forth his salvation" (here and in Ps. 96:2). Witness is therefore a daily feature in the life of those who have known salvation; it is not something done solely by attending an ecclesial gathering once per week. This explains why frequently Paul uses the word "Gospel" as meaning 'the preaching of the Gospel'; the Gospel is in itself something which *must* be preached if we really have it (Rom. 1:1,9; 16:25; Phil. 1:5 (NIV),12; 2:22; 4:15; 1 Thess. 1:5; 3:2; 2 Thess. 2:14; 2 Tim. 1:8; 2:8). The fact we have been given the Gospel is in itself an imperative to preach it.

Many of the Psalms reflect David's realization that confession of sin is the basis for powerful preaching. The LXX often uses the verb *euangelizesthai* to describe his preaching after the Bathsheba incident (Ps. 96:2). Because God has mercifully forgive His people and His face shines upon them in renewed fellowship, His way is thereby made known upon earth to all nations (Ps. 67:1,2). He utters forth the mighty acts of God with the preface: "Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord, who can shew forth all his praise?" (Ps. 106:2)- and then proceeds to do just that. He did so with a clear recognition of his own inadequacy. The Psalms of praise are full of this theme. David exhorts all those who have been redeemed to show forth God's praise (Ps. 107:2,22,32). He wanted all Israel to be a joyful, witnessing people. And even though it seems God's people didn't respond, David went on undeterred. Time and again he fearlessly sets himself up as Israel's example. He speaks of how he trusts in the Lord's grace, and then appeals to Israel to do just the same (Ps. 62:7,8). The strength of his appeal was in the fact that his sin and experience of grace was the bridge between him and his audience.

1Ch 16:24 Declare His glory among the nations, and His marvellous works among all the peoples-

In Lk. 24:45-47 we read how Christ explained to the disciples that their preaching of the Gospel "among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" was foretold in the Psalms and prophets. So the Bible student asks: *Where* in the Psalms and prophets? The Lord spoke as if the

prophecies about this were copious. There do not seem to be any specific prophecies which speak of the twelve spreading the Gospel from Jerusalem in the first century. Instead we read of the Gospel being spread from Jerusalem *in the Kingdom*, and often the phrase "all nations" occurs in a Kingdom context, describing how "all nations" will come to worship Christ at Jerusalem (Ps. 22:27; 67:2; 72:11,17; 82:8; 86:9; 117:1; Is. 2:2; 66:18,20; Jer. 3:17; Dan. 7:14; Hag. 2:7; Zech. 8:23). This selection of "Psalms and prophets" is impressive. Yet the Lord Jesus clearly interpreted these future Kingdom passages as having relevance to the world-wide spreading of the Gospel. "All nations" also occurs in many passages exhorting us to praise Yahweh among all the nations of this world. The reason for this is that God's glory is so great it should be declared as far as possible by us. 1 Chron. 16:24,25 is typical of many such verses: "Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised... for all the gods of the people are idols". World-wide preaching is therefore an aspect of our praise of Yahweh, and as such it is a spiritual work which is timeless.

A real sense of wonder becomes the base motivation for our witness. "Declare his glory among the gentiles, his wonders among the nations" (1 Chron. 16:24). And the Psalms are full of this, once we appreciate that in their primary context many of them were David's preaching to the Gentile nations around him.

1Ch 16:25 For great is Yahweh, and greatly to be praised. He also is to be feared above all gods-

David's focus of all his praises upon Yahweh as alone "worthy" (Heb.; Ps. 96:4) of praise was what he now wanted his people to follow (Ps. 18:3; 22:3). The implication of "worthy" could imply a contrast with other gods. This would confirm the hints we have that Saul had been an idolater (see on Ps. 12:8; 16:4), and that idolatry was prevalent in Israel at the time.

1Ch 16:26 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but Yahweh made the heavens-

The gods / idols aren't in so many words criticized as not existing, but rather, Yahweh is so exalted above them as creator of all that even if they do exist, they are so relatively powerless that they are shown to have no effective existence. It's the same with how the language of demons is used in the New Testament; the Lord's miracles demonstrated that God's power was so infinitely greater, that effectively demons don't exist.

1Ch 16:27 Honor and majesty are before Him. Strength and gladness are in His place-

See on :28. This is a reference to the Most Holy Place; the reference to His "strength and beauty" going into captivity may refer to the ark (Ps. 78:61 s.w.). See on :28. David had now brought the ark to "His place" and was expecting the Gentiles to come to it, in line with the promises to Abraham.

1Ch 16:28 Ascribe to Yahweh, you relatives of the peoples, ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength!-

The very same Hebrew words used about how David personally felt he wanted to give glory and strength [honour] to the Lord (Ps. 62:7). "Families of nations" or "relatives of the peoples" recalls the promises made to Abraham of his seed. He wished for the whole world to share his relationship with God. The radical nature of what is being suggested here and in Ps. 96 and many similar Psalms can easily be overlooked. The Psalmist is urging Gentiles to come and worship with Israel, proceeding into the tabernacle courts and thence into "the beauty of holiness" (:27 Heb.), i.e. the Most Holy Place ['holiness' being read there as a noun rather than an adjective- it is the same Hebrew word elsewhere translated "sanctuary" and related to the Hebrew word used for "sanctuary"]. The Psalmist is inviting Gentiles to come

in to the worship of Israel and proceed where only the High Priest could venture once / year. It was the equivalent of proclaiming an open table policy in the most exclusive of churches.

The common assumption of expositors is that the Psalmist has in view the Kingdom age, but this seems precluded by his appeal to the Gentiles to come and worship exactly because of the good news that the Lord is coming to judge the earth in righteousness (:33)- which is quoted about the return of Christ to earth in Acts 17:31. The holiness boundaries taught by the Law were only teaching mechanisms, which is why they were removed by the open Christ. David for one got to this point well before most other Israelites did, acting as the High Priest (1 Chron. 16:3), entering the sanctuary when not a Levite (Ps. 63:2) and experiencing forgiveness and salvation quite outside the Law rather than the Law's penalty of death.

David uses the words and spirit of this Psalm, especially about his vision of his outreach to the Gentiles, in the later Bathsheba Psalms, where he vows to tell the whole world of God's grace. It's not that the experience of sin and forgiveness makes a person somehow weak and wishy washy acceptant of anyone and anything. The experience of God's grace at close quarters leads us to realize how radical was His acceptance of us and thereby we should proactively seek to be acceptant of all those who are afar off. And so David perceived that God's Name (His characteristics, of which grace is uttermost) deserved glory to be given to it- simply for what it was (:29). And that glory is "due" from all, including the Gentiles- and so they should be invited across all holiness boundaries to come with their offerings to God. Thus Yahweh's greatness above all other gods was what led David to appeal to "all you gods" [perhaps put by metonymy for the idol worshipping peoples] to come and worship before Yahweh (Ps. 97:7).

The appeal was to be global and not just to Israel because David perceived that actually the truth of God is proclaimed by "the whole earth" and "heavens" (Ps. 97:5,6). Of course, the call is for the Gentile idolaters to "come" to Yahweh's sanctuary, and not for God's people to leave Yahweh and go to them. And they were to "bring an offering", to make a commitment to the God they were being invited to come close to (:29). Ps. 98:3-5 continues this radical appeal to the Gentile world, but it urges them to come and worship (which involved coming to the sanctuary in Israel) exactly because God has been so gracious to sinful Israel. Israel's extreme sin and God's radical grace and patience with them for not being good witnesses to the Gentiles... was to serve as encouragement for the Gentiles to come to Israel's God and praise Him, confident that their sins too could be forgiven.

The same idea is found in Ps. 99:1-5- because of God's grace to Jacob / Israel, an undefined group are bidden come to Zion, to the very cherubim (in the Most Holy Place) to exalt and praise God at His footstool. This group, in line with the preceding Psalms, are surely the Gentile world. "Let them praise Your great Name" (Ps. 99:3) would surely make most sense if it referred to the Gentiles, seeing that David or the Psalmist was Israelite. We see the same idea in Ps. 97:1; it begins with an appeal to the islands of the Gentiles to 'rejoice' and 'be glad', but the same two Hebrew words are used in Ps. 97:8 about how Zion- those in the very temple mount- likewise rejoice and are glad. The very "ends of the earth" who saw God's salvation of His people are invited to praise Him for it (Ps. 98:3,4)- the invitation to join in praise was effectively an invitation to join in worship, and thereby to become part of God's covenant people.

1Ch 16:29 Ascribe to Yahweh the glory due to His name. Bring an offering, and come before Him. Worship Yahweh in holy array-

David is inviting the Gentile world to come to the ark and worship. See on :28. This and the next verses confidently anticipated the coming of Messiah there and then, with :33 quoted about the second coming of Jesus in Acts 17:31. But that was to be delayed; for Israel and the Gentile world weren't going to respond to David's invitation here. For he is asking the Gentiles to dress up as priests and come and worship Yahweh and even enter the most holy place (:28). David was way ahead of his time in thinking in these terms.

As it was God's intention that Israel were to be a nation of priests to the rest of the world, so the new Israel likewise are to *all* discharge the priestly functions of teaching their brethren (Ex. 19:6 cp. 1 Pet. 2:5; Rev. 1:6; 5:9,10). Under the new covenant, we should all teach and admonish one another (Col. 3:16). Indeed, God told Israel [unrecorded in the historical records]: "Ye are gods [*elohim*] and all of you are sons of the Most High" (Ps. 82:6 RV). Further, Ps. 96:9 makes the paradigm breaking statement that even the Gentiles could come before Yahweh of Israel in holy, priestly array- they too could aspire to the spirit of priesthood (Ps. 96:9 RVmg.). Moses spoke of how all Israel should pray that God would establish the work of their hands (Ps. 90:17)- but this was in fact his special request for the blessing of Levi, the priestly tribe (Dt. 33:11). Ps. 135:19,20 parallels all Israel with the priestly family: "Bless the Lord, O house of Israel: bless the Lord, O house of Aaron: bless the Lord, O house of Levi: ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord... praise *ye* the Lord". All Israel were to aspire to the spirit of priesthood. Indeed, the Psalms often parallel the house of Aaron (i.e. the priesthood) with the whole nation (Ps. 115:9,10,12; 118:2,3).

"Come before Him" in the parallel Ps. 96:8 becomes "come into His courts". Again David is moving towards seeing coming to God as coming into a religious place. He is moving away from his sense in the wilderness years of being in God's presence anywhere. Likewise "in holy array", AV "the beauty of holiness", becomes "in His glorious sanctuary" in the parallel 2 Chron. 20:21 and Ps. 96:9; again moving from the need for personal holiness to the need to come into a holy place.

1Ch 16:30 Tremble before Him, all the land. The world also is established that it can't be moved-

The invitation to the entire *eretz* promised to Abraham to "tremble before Him" is an invitation for them to accept Yahweh as their God. The idea is that all of the planet, the sea representing the peoples (:32), would rejoice at the prospect of the coming of Israel's Lord in judgment (:33). This is not therefore speaking of the Kingdom; but rather of David's desire that before the Lord's coming, the Gentile peoples would come to such relationship with Him that they rejoiced at the prospect of His coming in judgment, knowing by faith that they would not be condemned. And yet as will be discussed on :31, he seems to think that the ark as God's throne meant that God was now king in Zion and the Gentile world should accept that. And he may be liking to think that this kingdom "can't be moved", when in fact it would be. For the kingdom was to be overturned. It was this wild over interpretation of the significance of his own kingdom which led him to wrongly assume that Solomon would be the promised Messianic king, and this led Solomon to have no sense of possible failure, so that he became proud and turned away from Yahweh.

1Ch 16:31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice! Let them say among the nations, Yahweh reigns!-

This again is an invitation to the Gentiles to accept Yahweh as their king and thus become His 'kingdom' before His final, open manifestation in the earth. And that is likewise our call. However in the immediate context, David sees the ark as God's throne, and His reign as therefore now beginning in Jerusalem. It could be that David is seeing this as a foretaste of His future Kingdom coming on earth, based also in Jerusalem. But he could also be over

interpreting, and seeing God's Kingdom as fully come in his kingdom, rather than recognizing that this was but a foretaste of that which was yet to come.

1Ch 16:32 Let the sea roar, and its fullness! Let the field exult, and all that is therein!-

The sea is again a symbol off the Gentiles, and David sees the coming of the ark to Zion as the enthronement of God in the earth (:31), and therefore he is inviting the Gentiles to come and worship there. But there is no evidence any Gentiles did come to the ark in Zion and do so. David was overly obsessed with the material, religious aspects of worship, as he went on to be in relation to the temple.

1Ch 16:33 Then the trees of the forest will sing for joy before Yahweh, for He comes to judge the earth-

All the trees of the world will be clapping their hands when Jesus returns. Yet trees are symbolic of Gentile nations. There will be, therefore, a remnant everywhere looking out for the Lord's return. But perhaps there is an element of literalism here. David perhaps also foresees the joy of the natural and spiritual creation of the last days as they sense the approach of the Lord (as in Rom. 8:22).

But I suggest the reference to the trees is specifically to the ark, referring to the wood at Kirjath-jearim (the city of woods) where the ark was "found": "we found it in the fields of the wood" (Ps. 132:6). The coming of the ark to Zion was seen by David as God's coming in judgment, and the praise of God and His grace (:34) was initially referring to the coming of the ark to Zion. No wonder God made that little gold box disappear so that men would focus instead upon Him in His essence.

1Ch 16:34 Oh give thanks to Yahweh, for He is good, for His grace endures forever-

Ps. 106:45 connects this eternal grace with God's covenant : "He remembered for them His covenant, and relented according to the multitude of His graces". The covenant in view is that with Abraham made in Gen. 15, which featured God making unilateral promises whilst Abraham was incapacitated and unable to do anything in response. Neither was there any clause added making it conditional upon his obedience. This is in sharp contrast with the law of Moses, the old covenant, and David seems to have seen beyond this. Jeremiah, Zechariah and Ezekiel all make the point to the exiles that they had broken the old covenant, and therefore they could only be saved by reaffirming their part in the new covenant. We take the cup of the new covenant to show how we have accepted this new covenant with us.

1Ch 16:35 Say, 'Save us, God of our salvation! Gather us together and deliver us from the nations, to give thanks to Your holy name, to triumph in Your praise'-

Verses 35 and 36 are quoted in Ps. 106:47,48. But the inspired Psalmist in Ps. 106:47 makes a slight change because he was using this Psalm in the context of the exiles wanting to be restored: "Gather us together and deliver us from the nations" is changed to "Gather us from among the nations". The ark was lost; it was the Jews themselves who were to come to Zion. The exile brought them to realize that the box called "the ark" was mere religion; the essence of it was that the dwelling place of God was no longer a box of acacia wood, but God's own repentant people.

1Ch 16:36 Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel, from everlasting even to everlasting. All the people said, 'Amen', and praised Yahweh-

See on :35. The people are asked to say "Amen!" to it all, recognizing their sinfulness as a people and as individuals; and yet with the confession, to also praise God for His abiding grace to His people. As noted on :35, these words are slightly adapted in Ps. 106:48. The

people were asked to understand that *their* return to Zion was to be like the return of the ark after a period in Gentile captivity. The dwelling place of God was no longer to be over a box of acacia wood, but over God's own repentant people.

1Ch 16:37 So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, Asaph and his brothers, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required-

The idea is that Asaph and his brothers were now to be permanently stationed in Zion to perform the required rituals there every day. Although David presents as very spiritually minded, time and again we find within his worship aspects which are simply not Biblical. Deuteronomy had made it clear there should only have been one sanctuary. But he had one at Gibeon (:4, where Solomon is said to have later worshipped) and yet had the ark with him, in his back yard, at Jerusalem. It's hard not to think that the bringing of the ark to himself wasn't politically motivated, cementing both religious and political power in himself as king, as so many kings did. Hence David's use of linen garments in which to minister as a priest, when he wasn't a Levite- for linen garments were a symbol of royalty as well as being used by priests.

1Ch 16:38 and Obed-Edom with their brothers, sixty-eight; Obed-Edom also the son of Jeduthun and Hosah to be doorkeepers-

"Their brothers" may mean that Asaph and his brothers (:37) are in view. 1 Chron. 26:8 speaks of a group of 62 relatives of Obed-Edom, whereas 1 Chron. 16:38 speaks of 68. The extra six may refer to "Asaph and his brothers, who are referred to in the otherwise strange reference in 1 Chron. 16:38 to "Obed-Edom with their brothers". The preceding verse (1 Chron. 16:37) has spoken of "Asaph and his brothers".

1Ch 16:39 and Zadok the priest, and his brothers the priests, before the tabernacle of Yahweh in the high place that was at Gibeon-

Zadok cared for the tabernacle at Gibeon, which was "the great high place" (1 Chron. 16:39; 1 Kings 3:4), and so it is another example of correlation within the inspired records that he had access to that horn and the oil with which to anoint Solomon (1 Kings 1:39).

1Ch 16:40 to offer burnt offerings to Yahweh on the altar of burnt offering continually morning and evening, even according to all that is written in the law of Yahweh, which He commanded to Israel-

We wonder whether these regular daily offerings had been made at Gibeon before this time. We note that at this point, the ark is in Zion, but the altar of burnt offering is still at Gibeon (:39). This seems rather typical of how David perceived the spirit of the law to such an extent that he apparently broke the letter of the law by allowing this situation to continue. For surely he ought to have united the sanctuaries of Gibeon and Zion. Perhaps he allowed it to continue because of the political difficult in deciding which of the two high priests to appoint as singular high priest (Zadok or Ahimelech). And so he allowed the two sanctuaries to continue, although this was contrary to the law's insistence upon one sanctuary. Hence Solomon sacrificed both at Gibeon and before the ark at Jerusalem (2 Chron. 1:3,6). It was only when Ahimelech was deposed by Solomon that he brought the brazen altar from Gibeon to Jerusalem (2 Chron. 1:5 AV; see note there). This suggests that David's operation of two sanctuaries was politically motivated.

1Ch 16:41 With them were Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest who were chosen, who were mentioned by name, to give thanks to Yahweh, because His grace endures forever-

These were to serve in Gibeon (:39), offering praise at the times the daily burnt offerings

were made (:40), whilst Asaph and his group did this in Jerusalem (:37).

1Ch 16:42 and with them Heman and Jeduthun with trumpets and cymbals for those that should sound aloud, and with instruments for the songs of God; and the sons of Jeduthun to be at the gate-

LXX omits "and with them Heman and Jeduthun", making it read more smoothly with :41.

1Ch 16:43 All the people departed each man to his family; and David returned to bless his family-

David is to be commended for not simply blessing Israel, but turning his attention privately to his own private household, and wanting to hold a private ceremony with them. But it was this which elicited the angry retort of Michal, whom I suggested on 2 Sam. 6:16 may still have been an idolater and despised not only David but also Yahweh.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 17

1Ch 17:1 It happened that as David lived in his house, David said to Nathan the prophet-

2 Sam. 7:1 adds: "It happened, when the king lived in his house, and Yahweh had given him rest from all his enemies all around". All his adult life, David had hardly slept more than a few nights in the same place. And he had always been surrounded by enemies who gave him no rest. Now finally he was living a stable life in his own house, with rest from his enemies. Instead of slumping into the mire of mediocrity in his spirituality, as many would have done, he reflects that he apparently has more than God, as it were. He has a nice house, whilst God's house was a tent. This desire to use a stable existence in God's service is a stellar example to God's children of all ages.

Behold, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of Yahweh is under curtains-

Any disparity between our own life situation and that of the things of God... ought to concern us. David didn't stop living in a house and instead live in a tent. Instead he did what he could to ensure that his abundance was not kept to himself. His motives were admirable throughout, and God saw that, but God was to use David's desires to teach that He doesn't need works, but just wants to share the abundance of His grace with others.

The reference to "curtains" doesn't mean that David was concerned that God's ark was under a tent, whilst he lived in a house. Rather is the reference to the ten curtains which comprised the tabernacle (Ex. 26:1). Although the tabernacle was at Gibeon and the ark in Zion, David had apparently made another tabernacle for the ark in Zion. David was assuming that he could change the Mosaic commandments about the tabernacle, and move God's purpose forward to something more permanent. We see here how he didn't consider the laws of Moses [of which the commands about the tabernacle were part] to be static. He saw them as open to interpretation and development. This was not a position he came to lightly, seeing he had been terribly punished for thinking he could flout the legislation about how the ark was to be transported.

Many of the commands within the "law of Moses" were clearly only intended for the wilderness generation, indeed they could only have been obeyed by them then; and David wondered whether the entire commands about the tabernacle were in that category. Those today who claim that Mosaic legislation is eternally binding need to give this due weight. It's not just that the Mosaic law was abrogated by the Lord's death; but the whole nature of that

law was that it was never intended to all be literally applied to every subsequent generation. And that meant that it was the spirit of it which was to be discerned and followed.

1Ch 17:2 Nathan said to David, Do all that is in your heart; for God is with you-

Nathan wrongly assumed that Yahweh would naturally agree to David's proposition to move on from the Mosaic idea of a tabernacle. David didn't actually state what he intended to do (:1), but Nathan assumes he knows David's intentions, and assumes he knows God will agree. Such assumptions are typical of human beings, and further adds psychological verisimilitude to the record. Nathan of course should have had the humility to first ask of God rather than assuming he knows God's will. The assumption we know God's will is a common problem amongst God's people; effectively we are elevating our gut feeling to the level of God's word.

1Ch 17:3 It happened the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan saying-

David's plan to build a great house was met with the word of the Lord coming unto him "the same night", telling him not to do this. There seems to be some allusion to this by the Lord Jesus when He spoke of the rich fool who wanted to build a greater barn being told the Lord's word "that same night". It could be that the Lord Jesus saw something material and very human in David's desire to build a house for the Lord. See on :6.

1Ch 17:4 Go and tell David My servant, 'Thus says Yahweh, You shall not build Me a house to dwell in-

This is very clear. David's insistence upon pushing ahead with what became an obsession, and Solomon likewise, was a studied disregard of these simple words. The emphasis was upon the words "you" and "Me". David had not given due thought to the magnitude and inappropriacy of what was in his mind; that he as a mere man could build a house for Yahweh to live in. He had failed to perceive the greatness of his God. Any idea of confining God within four walls was bizarre.

1Ch 17:5 for I have not lived in a house since the day that I brought up Israel to this day, but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tent to another-

Although this may primarily refer to the Angel, the point is that the God of the cosmos had intensely manifested Himself in the ark and the tabernacle / tent which enclosed it. This of itself revealed His humility. The idea is "I have walked continually"; like David up until this point (see on :1), He had been a wanderer. David had now ceased his years of wandering (see on :1), and was assuming that God was like himself, preferring a stable and sedentary life. But this assumption that God is like us at this moment and point of our lives is incorrect, and David later criticizes it (Ps. 50:21). He is who He is, and not a god made in our image, as we are at this moment; rather are we made in His image, and not the other way around. It is for us to hear His voice in His word and accept Him as He is, rather than assuming He will think how we do at this point in our development. David earlier had appreciated the idea of God being a wanderer when he was a wanderer, as his wilderness Psalms indicate. But now he was settled, he assumed that this was how God would like to be.

1Ch 17:6 In all places in which I have walked with all Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to be shepherd of My people saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'

David desired to build God a physical house. But God's response is in clear enough language: God did not want a physical house because

1. It was not really possible for man to build God a house ("Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?" in 2 Sam. 7:5 is surely rhetorical)

2. God had never asked Israel to build Him such a house before; indeed, it had been His expressed will that He should dwell among Israel in the temporary form of the tabernacle. God wanted a temporary abode to point forward to the fact that the reality was in Christ; thus the Law of Moses had features built into it which were intrinsically temporal, to point men forward to the stability and finality of Messiah. By building a permanent temple, Solomon reflects his lack of focus on the Messiah to come.

3. He would only have a permanent physical house when His people were permanently settled, never to be moved again (2 Sam. 7:10), i.e. in the Kingdom. Yet Solomon perceived that his kingdom was in fact the final Kingdom of God. David made this mistake, in assuming in Ps. 72 that Solomon's Kingdom would undoubtedly be the Messianic one...and Solomon repeated the error, yet to a more tragic extent.

4. God plays on the confusion between 'house' in the sense of household, and 'house' in the sense of a physical building. He says: '*You* want to build *me* a physical house. But *I* am going to build *you* a *household* which will be my Kingdom'. The implication is that David's desire for a physical house was altogether too human, and that there is an opposition between what man thinks he can physically do for God, and the fact that God wishes to do things for men. Yet Solomon went ahead with his works rather than grappling with the reality of sheer grace. He so wanted to *do* something. He betrays this when he writes in Ecc. 9:7: "God now accepts your works". The Hebrew translated "accepts" means literally to satisfy a debt, and is elsewhere translated 'to reconcile self'. He saw works as reconciling man's debt to God, rather than perceiving that grace is paramount. He keeps on about David his father; and yet there was a crucial difference. David perceived the need for grace as the basis of man's reconciliation with God; whereas Solomon thought it was works. David wrote that God wants a broken heart and not thousands of sacrifices; yet Solomon offered the thousands of sacrifices, but didn't have the contrite heart of his father.

5. To desire a physical house for God is to overlook the promised Messiah- that was surely the implication of the promise of the Lord Jesus following right on from the statement that a physical house was not required. Is. 57:15 and Is. 66:2 explain why this is- because God does not live in what man builds, but will fully dwell in one man to whom He will look, one who would have a humble spirit towards Him. And this man was of course the Lord Jesus. Solomon's obsession with the temple therefore reflected his deeper problem- of not being focused upon the Christ to come.

So it ought to be clear from all this that God's response to the request to build a temple was negative; He did not want a physical temple. None of the four reasons for this listed above were just temporary considerations; they were reasons which were valid for all time. There can be no doubt that God's response here is at the basis of Is. 66:1,2: "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all these things hath mine hand made... but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" . God is saying that it simply isn't possible to build Him a house; instead, He seeks to dwell in the hearts of men. Yet Solomon wasn't interested in the personal spiritual mindedness which enables this to happen. This is the same spirit as God's response to David: 'You can't build me a physical house, I will build my own household of believers'.

These words of Is. 66 are twice quoted in the New Testament. "God that made the world and all things therein, *seeing that* He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands... as though He needed any thing" (Acts 17:24,25). The reason for God not dwelling in temples is that He is Lord of heaven and earth. This reason does not change with time; He was Lord of heaven and earth at David's time just as much as He is now.

1Ch 17:7 Now therefore, you shall tell My servant David, 'Thus says Yahweh of Armies, I

took you from the sheep pen, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over My people Israel-

David was asked to reflect that his wandering around as a shepherd as a child and teenager had been to prepare him for leading Israel. But leading a people likewise involves an element of mobility, and God as the ultimate leader of Israel was likewise moving on and never static. Hebrew shepherds usually lead their sheep, but here David is described as being moved from following sheep, to going ahead as a leader. Here we have an example of where language and imagery is used in a way we might consider opportunistic; but this is the nature of Semitic writing and reasoning. A failure to appreciate the Hebrew nature of the Bible has led to so many misinterpretations of it.

1Ch 17:8 I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you-

David's continual wandering up until the point of :1 had always been with God's presence "with you wherever", as he often celebrates in his wilderness Psalms. This connects with God's own statement that He Himself had "walked continually" (:5,6; 2 Sam. 7:6). Those years had been in order to get David to appreciate God's own constant journeying. This is to be a feature of every believer's life. Even if we live and die in the house we were born in and never move 20 km. from our home village, life with God is a constant journey. And all within us will seek to turn it into the stability of mere religion, as David was seeking to do.

God encourages David to see himself as representative of Israel by saying this; they are words replete with reference to Israel in the wilderness and their establishment in the land. As David so loved his people and was their representative, for all they did to him, so with the Lord Jesus and His people. When God asked David "choose thee one of" three possible judgments, each of them involved the whole nation- e.g. "Shall seven years of famine come unto *thee*" (singular). David was their representative even in their time of failure.

I will make you a name, like the name of the great ones who are in the earth-

This is now developed by God into saying that He will make David a house / family. That family was to bear David's great name, but the "great name", the greatest in the earth [reading "great ones" as an intensive plural for a singular great name] was that of Yahweh. And this Name was to be carried by David's house and particularly by the Messianic seed who was now to be promised. 2 Sm. 7:9 AV "I have made thee a great name" shows the intentional confusion of tenses. David had been made a great name, but that was just a foretaste of how great his name was to become through his future descendant and house.

1Ch 17:9 I will appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and be moved no more. Neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the first-

This connects with how David had just planted the ark in its "place" in Zion (2 Sam. 6:17). God is saying that His grace is such that He will do exceeding far above what we ever ask or think to do for Him. He would plant and place Israel in an eternal Kingdom, just as David had planted and placed the ark in Zion. As David personally had been given rest from his enemies (see on :1), so would Israel be granted rest.

These words would have been comforting to the exiles; ultimately they would not be afflicted as they had been by the Babylonians, and would return to their land permanently (2 Sam. 7:10 s.w. for "afflict" in Zech. 10:2; Zeph. 3:19; Lam. 3:33; 5:11). The word used in 1 Chron. 17:9, 'to waste', is also used of the Babylonian wasting of Judah (Lam. 3:4).

1Ch 17:10 and from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will subdue all your enemies-

The constant affliction Israel experienced at the time of the judges was because of their sins; they had no rest from their enemies because of their continual unfaithfulness to Yahweh. These promises are therefore tantamount to saying that God would somehow permanently establish His people, in a way not conditional upon their faithfulness because He would somehow make them faithful. This is the language of the new covenant offered to the exiles, and is achieved today through the work of the Holy Spirit keeping us from falling from the covenant. The "blessing" promised to Abraham is therefore interpreted in Acts 3:25,26 as the power of God turning away His people's hearts from sin. And the same is implied in these promises to David.

Moreover I tell you that Yahweh will build you a house-

To what was God referring to when He told David that David's son would build him a house? Firstly, we must bear in mind that in hundreds of places, the Hebrew word for "house" means 'household'. The eternal house promised to David is paralleled with the Kingdom; and a Kingdom is comprised of people. This is what is in view, not the building of any literal temple at the Lord's return. The Kingdom is the house of Jacob (Lk. 1:33). That the house of David is the Kingdom is evident from 2 Sam. 7:13,16; 1 Chron. 17:14 (cp. Lk. 11:17). The Kingdom was taken from the house of Saul and given to the house of David (2 Sam. 3:10), but later the Kingdom was taken from the house of David because of Solomon's apostasy (1 Kings 14:8). This is proof enough that at best the promises to David had only a tiny fulfilment in Solomon's Kingdom.

The New Testament is very insistent that the true temple of God is the body of Christian believers (1 Cor. 9:13; 2 Cor. 6:16; Heb. 10:21; 1 Pet. 4:17; Rev. 3:12; 11:1,2; 1 Tim. 3:15). This string of passages is quite some emphasis. Yet Christ was the temple; he spoke of the temple of his body (Jn. 2:19-21; Rev. 21:22). For this reason, the Gospels seem to stress the connection between Christ and the temple (Mk. 11:11,15,16,27; 12:35; 13:1,3; 14:49; Lk. 2:46; 21:38). Christ's body was the temple of God. By being in Christ, we too are the temple (1 Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:21), *our* body is the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19). Yet Solomon was not Christ centred; he didn't want to see this connection. And we too can have an over-physical view of the Kingdom, centred around a literal temple in Jerusalem etc., rather than perceiving that the Kingdom / reign of God is, in its essence, over the hearts of men and women like us. The future political Kingdom will be the concrete articulation of the essence of the Kingdom principles which are now being lived out in the hearts of the people who are under the Lord's present kingship.

In the person of Jesus, the essence of the Kingdom came nigh to men (Mt. 10:7; 11:4; 12:28)- and this was why one of His titles is "the Kingdom". The Kingdom of God is about joy, peace and righteousness more than the physicalities of eating and drinking. In this sense the Kingdom was "among" first century Israel. The Kingdom of God is not merely a carrot held out to us for good behaviour. It is a reality right now, in so far as God truly becomes our king. Even in the Old Testament, the word "temple" does not normally refer to the physical temple outside the records of Solomon's building of the temple. It is often stated that the house David's seed was to build would be for the Name of Yahweh. His Name refers to His mental attributes. A physical house is inappropriate to express these.

If the house refers to a household of righteous believers, all becomes plain. This explains why 2 Sam. 7:13,26 parallels God's eternal name with the eternal house and Kingdom which was promised to David. Building a house was a common Hebrew idiom for developing a household (Ruth 4:11; Dt. 25:9). God's promise to David about building him an eternal household was anticipated in His words to Eli: "I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind (i.e. David, 1 Sam. 13:14); and I will build him a *sure house*", in contrast to God's destruction of Eli's household (1 Sam. 2:35). 1 Kings 11:38 clinches the idea that this refers to David: "I will be with thee, and build

thee a *sure house* as I built for David". In passing, note that these words to Solomon remind him that God will build *him* a house, in opposition to the way in which Solomon so frequently speaks about building God a house.

There is a play on words with the Hebrew word *bayith* ['house']. It is used about David's house / family (1 Chron. 17:10,16,17,23,24) and that of God (vv. 12,14). Our house is God's house. He is, therefore, to be at the centre of family life.

1Ch 17:11 It shall happen, when your days are fulfilled that you must go to be with your fathers-

There is a strong sense that God has determined a number of "days" for our mortal life (Ps. 23:6; 2 Sam. 7:12), and David like all of us wished to know how many those days were for him, in order that he might live an appropriately humble life in response to realizing his frailty (Ps. 39:4). But that predetermined number of days can be cut short (Ps. 102:4,23,24) or extended (1 Kings 3:14; Prov. 9:11). Hezekiah would be the parade example of this; his days were cut short (Is. 38:10), and then lengthened in response to prayer (2 Kings 20:6). God is open to dialogue, His timetable in our personal lives is flexible according to our prayers; and He is also responsive to human behaviour. Like Job we should perceive our life as "my days" (he uses this term multiple times), so that we might use each of them for Him.

That I will set up your seed after you, who shall be of your sons-

"Set up" has a similar meaning to "establish". It is tempting to note that the Hebrew word is often translated "arise", and to wonder if there is here a hint that this seed will experience a bodily resurrection. The possible fulfilment in David's family was precluded by his sin with Bathsheba and the resultant effects upon his "house"; the same word for "set up" is in 2 Sam. 12:11 of how God would "raise / set up evil out of your own house". His house "was not so with God", as he concluded at the end of his life; and so he with us look for a fulfilment in his Messianic seed, the Lord Jesus, and the house of people being built up / established in Him.

The promise to David concerning Christ precludes his physical existence at the time the promise was made: "I *will* set up your descendant [singular] *after* you, which *shall* proceed out of your body... I *will* be his father, and he *shall* be my son" (2 Sam. 7:12,14). Notice the future tense used here. Seeing that God *would be* Christ's Father, it is impossible that the Son of God could have already existed at that point in time when the promise was made. That this seed "*shall proceed out of your body*" shows that he was to be a literal, physical descendant of David. "The Lord has sworn in truth unto David... Of the fruit of your body will I set upon your throne" (Ps. 132:11). Solomon was the primary fulfilment of the promise, but as he was already physically in existence at the time of this promise (2 Sam. 5:14), the main fulfilment of this promise about David having a physical descendant who would be God's son, must refer to Christ (Lk. 1:31-33).

And I will establish his kingdom-

"Prepared" or "established" is a major theme in the promises of the eternal establishment of David's throne (2 Sam. 7:12,13,16 etc.), and Solomon wrongly assumed that the conditional nature of the promises concerning the seed were just irrelevant to him as he had wisdom. Therefore he uses the word of how his kingdom has been "established" (1 Kings 2:24 s.w.). Solomon's contenders for the throne were all stopped by God, they tried to prepare or establish themselves but it never worked out (2 Sam. 15:1; 1 Kings 1:5); and so surely Solomon has the idea in mind that he has been established as the promised Messianic seed of David with an eternally "established" throne and kingdom. This leads him to the conclusion that the outcome of wisdom and folly is in this life, and he has no perspective of a final day of judgment and eternal establishment of God's Kingdom on earth. This is why the simplistic dichotomies he presents in Proverbs between the blessed and wise, and the cursed and

foolish, are not always true to observed experiences in this life. For it is the future Kingdom which puts them in ultimate perspective.

1Ch 17:12 He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever-

Ultimately, as shown above, this refers to the building up of the house of believers to be the throne of the seed's eternal kingdom. The Lord Jesus will reign upon us, "whose house are we" (Heb. 3:6); we are His throne, the basis of His Kingdom. And that house and throne are being built up now, although it will only be more materially and physically articulated at His second coming and the establishment of His literal Kingdom upon earth. This process of building up is achieved by the colossal work of the Lord Jesus through His Spirit, calling, converting and transforming His people to be His house. This is how the New Testament alludes to these ideas of building and establishing (Acts 20:32; Rom 16:25; 1 Thess. 3:13; 2 Thess. 2:17; 3:3; 1 Pet. 5:10). Ps. 89:4 says that this building up of the throne goes on in "all generations". The idea is that the house and throne of the seed is built up from people of all generations. The light never went out for God's Truth and true people. In every generation there were some. This has big implications for those who consider that a very specific theology, especially one based upon 19th century revelations of truth, is required for salvation and membership of God's people.

The fact is that God *did* dwell, temporarily, in Solomon's temple. His glory entered it, and later left it in Ezekiel's time. This is the classic example of the way in which God will go along with men in their mistaken enthusiasm, working with them, even though this is contrary to His preferred way of doing things. A similar example is found in the way God forbade Israel to have a human king, because to do so would be a denial of His superiority and of their covenant relationship with Him. And yet Israel had a king. God did not turn a blind eye to this. Instead He worked through this system of human kingship. Or take marriage out of the faith. This is clearly contrary to God's ideal wishes. And yet in some cases He is prepared to work through this, in order to being about His purpose. There is even the possible suggestion in Acts 15:10 that God was 'tempted' to re-instate the law of Moses, or parts of it, in the first century, seeing that this was what so many of the early Christians desired to keep. That God is so eager to work with us should in itself be a great encouragement. Yet we must not come to presume upon God's patience, assuming that He will go along with us.

In any case, 2 Chron. 7:12 says that God accepted the temple only as a place of sacrifice, i.e. a glorified altar (cp. 2 Sam. 24:17,18). And yet- God didn't really want sacrifice (Ps. 40:6; Heb. 10:5). "Now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever" (2 Chron. 7:16) is a conditional promise, followed by five verses of conditions concerning Solomon's spirituality which he overlooked. Like Solomon, we too can fix upon promises without considering their conditionality. There is good reason to think that communally and individually we are increasingly shutting our eyes to the possibility of our spiritual failure and disaster. God constantly warned Solomon about the conditionality of the promises, before the building started (2 Sam. 7:14), during it (1 Kings 6:11-13) and immediately after completing it (1 Kings 9:2-9). Note, too, that Solomon had the idea that if sinful Israel prayed towards the temple, they would somehow be forgiven because of this. God's response was that if they sought *Him* wherever they were and repented, then He would hear them- the temple was not to be seen as the instrument or mediatrix of forgiveness which Solomon envisaged. Likewise, Solomon's implication that prayer offered in the temple would be especially acceptable was not upheld by God's reply to him about this (2 Chron. 6:24-26 cp. God's response in 2 Chron. 7:12,13).

1Ch 17:13 I will be his father, and he shall be My son. I will not take My sure mercies away from him, as I took it from him that was before you-

“The sure mercies of David” result in the wicked man forsaking his way (Is. 55:3,7). The description of the promises to David as “sure mercies” (1 Chron. 17:13) may perhaps be with a reference to his sin with Bathsheba; his forgiveness in that incident is typical of that which we all receive (Rom. 4:6-8). The very existence of the “mercies of / to David” therefore inspire us in forsaking sinful thoughts and wicked ways (Is. 55:7).

It was God's Spirit which departed from Saul and came upon David. Yet that Spirit is here called God's grace or loving kindness, and the New Testament makes the same connection between the grace / gift of God and the Holy Spirit. The formation of the seed, both collectively and individually in the Lord Jesus, was through the work of the Spirit. And that Spirit would abide fully and eternally upon the Lord Jesus (Jn. 3:34).

Often the promises about the seed in the singular (the Lord Jesus) are applied to us in the plural (e.g. 2 Sam. 7:14 cp. Ps. 89:30-35). Those seminal promises to Abraham hinged around what would be realized *in*, not *by*, his seed. All that is true of the Lord Jesus is now true of us, in that we are in Him. Baptism is not an initiation into a church. It isn't something which just *seems* the right thing to do. And even if because of our environment and conscience, it was easier to get baptized than not- *now* this mustn't be the case. We really are *in* Christ, we are born again; now we exist, spiritually! And moreover, we have risen with Him, His resurrection life, His life and living that will eternally be, is now manifest in us, and will be articulated physically at the resurrection.

1Ch 17:14 but I will settle him in My house and in My kingdom forever. His throne shall be established forever'-

Solomon came to overlook the conditionality of the promises (which are more laboured in 2 Sam. 7) because his father had done the same. David on his deathbed speaks of how “God has given one to sit on my throne this day, my eyes even seeing it” (1 Kings 1:48). He forgot how those promises more essentially spoke of his house “for a great while to come”, and how only after “you shall sleep with your fathers” would David see “your house and your kingdom established for ever *before you*” (2 Sam. 7:12,16), thus implying David's resurrection. He lost this focus in his enthusiasm for Solomon, and it seems that Solomon followed suite.

Abigail quotes the promise of a priest being raised up with a "sure house" (1 Sam. 2:35), imagining that David was to become a Messianic king-priest; and to have blood on his hands would preclude that. Abigail's phrase "a sure / established house" (1 Sam. 25:28) is used in the promises to David (2 Sam. 7:16; 1 Kings 11:38). It's as if she was so in tune with God's ways that she had some premonition of His intentions with David, although she saw these as conditional upon David not shedding the innocent blood of her family. Or perhaps the promise of 1 Sam. 2:35 about a priest with a "sure house" had already been developed by Samuel in relation with David, and Abigail was aware of that. The promises to David which mention a sure house for him would therefore only be confirming what had already been promised.

I suggested on :11,12 that this establishment of the throne was a process of building up and establishing God's people over the generations, coming to full term in the establishment of the Lord Jesus on David's revived throne in Jerusalem at His second coming. Ps. 89:4 says that this building up of the throne goes on in "all generations". The idea is that the house and throne of the seed is built up from people of all generations. The light never went out for God's Truth and true people.

1Ch 17:15 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David-

Nathan faithfully relayed the vision he received in these words to David. This is in contrast to how he had over hastily assumed to know God's word and will in the matter the day before.

1Ch 17:16 Then David the king went in and sat before Yahweh; and he said, Who am I, Yahweh God-

It was because David was truly humble that he could immediately respond in genuine humility to God's promises to him; whereas Solomon became proud because of them (1 Chron. 17:16: "David *the king* came and *sat* before the Lord, and said, Who am I...?"). Despite the openness with God which we see in the Psalms, despite being able to break explicit commandments because he so finely appreciated the spirit behind them, despite being a man after God's own heart, even in his true spiritual maturity towards the end of his life, David "could not go before (the altar) to enquire of God; for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the Lord" (1 Chron. 21:30). Now this seems an eloquent essay in the true spiritual humility of that man David.

The promises to David are described as the mercy of God (Is. 55:3; Ps. 89:33,34). God having a son is the sign of His love for us, and this must elicit a response in us. David himself marvelled that such mercy had been shown to him: "Who am I... and what is my house... You know Your servant" (2 Sam. 7:18-20). And yet in the very next chapters, we read of how David made a renewed attempt to show mercy to the house of Saul. Mephibosheth says that he is "thy servant... what is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such... as I am?" (2 Sam. 9:8 AV). Mephibosheth is using the very words which David used to God; David is showing mercy to Mephibosheth in the very way in which the promises of God to him were the "mercies" shown to David. Appreciating that the promises concern us personally, and that they reveal such loving grace from the Father, can only lead to a similar response in showing love and grace through entering into the lives and destinies of others.

And what is my house, that You have brought me thus far?-

"I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant" (Gen. 32:10) was spoken by Jacob on that night of destiny, in recognition of how he was morally unworthy to receive the promises which God had given him (see context). David picked this up here, where he comments on his unworthiness to receive the promises to him, which were an extension of those Jacob received.

1Ch 17:17 This was a small thing in Your eyes, O God; but You have spoken of your servant's house for a great while to come, and have respected me according to the estate of a man of high degree, Yahweh God-

Such is the wonder of God's promise to us that we really have no excuse to sin. Every sin is in a sense a denial of His promises. God told David that he had no excuse for what he did with Uriah and Bathsheba, because he had given him so much, "and if that had been too little, I would have added unto you..." (2 Sam. 12:8). "Too little" sends the mind back here, where the promises to David are described as a "little / small thing"; the promises were so wonderful that David should not have allowed himself to fall into such sin. And us likewise.

David is one of the major OT types of the Lord Jesus. The words of David in Ps. 16 are quoted in Acts 2:25,29 concerning Jesus: "I have set the Lord always before me...he is at my right hand...thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption". These are words describing David's feelings about his own death and resurrection; and yet so identified was he with the Messiah, that they are quoted as being directly true of Jesus. But Acts 2:29 also quotes these words with a slightly different spin- in that David saw the Lord *Jesus* always before him, and it was this sense that stabilized him. This could only have been true in that David understood all his feelings and present and future experiences [e.g. resurrection, not being suffered to corrupt eternally] as being typical

of the Lord Jesus. He so understood himself as a type of the One to come that he saw this person as ever with him. This is the extent of the typology. 1 Chron. 17:17 in Young's Literal has David saying: "Thou hast seen me as a type of the man on high" [i.e. Messiah]. David describes himself at ease with clearly Messianic titles such as 'the Christ', 'the man raised on high', and then goes on to speak of the Messiah who *is to come* on the "morning without clouds", admitting that "verily *my* house is not so with God" (2 Sam. 23:1-5). This is only really understandable if we accept that David consciously saw himself as a type of the future Messiah.

1Ch 17:18 What can David say yet more to You concerning the honour which is done to Your servant?-

In view of all God had said to David, he had nothing to say to God, and the implication is that he would now not say to God his plans of building a house for God. His later desire and insistence upon doing so would suggest he lost this intensity of understanding and awareness.

For You know Your servant-

David is expressing what we often do to God; that we cannot express our gratitude enough in words or praise, we can only ask God to know us, and know how we feel.

1Ch 17:19 Yahweh, for Your servant's sake, and according to Your own heart, You have worked all this greatness, to make known all these great things-

David spoke of how God's word and "own heart" are parallel; God's mind / spirit is expressed in His word, although David may here more understand the "word" as referring to God's purpose (as in Jn. 1:1) rather than the scriptures. David was sure the promises would come true; he speaks in the past tense of how God had worked already these great things.

1Ch 17:20 Yahweh, there is none like You, neither is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears-

What characterizes Yahweh as the one and only God is His grace, which David has just experienced poured out. Divine grace is the defining feature of the one true faith; no other god, idol or religious system comes close to it.

1Ch 17:21 What single nation in the earth is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem to Himself for a people, to make You a name by great and awesome things, in driving out nations from before Your people, whom You redeemed out of Egypt?-

Israel had been redeemed from the gods of Egypt. Yet they took those gods with them through the Red Sea, and carried the tabernacle of Moloch and Remphan through the wilderness along with that of Yahweh (Acts 7:43). The LXX here brings out this point: "so that thou shouldest cast out nations and their tabernacles from the presence of thy people, whom thou didst redeem for thyself out of Egypt". That Israel carried these tabernacles and gods with them suggests that this was a redemption refused. And David, having experienced the grace which can only come from Yahweh, is resolved to only serve Him and root out all such idolatry.

1Ch 17:22 For Your people Israel You made Your very own people forever; and You, Yahweh, became their God-

God had promised to establish David's seed, God's true people, as His throne and people for ever. David recognizes that what had been promised to him had already been offered to Israel; although as noted on :21, they had refused this through their idolatry and failure to be God's exclusive kingdom / people, rejecting Him as their God. It was similar to God's thought of rejecting His people and working instead through Moses and his seed. God had been

persuaded against that, but now David perceives that God is going to work not through Israel as a whole but through him and his seed. The allusion is to Dt. 32:6 where Israel act as the most foolish nation in rejecting the God who established them as a nation.

1Ch 17:23 Now, Yahweh, let the word that You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house be established forever, and do as You have spoken-

David seems to feel the need to show his agreement with God's plan (also in 2 Sam. 7:29). This may be because he perceived the similarity with Moses, who was also offered to have God working not with Israel but with him and his seed. And Moses hadn't agreed. But David agrees.

1Ch 17:24 Let Your name be established and magnified forever, saying, 'Yahweh of Armies is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel. The house of David Your servant is established before You' -

David believed in the fulfilment of these future promises, and so he expresses this in terms of them already having been fulfilled. For this is the essence of faith, to believe that we have receive that which is promised, even if it is not yet in our hands (Mk. 11:24). And his response was in prayerful praise, which must be our response to having received in essence the same promises.

1Ch 17:25 For You, my God, have revealed to Your servant that You will build him a house. Therefore Your servant has found courage to pray before You-

David was so humbled that he felt that even to pray a prayer of thanks was something which required courage. He, the courageous warrior, was so humbled that he found it a challenge to find courage to even thank God for these promises. So greatly was he awed by God's grace in these promises- promises which have in essence been made to us too, and which should elicit a similar response.

1Ch 17:26 Now, Yahweh, You are God, and have promised this good thing to Your servant-
The idea is "You are the one and only God". The context is Israel's idolatry, and how God is now working through David and his seed as His Kingdom, rather than through an Israel who rejected Him as the only true God.

1Ch 17:27 Now it has pleased You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue forever before You; for You, Yahweh, have blessed, and it is blessed forever-

David describes the promises as "blessing" (also 2 Sam. 7:28,29), a word normally used in the context of forgiveness. So David was aware of the grossness of sin, of the need for self-examination, to ensure that his technical breaches of the Law of Moses were truly a reflection of his friendship with God rather than an indication of spiritual weakness. For David's house to become God's eternal Kingdom would require their blessing with forgiveness in order to be immortalized.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 18

1Ch 18:1 After this-

"After this" may not be strictly chronological, because 2 Sam. 7:1 was at a time when David had rest from his enemies. 1 Chron. 17 is included where it is to continue the theme of the ark and Zion which began before it. The promised king of Israel would save Israel from the Philistines and their other enemies; Saul had failed in this, but David succeeded as the truly

intended king. The parallel 2 Sam. 8:1 LXX implies that until this time, Israel were still paying tribute to the Philistines: "David took the tribute from out of the hand of the Philistines".

It happened that David struck the Philistines and subdued them, and took Gath and its towns out of the hand of the Philistines-

After David received the promises about the future Messianic Kingdom, he went out and established his Kingdom, attacking Israel's enemies and driving them out of the land (1 Chron. 18:1-3). Our response to the future Hope of the Kingdom, which we too have through the very same promises, should be to try to live the Kingdom life now, as far as we can.

2 Sam. 8:1 says that "David took the bridle of the mother city out of the hand of the Philistines". But 1 Chron. 18:1 says that David took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines". Gath would be the 'mother-city', and the word translated "towns" literally means daughters. We note that David had earlier lived in Gath under the protection of Achish and had lied to the people how many Israelites he had slain in his apparent hatred of Saul. They would have considered him a hypocrite.

1Ch 18:2 He struck Moab; and the Moabites became servants to David, and brought tribute-

2 Sam. 8:2 gives more detail: "He struck Moab, and measured them with the line, making them to lie down on the ground; and he measured two lines to put to death, and one full line to keep alive. The Moabites became servants to David, and brought tribute". David made the captives lay down in three lines. He arbitrarily chose one line to keep alive, and killed the other two lines. This can't be justified as some careful obedience to some Mosaic law. It reads like something out of the Holocaust, an arbitrary slaying of some in order to exercise the whim of one's own power. No wonder David was barred from building the temple because of his attitude to bloodshed. And this was the worse because his parents had been given refuge there (1 Sam. 22:3,4). Perhaps the incident of 2 Sam. 23:20 occurred at this time.

Likewise when Rabbah is captured, David proudly puts the crown of the king on his head, grabs their spoil for himself (not following Abraham's example), "and he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon" (2 Sam. 12:31). Now all that is torture. It's one thing to obey Divine commands about slaying enemies; it's another to willfully torture them, Auschwitz-style. These incidents reveal David at his worst. And again- did he really have to ensure that every male in Edom was murdered (1 Kings 11:15,16)- was that really necessary? What about the mums, wives, sisters left weeping, and the fatherless daughters, left to grow up in the dysfunction of a leaderless Middle Eastern home? Those men were all somebody's sons, brothers, fathers, grandfathers. Was David really obeying some Divine command here, or was this the dictate of his own anger and dysfunctional bloodlust? We get the impression this was another example of his wrong attitude to the shedding of blood (1 Chron. 22:8).

1Ch 18:3 David struck Hadadezer king of Zobah to Hamath-

Hadadezer = 'helped by Hadad', the sun god. 2 Chron. 8 shows how Solomon sought to replicate what his father David did here. It describes the actions of Solomon in the very language which is used earlier about David.

2 Chron. 8:3 "Solomon went to Hamath Zobah" = 2 Sam. 8:3 "David smote also Hadadezer the son of Rehob king of Zobah"; 2 Chron. 8:3 "and prevailed" = same word 1 Sam. 17:30; 2 Chron. 8:8 Those "whom the children of Israel consumed not, did Solomon make to pay tribute" = 2 Sam. 8:6 "David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus, and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts"; 2 Chron. 8:14 "He appointed

according to the ordinance of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges... for so had David commanded" = 1 Chron. 24:1; 2 Chron. 9:15,16 = 2 Sam.8:7 "David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem".

1 Kings 11:4,6 clearly states God's opinion that Solomon was not like David: "his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father... (he) went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father". This double stress, bearing in mind inspiration's economic use of words, is really making a point. Yet the records of Solomon seem to be framed to show that externally, Solomon was indeed following David; he was obsessed with living out parental expectation, and perhaps the expectation of his society, rather than forging his own relationship with God.

As he went to establish his dominion by the river Euphrates-
Grammatically, the subject of the sentence is Hadadezer, and the reference is to the battle of 2 Sam. 10:15-19. Again we see that the records are not chronologically but thematically arranged.

1Ch 18:4 David took from him one thousand chariots, seven thousand horsemen and twenty thousand footmen; and David hamstringed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them enough for one hundred chariots-

See on :3. Notice how both David and Solomon dealt with the matter of chariots and horses. Solomon's weakness for horses was perhaps traceable to David's. Solomon unashamedly amassed horses and chariots, in direct disobedience to Divine command (Dt. 17:16). When David his father had captured 1000 chariots and horses, he hamstrung 900 of them and retained 100 of them (2 Sam. 8:4). He had a conscience about the matter, but thought that 90% obedience wasn't bad. And the hamstrung horses were likely used for agricultural work and especially for breeding- breeding yet more chariot horses. David's 90% obedience lead to his son's 100% disobedience in this matter of chariot horses.

Solomon wished to imitate his father David in every sense; his own real personality only really came out in the Ecclesiastes years, when he took to drink, materialism, women and idolatry. It took the influence of his parents many years to wear off. David had weaknesses for horses (2 Sam. 8:4) and many wives; and Solomon followed in these steps too. Note that David had six sons in seven years by six different women, including Gentiles (1 Chron. 3:3). And in addition to these, David had children by "the concubines" (1 Chron. 3:9). Doubtless Solomon reasoned, albeit deep within his psyche, that such behaviour was legitimate because David his father had done it. David seems to have over interpreted the promises made to him about Solomon and the temple, and assumed that his interpretation was certainly correct. And Solomon did exactly the same. The weaknesses of the parents all too easily are repeated by the children to an even greater extent.

There are apparently different numbers given in 2 Sam. 8:4; 10:18 and 1 Chron. 19:18. I see no real problem here once we appreciate that the Hebrew word "thousand" used when giving numbers like this rarely means 1,000 as a number. It is also translated regiment, brigade, family, squadron etc. And to Israelites looking at the Syrian army, it could be described in various ways. There many regiments, families, groups, squadrons, but these subdivisions of an ancient army are all called a "thousand". Depending how one looks at the army and its subdivisions. A modern army would be subdivided into two to four corps, a corps has at least two divisions or legions, a division has two four brigades or regiments, a brigade has two or more regiments, a regiment has two or more battalions, a battalion has a number of companies, a company has a number of platoons, a platoon has a number of squads or fire teams. The problem is that the Hebrew Bible uses the same word for all such

military subdivisions, and it is translated "thousand" in many Bibles. Hence the apparently contradictory numbers.

1Ch 18:5 When the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David struck of the Syrians twenty-two thousand men-

Again we must note that "thousand" refers to regiments / families and is not necessarily to be taken as literally 1,000.

1Ch 18:6 Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus; and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought tribute. Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went-

This was short-lived, because Solomon's adversary Rezon established himself at Damascus (1 Kings 11:23-25).

1Ch 18:7 David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem-

"Hadad" was the god of the sun, "Hadadezer" had not been 'helped by Hadad' as his name means, and so David brought these golden imitations of the sun to Yahweh's temple. It is perhaps questionable whether David should have brought idols into Jerusalem; we note that later Judah worshipped sun gods. David's actions here were not blessed, for the LXX adds "And Susakim [i.e. Shishak] king of Egypt took them, when he went up to Jerusalem in the days of Roboam the son of Solomon". Likewise 1 Kings 14:26 LXX mentions that David took golden spears from Hadadezer: "And the golden spears which David took from the hand of the servants of Adraazar king of Soba and carried to Jerusalem, he took them all". These would not have been used as real spears, but were part of the worship of the golden sun which was the main religion in Syria at the time. He would have been better destroying them, rather than bringing idol paraphernalia into Jerusalem. For it later contributed towards the freedom Judah felt to worship sun gods.

1Ch 18:8 From Tibhath and from Cun, cities of Hadadezer, David took very much brass, with which Solomon made the bronze laver, the pillars and the vessels of brass-

2 Sam. 8:8 "From Betah". LXX Tebah, a son of Nahor the Syrian (Gen. 22:24). As discussed on :7, these were likely brass [better, 'copper'] idols or idol paraphernalia which he would have been better destroying.

1Ch 18:9 When Tou king of Hamath heard that David had struck all the army of Hadadezer king of Zobah-

Hamath came under tribute to David (2 Sam. 8:10), and Solomon, ever seeking to re-live the work of his father David, made a point of building forts there (1 Kings 4:24; 2 Chron. 8:4). But this external imitation of the faith and works of his father wasn't the same as real spirituality; and this is a warning to all those raised as believers. For when he finally individuated as his own man, Solomon had no faith in Yahweh and turned to idols

1Ch 18:10 he sent Hadoram his son to king David to greet him and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and struck him (for Hadadezer had wars with Tou); and he had with him all kinds of vessels of gold and silver and brass-

These vessels were devoted to God's service by David and then Solomon dedicated them to the temple (1 Kings 7:51). The same phrase "of silver, and vessels of gold, and vessels of brass" is used of the vessels taken from Egypt and dedicated to the tabernacle (Ex. 11:2; 12:35; Josh. 6:19; 2 Sam. 8:10; 1 Kings 7:51). The generosity of others in Biblical history, their right perspective on the wealth taken from this world, was to inspire other believers in

later history. And this is how the body of Christ should function today, with members inspiring others to spirituality.

1Ch 18:11 King David also dedicated these to Yahweh, with the silver and the gold that he carried away from all the nations; from Edom, Moab, the children of Ammon, the Philistines and from Amalek-

See on :10. David "subdued" the nations, using the word often used of the command to subdue the nations of Canaan (Num. 32:22,29; Josh. 18:1). He is presented as a second Joshua, subduing the land as it ought to have been subdued, and therefore becoming what Adam ought to have been in Eden (Gen. 1:28 s.w.). This is another indication that the garden of Eden was effectively the *eret* or land promised to Abraham. There is no record of David fighting Amalek again, so the spoil in view may be that taken in 1 Sam. 30:16.

1Ch 18:12 Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah struck of the Edomites in the Valley of Salt eighteen thousand-

2 Sam. 8:13 says that "David made himself a name when he returned from smiting the Syrians in the Valley of Salt, even eighteen thousand men". This demonstrates that a "name" in Hebrew thought is not just a lexical item. David made his name; it involves personal history, character, reputation etc. These are all what the Yahweh Name is all about. This is the reference of 2 Sam. 7:9, indicating that 1 Chron. 17 is actually referring to events after 2 Sam. 8 and is not in chronological sequence. Chronicles has "And Abishai the son of Zeruiah smote Edom in the valley of salt, (to the number of) eighteen thousand men". Perhaps Edom and Syria were confederate; or we should read with LXX, which had "Edom" here rather than "the Syrians". We note that :13 goes on to talk about Edom.

1Ch 18:13 He put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became servants to David. Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went-

This is framed in such terms as to show that Esau / Edom was indeed now subject to Jacob as predicted in (Gen. 27:37-40), and Balaam's prophecy (Num. 24:17,18).

1Ch 18:14 David reigned over all Israel; and he executed justice and righteousness to all his people-

David was motivated in doing this by realizing that this is how Yahweh reigns (Ps. 33:5), and that by doing so he would help live out the spirit of the promises to him, that his throne would be eternally established; for that throne was all about justice and righteousness (Ps. 89:14).

And so David's throne or way of rulership becomes the basis for how his seed, the Lord Jesus, eternally reigns (Is. 9:7; 32:1; Jer. 23:5,6).

1Ch 18:15 Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder-

The men who had been faithful to David during his long wilderness years, when he seemed a lost cause with Saul certain to win against him (1 Sam. 27:1), were the very ones who were the rulers in his kingdom. Despite the very evident weaknesses of men like Joab. And in the type this looks ahead to we who shall be king-priests in the Lord's eternal kingdom (Rev. 5:10), having been loyal to Him and His cause in these apparently hopeless wilderness years.

1Ch 18:16 Zadok son of Ahitub and Abimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Shavsha was scribe-

We notice that no high priest is nominated. David effectively acted as the high priest; see on :17. The "scribe" or historian was a senior advisor in the Hebrew court (2 Sam. 8:17; 2 Kings 18:18,37; 2 Chron. 34:8) because of the huge value attached to history in the Hebrew mind,

and as reflected in the Bible being largely history. Advice on how to act was to be based upon historical, or as we would now say, "Biblical", precedent.

1Ch 18:17 Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David were chief around the king-

2 Sam. 8:18 has "David's sons were chief ministers". David knew God well enough to act like the High Priest even when he was not a Levite (:17; 2 Sam. 6:13-20; and 2 Sam. 19:21 = Ex.22:28), he came to understand that God did not require sacrifices, he came to see that the Law was only a means to an end. David's sons, although not Levites, were "priests" (2 Sam. 8:18 RV). He could say that the Lord was his inheritance [a reference to how he as the youngest son had lost his?], and how he refuses to offer the sacrifices of wicked men for them (Ps. 16:4,5; 119:57)- speaking as if he was a Levite, a priest, when he was not.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 19

1Ch 19:1 It happened after this, that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his place-

"After this" can signal a change of subject rather than being chronologically significant. The same phrase is used in 1 Chron. 18:1, although the preceding chapter refers to events after and not before that time.

1Ch 19:2 David said, I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me. So David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father.

David's servants came into the land of the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him-

This continues the theme discussed on 2 Sam. 9:1, where the same phrase is used. David was proactively seeking to show grace to all and sundry. It was as if he was looking for an excuse to show grace by saying that Nahash king of the Ammonites had been kind to David; for Saul and David had had conflict with them (2 Sam. 8:12). But he fails to maintain that intensity; for when his grace is now abused, he reacts very harshly. Whereas when he abused God's grace, e.g. over Bathsheba, God was gentle with him. We note that he likewise shows grace to Shimei, and then finally asks Solomon to ensure that Shimei is slain. It is one thing to show grace or forgiveness in a moment, but to maintain that position long term, or when it is abused and rejected, is far harder. But that is what imitating God's grace is all about it.

1Ch 19:3 But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, Do you think that David honours your father, in that he has sent comforters to you? Haven't his servants come to you to search, to overthrow, and to spy out the land?-

Again, as with Mephibosheth's struggle to believe David's grace, these men couldn't believe David's grace, just as struggle to believe that of the Lord Jesus. Their logic is presented here as being exactly that of Joab in his angry, suspicious interpretation of Abner's visit to David (2 Sam. 3:24,25). Joab was wrong in his interpretation, and so were these princes. It is quite a theme of the historical records that kings are badly advised by their courtiers. We think also of Rehoboam's advisers. Perhaps this is to highlight how the only true interpretation of events and advice for action comes from God and not men.

David sent messengers to Nabal meaning well to him, and they were rudely rebuffed, resulting in his anger which only Abigail's grace and wisdom saved him from (1 Sam. 25). And yet the same situation repeated in its essence when he sent messengers to Hanun who were likewise misinterpreted and rebuffed (2 Sam. 10:3). Again, David got angry- but there was no Abigail to restrain him, and he did get into an impossible fight... from which by grace

God delivered him. Could it not be that David failed to learn from his previous experience...? Circumstances repeat within our lives and between our lives and those of others in Biblical history; that we might learn the lessons and take comfort from the scriptures, that man is not alone.

1Ch 19:4 So Hanun took David's servants, shaved them, cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away-

2 Sam. 10:4 says that half their beards were shaved. Having a beard was then seen as a sign of being a free man; to have a half shaved beard was a sign of servanthood. Doing this was a direct provocation and effective declaration of war, claiming the Hebrews were their servants.

1Ch 19:5 Then there went certain persons and told David how the men were served. He sent to meet them; for the men were greatly ashamed. The king said, Stay at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return-

We note David's ability to be very sensitive to the situation of others. And yet the same man shed blood abundantly, took no care for the feelings of Michal and Paltiel when he split their marriage up, let alone cared for Uriah... And yet this is the strange mixture of spirituality and unspirituality which we experience in ourselves and in others all the time.

1Ch 19:6 When the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent one thousand talents of silver to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Arammaacah, and out of Zobah-

For "thousand" see on 1 Chron. 18:4. This fearsome confederacy was all part of God's purpose, for the subsequent victories resulted in these smaller kings becoming subservient to David (see on 2 Sam. 10:19). And this is how God uses our worst crises, ultimately towards our blessing. 2 Sam. 23:36 speaks of a Syrian man from Zobah being one of David's loyalest men. Igal would have been a Syrian from Zobah, perhaps one of the soldiers who fought against David (2 Sam. 10:6) and then converted to him. The Gittites who followed David were likewise Philistines from Gath who were once his enemies but converted to his God, and devoted themselves zealously to Him. This is an incredible witness to the power of Yahweh to convert, because such willing defections of individuals to the people and God of their enemies, and being zealously committed to Him, was unheard of in their society.

1Ch 19:7 So they hired for themselves thirty-two thousand chariots, and the king of Maacah and his people, who came and encamped before Medeba. The children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle-

Numbers 32 describes how Reuben and Gad didn't want to venture West of Jordan, but wished to just wave goodbye to their brethren and settle on the land which looked good for their cattle on the East banks of Jordan. They asked permission to make booths for their cattle and towns for their children. God eventually agreed and made a compromise with them- but He repeats their words back to them in a different order. They were to make towns for their children, and booths for their cattle (Num. 32:16 cp. 24). Their order was cattle and kids; God's desire was kids then cattle. And time and again one sees the same nexus of thought playing itself out- people put their cattle, their materialism, before their children. And God wants it the other way around. Working mothers, late working fathers, kids in day care from babyhood- all so the family can live here and not there, have this car rather than that one, holiday here rather than stay at home, have the latest toys and gadgets... all, of course, in the name of 'for the sake of the kids'; when it's actually cattle before kids. Interestingly, the names of the towns which Reuben and Gad built, the territory they so desired, only occur in later Scripture in the context of their being part of Gentile territories (Is. 15:4; 16:8-9; Jer.

48:2, 45; 1 Chron. 19:7). So they never ultimately kept hold of that for which they sacrificed the promised inheritance of Canaan. God in His total love and grace was willing to go along with their weakness- He compromised, as it were, by saying they could have that coveted territory if they helped their brethren totally inherit their possessions West of Jordan. Ultimately this never happened, as not all the Canaanite territory was possessed; yet still God allowed Reuben and Gad to have their part of the deal which they never fully kept. And there's great grace in the way that Dt. 3:19 records God saying to them at this time: "I know that you have much cattle". God knew their weakness. He knew they'd never even seen the wonders of the promised land, which was far more fertile than the land East of Jordan. But He went along with them, so much did He thirst for relationship with them. And so it is with our cattle-before-kids materialism. God may not cast us off because of it in itself. His grace and love is too strong for that. But by permitting us the compromise, we find ourselves in a far harder situation and a path which long term won't lead to permanent inheritance of the promised land, just as it didn't for Reuben and Gad.

1Ch 19:8 When David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the army of the mighty men-
We wonder why David didn't go himself, although he does personally lead the army to the even greater battle with the Syrians which this one provoked. Perhaps this is to prepare us for the statement in 2 Sam. 11:1 that David's remaining in Jerusalem led to his sin with Bathsheba. And we wonder whether that relationship had not already started at this time, with Uriah away at the front so much.

1Ch 19:9 The children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the gate of the city. The kings who had come were by themselves in the field-

2 Sam. 10:8 adds: "The children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array at the entrance of the gate: and the Syrians of Zobah and of Rehob, and the men of Tob and Maacah, were by themselves in the field". "By themselves" could mean that they had planned to combine with the Ammonite forces at Medeba (1 Chron. 19:7), about 20 miles from Rabbah of the Ammonites. It seems Joab marched at top speed to engage with them before the Ammonites and Syrians met up with each other as one large force. The Ammonites assembled their battle lines at the entrance to Rabbah, but it seems they didn't engage with the Israelites. They were waiting for the Syrians to arrive and combine their forces. When Joab makes the Syrians flee, the Ammonites fled back into their city gate.

1Ch 19:10 Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him before and behind, he chose of all the choice men of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians-
He saw the Syrians as a greater strength than the Ammonites. He placed himself between the two armies before they had time to join up with each other. This meant the Israelites would be sandwiched between them. It was a daring but dangerous move, which could easily have led to the annihilation of the entire Israelite army.

1Ch 19:11 The rest of the people he committed into the hand of Abishai his brother; and they put themselves in array against the children of Ammon-

That Joab took the most dangerous part of the engagement speaks much of his bravery. But as we will note on :13, bravery and passing mention of God are not the same as faith and true wisdom.

1Ch 19:12 He said-

The idea is, that he planned or thought. The Bible continually stresses that the thought is the word spoken. And the essence of Biblical spirituality is upon the heart, the thinking.

If the Syrians are too strong for me, then you are to help me; but if the children of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will help you-

This is playing on the name "Hadadezer" (:16), which means 'Helped ['ezer] by Hadad', the sun god. We might have preferred to see Joab alluding to Yahweh being their help; but instead he thinks of help in terms of human strength.

1Ch 19:13 Be courageous, and let us be strong for our people, and for the cities of our God. May Yahweh do that which seems good to Him-

As explained on :10, this was a very daring maneuver by Joab. We wonder whether he had real faith in Yahweh, or whether his words here express fatalism rather than faith. There is a significant difference, and often what appears to be faith can be mere fatalism.

We ask ourselves whether this was faith or fatalism. Joseph held no grudge against his brethren, and would not be vindictive to them, because he understood something of predestination: "You *meant* evil against me; but God *meant* it for good" (Gen. 50:20). And because he understood that God's good intentions were worked out through the evil intentions of others, Joseph was content to leave all in God's hands, and on *this basis* he assures his brothers that given his understanding of this 'predestination', he wouldn't hit back at them for what they'd done to him. The Lord spoke of the coming of His 'hour' of death as if it were somehow predestined of the Father. But His appreciation of this didn't lead to a mere fatalism, but rather to a heightened sense of the importance of obedience, of playing His part in the Father's drama to the best of His ability (Jn. 7:6,8; 12:23,27). Joab likewise may have had the same understanding, and this bred not fatalism but rather a zealous attempt to fight for the Lord, which God blessed with victory.

1Ch 19:14 So Joab and the people who were with him drew near before the Syrians to the battle; and they fled before him-

So often the Israelite victories were humanly speaking achieved by surprise attack from an unexpected angle, using unexpected and unusual tactics. It could be that this was due to Divine guidance, telling them to do what was unusual and against secular wisdom. For this is always God's path to victory, thereby demonstrating that victory and success are of His grace rather than human strength.

1Ch 19:15 When the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians had fled, they likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem-

We get the impression that Abishai didn't attack the Ammonites; the Syrians fled when Joab attacked them, and the Ammonites withdrew into Rabbah when they saw that.

1Ch 19:16 When the Syrians saw that they were defeated by Israel, they sent messengers, and drew forth the Syrians who were beyond the River, with Shophach the captain of the army of Hadadezer at their head-

They were mercenaries, and the fact they had failed to achieve what Ammon hoped for didn't require them to fight again. They did so, it seems, because of wounded pride. And this again (as noted on :13) is a feature of God's amazing victories. The pride of Gentile armies is brought down by smaller armies of Israelites using unusual, unexpected tactics because they were guided by Yahweh. Always pride is presented as the great weakness of man. To gather soldiers from beyond the river Euphrates was a huge effort; and now the best general, as they thought, was placed over them. And it all arose from hurt pride and the desire by all means to defeat Israel in vengeance for Joab and his small army putting their army to flight previously, when they had been paid money to defeat Israel.

1Ch 19:17 It was told David; and he gathered all Israel together, passed over the Jordan and came on them, and set the battle in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him-

The parallel is drawn between the Syrians coming from the other side of the Euphrates (:16) led by Shobach, and David and his men coming from the other side of the Jordan.

1Ch 19:18 The Syrians fled before Israel; and David killed of the Syrians seven thousand charioteers, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the army-

There are apparently different numbers given in 2 Sam. 8:4; 10:18 and 1 Chron. 19:18. I see no real problem here once we appreciate that the Hebrew word "thousand" used when giving numbers like this rarely means 1,000 as a number. It is also translated regiment, brigade, family, squadron etc. And to Israelites looking at the Syrian army, it could be described in various ways. There many regiments, families, groups, squadrons, but these subdivisions of an ancient army are all called a "thousand". Depending how one looks at the army and its subdivisions. A modern army would be subdivided into two to four corps, a corps has at least two divisions or legions, a division has two four brigades or regiments, a brigade has two or more regiments, a regiment has two or more battalions, a battalion has a number of companies, a company has a number of platoons, a platoon has a number of squads or fire teams. The problem is that the Hebrew Bible uses the same word for all such military subdivisions, and it is translated "thousand" in many Bibles. Hence the apparently contradictory numbers.

1Ch 19:19 When the servants of Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David, and served him. From then on, the Syrians would not help the children of Ammon-

This meant that the smaller kings like Tob, Rehob and Maacah now paid tribute to David rather than to Hadadezer.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 20

1Ch 20:1 At the time of the return of the year, at the time when kings go out, Joab led forth the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem-

The record, typical of Chronicles, doesn't record the shameful incident of David sinning with Bathsheba as a result of remaining in Jerusalem. This is the classic example of the devil finding work for idle hands; in 1 Chron. 19:8 David had already skipped one battle in this campaign. His remaining in Jerusalem was the set up for David's sin with Bathsheba. That he was lying down on his bed in the late afternoon rather than working would exemplify the same thing. He appears to recognize his attitude problem in Ps. 30:6: "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be (spiritually) moved". In the lead up to the sin, God had given him victory after victory- leading him to think that he must therefore be spiritually OK because of his many physical blessings (1 Chron. 18:6 RV). His conscience had been blunted. David may have cleverly alluded to this when he comments that the ark was abiding in a *tent*, and therefore he would not go down to his *house* (2 Sam. 11:11). The tension between a tent and a house is surely intended to take David back to his words in 2 Sam. 7:2, where he laments as unacceptable the fact that he lives in a *house* but the ark is in a *tent*. And David was 'tarrying', living in a settled way, in a house in Jerusalem now.

David stayed [AV "tarried"] at Jerusalem. This uses a Hebrew word which does not mean to wait, but rather to permanently dwell. It is also translated 'to marry'. The next verse continues "And it came to pass...", indicating that his permanent residence at Jerusalem was connected with his sin. Are we to infer that David remained at Jerusalem because of his relationship with Bathsheba? Even though they had probably got nowhere near consummating it, subconsciously this was behind David's motive in remaining. The word for "tarried" being the same for 'marriage' could imply that David was still actively married to his other wives who were there in Jerusalem.

Joab struck Rabbah and overthrew it-

How the citadel fell is explained in 2 Sam. 12:27. I suggest that 2 Samuel is thematic rather than chronological. This really picks up from 2 Sam. 10, where Syrian support for Rabbah had been cut off, and Rabbah was besieged by Joab. It is unlikely that the siege could have been maintained for a year or so. I suggest therefore that what we read of here happened some time after the sin with Bathsheba, and before David's repentance. The harsh treatment of the captives and proud taking of the crown David hadn't fought for... is all the kind of behaviour to be associated with a man in bad conscience before God.

This may be alluded to in Prov. 16:32: "One who is slow to anger is better than the mighty; one who rules his spirit, than he who takes a city". This may refer to the hot headed anger of Joab and the "sons of Zeruiah", who had opposed Solomon and sought the throne for themselves towards the end of David's life. It was Joab who had taken the citadel of Zion and also the city of Rabbah, but this is dismissed by Solomon as cancelled out, as it were, by his hot headed lack of mental self control.

1Ch 20:2 David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there were precious stones in it; and it was set on David's head; and he brought forth the spoil of the city, a great amount-

As explained on Ps. 20:1; 21:1, Psalms 20 and 21 appear to be David's prayers before going into battle against Ammon, and Psalm 21 is his thanksgiving for the victory. The setting of the gold crown upon his head is specifically referenced in Ps. 21:3. This however was straight after his sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:30). So David's joy in God's salvation expressed in those Psalms was due to his sense that God had given him this victory by grace when he himself was a sinner. His thanks for giving him eternal life when he put the crown upon him (Ps. 21:4) was therefore in the sense that he believed that despite his sin, he would be eternally saved, and he saw the victory against Ammon as a foretaste of that.

But another take is possible. Soon after the sin with Bathsheba, but before David's repentance (see on 2 Sam. 12:26), David went to join Joab in the battle for Rabbah- perhaps to give an impression of zeal to Bathsheba and the rest of his people. 'If brave Uriah died there, why, I'm not afraid to be with the boys on the front line either'. After the victory, David proudly placed the crown of Rabbah's king on his own head, pillaging the spoil of the city rather than burning it, and then cruelly tortured the Ammonites; "he (David personally) brought out the people... and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes" (2 Chron. 20:2,3). How true it is that one sin leads to another. David's own bad conscience with God led him into this fit of bitterness, in which he so needlessly tortured people who at the most only warranted a quick death. One is left to imagine him making a great deal of how he was doing this in vengeance for the death of Uriah. Whenever we detect unreasonable behaviour, pride, materialism or bitterness within our own lives, we need to ask to what degree this is related to our own lack of good conscience with God.

The extent of David's fall at this time may be indicated by the way he crowns himself with the 70 pound gold crown of the Ammonite state god Milcom. Whilst retaining his

allegiance to Yahweh, this personal association with a pagan god seems inappropriate. See on 2 Sam. 12:26.

1Ch 20:3 He brought forth the people who were therein, and cut them with saws, and with iron picks, and with axes. David did so to all the cities of the children of Ammon. David and all the people returned to Jerusalem-

See on 2 Sam. 12:26. This harsh torture and judgment of others is of the same nature as his harsh judgment of the person in Nabal's parable, demanding the death sentence for a man whom the law of Moses didn't punish with death for what he did. This is a classic case of transference. David is subconsciously transferring his sin and guilt onto others, and then punishing them heavily. This kind of psychological credibility of the narrative encourages us in our faith that it is indeed the inspired word of God.

It's one thing to obey Divine commands about slaying enemies; it's another to willfully torture them, Auschwitz-style. It was the same cruelty he showed in 2 Sam. 8:2. These incidents reveal David at his worst. And again- did he really have to ensure that every male in Edom was murdered (1 Kings 11:15,16)- was that really necessary? What about the mums, wives, sisters left weeping, and the fatherless daughters, left to grow up in the dysfunction of a leaderless Middle Eastern home? Those men were all somebody's sons, brothers, fathers, grandfathers. Was David really obeying some Divine command here, or was this the dictate of his own anger and dysfunctional bloodlust? We get the impression this was another example of his wrong attitude to the shedding of blood (1 Chron. 22:8).

1Ch 20:4 After this, there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines. Then Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Sippai, of the sons of the giant; and they were subdued-

We note that the *rephaim* had children like other human beings (2 Sam. 21:16,18; Dt. 3:11), inhabiting an area known as the valley of Rephaim (Josh. 15:8). The "giants" of Gen. 6:2-4 were therefore humans and not celestial beings. Gezer or "Gob" (2 Sam. 21:18) is LXX Gath; see on :6 for the significance.

1Ch 20:5 There was again war with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam-

Elhanan was from the small village of Bethlehem, and therefore was likely a childhood friend of David's. He like us with the Lord Jesus was inspired by David's victory over Goliath. He saw what was potentially possible for man in faith, just as we are shown through the Lord's victory on the cross what is possible for men apparently saddled with human nature.

1Ch 20:6 There was again war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were twenty-four, six on each hand, and six on each foot; and he also was born to the giant-

David fought the Philistines at Gath (see on :4), and yet we note that he lived with Achish at Gath for over a year, and some of his most loyal followers were Philistines from Gath like Ittai. His victories over them therefore elicited humility and faith from some of the Philistines there. They realized that David and his men won their victories not in their own strength, but because of Yahweh. And they humbly came into covenant relationship with the God of their enemies, and fellowship with their one time enemies and murderers of their friends and families. It is humility which is the critical requirement in coming to the true God, and no amount of apparently high powered intellectual argument and slick presentation can replace that.

1Ch 20:7 When he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea David's brother killed him-

Goliath's defiance of Israel is a major theme (1 Sam. 17:10,25,26,36,45). Later Philistine defiance is described with the same word (2 Sam. 21:21; 23:9). David's victory over Goliath was inspirational to other Israelites, just as the Lord's triumph on the cross should be to us. Jonathan was brother to the crafty Jonadab, who led Absalom into major sin by his subliminal suggestions. We see how faith and unbelief can exist within the same family.

1Ch 20:8 These were born to the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants-

David took five stones to kill Goliath but used only one. Was he faithless and doubting that the first one would hit home? Or did he aim to use the other four on Goliath's four giant sons (2 Sam. 21:16-22)? Do those five stones represent the five books of Moses which Ps. 119 tells us was Christ's study all the day, it being through the word that Jesus overcame the mind of sin? If he did aim to use the other four on Goliath's four giant sons, that shows supreme spiritual ambition. In reality those four were killed later by David's closest followers- and they must have their counterparts amongst us.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 21

1Ch 21:1 Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel- 2 Sam. 24:1 says that this happened because Yahweh was angry with Israel. This common phrase is typically used of God's anger with Israel for idolatry, which was clearly a problem amongst them even at David's time. He didn't want to punish them. The census gave them the opportunity to pay a half shekel each for "atonement money" (Ex. 30:12-15), lest they be struck with plague. It seems God worked through David's fear of an invasion or forthcoming battle with a 'satan' / adversary, so that he took a census and the people had the chance to pay that atonement money in loyalty to Yahweh. But they didn't- and so they were struck with plague. David's feeling of guilt over the matter is understandable, but I will argue later that it was more a case of false guilt.

The books of Samuel and Chronicles are parallel accounts of the same incidents, as the four gospels are records of the same events but using different language. 2 Sam. 24:1 records: "The Lord... moved David against Israel" in order to make him take a census of Israel. The parallel account in 1 Chron. 21:1 says that "Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David" to take the census. In one passage God does the 'moving', in the other Satan does it. The only conclusion is that God acted as a 'Satan' or adversary to David. He did the same to Job by bringing trials into his life, so that Job said about God: "With the strength of Your hand You oppose me" (Job 30:21); 'You are acting as a Satan against me', was what Job was basically saying. Or again, speaking of God: "I must appeal for mercy to my accuser (Satan)" (Job 9:15 NRSV). The idea is sometimes used to describe our greatest adversary, i.e. our own sin, and at times for whole systems or empires which stand opposed to the people of God and personify sinfulness and evil. But it seems obvious that it is a bizarre approach to Bible reading to insist that whenever we meet these words 'Satan' and 'Devil', we are to understand them as references to a personal, supernatural being.

Perhaps the satan which moved David to number Israel was a Satan-Angel, as in the case of the righteous Angel involved with Balaam, acting as a satan / adversary, and with Job. The parallel with Balaam is that God sent a Satan-Angel against him because His anger was kindled against Balaam (Num. 22:22, the same phrase as in :1). The Angel may have acted directly on David's heart to bring about a trial for both

David and Israel. This is one of the many indications that the numbering of the people was not David's sin. See on :10. But the adversaries to David and Israel were at that point the surrounding nations. Even if an Angel was involved, the immediate 'satan' would have been an approaching enemy army; and David wanted to know how many men he had to fight off that invasion. Or it could have been an extension of the gathering of troops made at the time of 2 Sam. 20:4, when David wanted to know how many soldiers he could really count on after Absalom's rebellion.

1Ch 21:2 David said to Joab and to the princes of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring me word, so that I may know the sum of them-
The list of David's mighty men just given in 2 Sam. 23 included men literally from Dan to Beersheba. I suggested on :1 that the occasion of this census may have been when David wanted to know how many soldiers he could really count on after Absalom's rebellion. It's possible that although out of chronological sequence, the catalogue of mighty men in 2 Sam. 23 was the result of this census. This would explain Joab's comment in 1 Chron. 21:3 "Are they not all my Lord's servants?", as if to say 'Loyalty to you is not in question, taking a census won't prove loyalty to you'.

1Ch 21:3 Joab said, May Yahweh make His people a hundred times as many as they are; but, my lord the king, aren't they all my lord's servants? Why does my lord require this thing? Why will he be a cause of guilt for Israel?-

Joab is alluding to Dt. 1:11. For all his unspirituality, he did also have a spiritual side. He was not unaware of the scriptures, and seemed to want to do what was genuinely best for Israel. Men with deeply mixed motives is quite a theme of the Bible's historical records; and that is because they are true to life. For that is how people are.

The numbering of Israel was another weak moment for David (note 2 Sam. 24:3,4,10), leading to suffering for others. Yet this same David had written that "there is no king saved by the multitude of an host" (Ps. 33:16). Perhaps this was an expression of repentance after this incident; or, if written before it, an example of David being over confident of his faith. "Why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?" (1 Chron. 21:3 AV) suggests Joab suspected the people would not pay the half shekel required when a census was taken, and so would be led into sin. Although it was their fault, the situation was provoked by God Himself provoking David to take the census, because His anger was kindled against Israel (:1). This would then be an example of God confirming a sinful people in the way they wished to go.

1Ch 21:4 Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. Therefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem-

2 Sam. 24:4 "and against the captains of the army". The army captains likewise agreed with Joab that the census was not a good idea. This incident is at a time when David's word prevails against Joab and the generals, and we get the impression that this would not have happened after his sin with Bathsheba, after which Joab speaks and acts towards David in a belligerent manner. So the incident may be not in chronological order; indeed none of the cameos of Davidic history at the end of 2 Samuel are in chronological order.

1Ch 21:5 Joab gave up the sum of the numbering of the people to David. All those of Israel were one million one hundred thousand men who drew sword; and in Judah were four hundred and seventy thousand men who drew sword-

According to 1 Chron. 21:5, there were 1,100,000 "men that drew sword" in Israel.

According to 2 Sam. 24:9, there were 800,000 “valiant men” in Israel, according to the same census. There is no contradiction- rather the Samuel record is perceiving that there was a higher level of commitment, as. There were the enthusiasts, and those who merely could draw a sword. They were all living on different levels.

The numbers are also difficult because the Hebrew word for "thousand" need not mean a literal 1,000, but it is at time used to refer to a military subdivision. And it can have different definitions in some areas and at some times and by some writers. That is likely the reason for the difference between the numbers presented in Samuel and Chronicles, rather than textual corruption. If taken literally, the numbers are unrealistic; nearly 2 million soldiers (according to Chronicles) in the combined kingdom would imply a huge total population. Even if there were six million population in the territory they then inhabited (about 11,000 square miles), this would give an average population density of 600 / square mile. It seems really doubtful that the country could have supported this.

"Drew the sword" is the same phrase used in 1 Chron. 21:16 of how the destroying Angel had a drawn sword in his hand. The idea seems to be that God's Angelic power was more than a match for thousands of Israelites with their drawn swords. This would be an argument in favour of the idea that David did indeed sin at this time by trusting in his own swords, although the greater sin appears to have been with the people.

1Ch 21:6 But he didn't count Levi and Benjamin among them for the king's word was abominable to Joab-

Perhaps Joab reasoned that the Levites were not numbered as they were exempt from military service (Num. 1:47). But that was just a cover for the fact he didn't want to obey the king's word, because he knew Israel would not pay the required temple tax and there would be plague because of it. And Benjamin, the tribe of Saul, were perhaps particularly opposed to being numbered by David.

1Ch 21:7 God was displeased with this thing; therefore He struck Israel-

Israel were struck as promised in the law, because they refused to pay the temple tax when they were numbered. We note therefore that God's anger was with Israel rather than David, who took false guilt in this matter.

1Ch 21:8 David said to God, I have sinned greatly, in that I have done this thing. But now, put away, I beg You, the iniquity of Your servant; for I have done very foolishly-

The response is similar to that to the sin with Bathsheba, again before a prophet. Balaam also said the same words (Num. 22:34), and again we find an Angel 'standing'. Although David did take false guilt, it seems there was some element of real failure. The allusion is to the foolishness of Saul (1 Sam. 13:13). He feels he is no better than Saul for his trust in human strength; see on :14. 1 Chron. 21:6,7 says that David's "word" of command of the census was "abominable" to Joab, and also God was "displeased" with "this thing", the same Hebrew translated "word". Unless this refers to His displeasure with Joab for despising David's word. Yahweh had likewise been "displeased" with David in the matter of Uriah (2 Sam. 11:27 s.w.). But although David's lack of faith wasn't good, it seems to me on balance that he was largely taking false guilt. Perhaps we are to read that God was displeased with Israel's lack of response to the word of command about the census, seeing Israel didn't pay the half shekel required at the time. Indeed David's trust in human numbers would not have been pleasing to God, it was a slip backwards. But we wonder whether he took false

guilt in this matter. For it was allowable to take a census of Israel, although there was to be a half shekel tax paid at the time, which if not paid would result in plague (Ex. 30:12-15). Joab perhaps guessed that those numbered would not pay this and therefore the census would lead Israel into sin. This is why God chose the punishment of plague; not upon David, but upon Israel. Yet David perhaps realized all that, but knew that his lack of faith in wanting a census, his lack of consideration for the weakness of others, would lead them into sin and punishment. And therefore he felt guilty. It could be argued that his sacrifice atoned for himself and for the people, but they still suffered for not having paid the required "atonement money". But then we must balance against this the comment that "David had done that which was right in the eyes of Yahweh, and didn't turn aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite" (1 Kings 15:5). No mention is made of the matter of the census. There is true guilt, the guilt we should take for our actual sins; and false guilt, the guilt put on us by others and the malfunctioning of the human conscience. In this matter of David's guilt about the census, we may have an example of a man taking false guilt. The fact Israel and not David were punished with plague would rather confirm this. It may be impossible for us to sort out within us what is true guilt or false guilt, at least not be any intellectual process. But we can rest assured that all our guilt, of whatever kind, is met in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, the ultimate guilt offering.

1Ch 21:9 Yahweh spoke to Gad, David's prophet, saying-
Gad was to write his record of these things (1 Chron. 29:29), so maybe his record has been incorporated here.

1Ch 21:10 Go and speak to David saying, 'Thus says Yahweh, I offer you three things. Choose one of them, that I may do it to you' -

When given a choice, Ahaz declined to choose, and was condemned for it (Is. 7:11). David declines to choose, because he preferred to fall into God's hands of grace than decide himself; and is not condemned. The same actions can be committed with different motives, and therefore only God can judge. But the invitation to "choose one of them" was for David's education, to elicit his reflection as to whether it was appropriate that he were punished, or the people; or he be punished along with the people. God's choice of plague was in accordance with the teaching of Ex. 30:12-15, that if Israel didn't pay the atonement money at the time of a census, they would be punished with plague.

1Ch 21:11 So Gad came to David and said to him, Thus says Yahweh, 'Take your choice-

Although David was innocent, I suggest he was given the choices in order to develop his own self examination over the matter. Thus as king, famine would not have hurt David personally. He was asked to consider whether this was appropriate.

1Ch 21:12 either three years of famine; or three months to be consumed before your foes, while the sword of your enemies overtakes you; or else three days' suffering the sword of Yahweh, even plague in the land, and the angel of Yahweh destroying throughout all the borders of Israel'. Now therefore consider what answer I shall return to Him who sent me-

Famine, war and plague are the three Divine judgments listed in Ez. 14:21 as coming upon Jerusalem at the time of the exile. David had already experienced war and

famine (because of the Gibeonites, 2 Sam. 21). Now he was to experience plague. The lesson to the exiles was that these judgments had indeed come because of sin, but the experience of them could be cut short by intense prayer and repentance after the pattern of David. For Yahweh "relented" of the three days plague because of David's prayer and sacrifice. We see here the open ended nature of His purpose.

1Ch 21:13 David said to Gad, I am in distress-

The phrase is that used of Saul's great distress on the night of his final condemnation (1 Sam. 28:15). David felt he had been foolish as Saul had been (2 Sam. 24:10 = 1 Sam. 13:13). David had replaced Saul because of Saul's apostasy, but he was being made to realize through this experience (even if it was all false guilt), that he too was a sinner and saved by his acceptance of grace, and not because he was intrinsically better than Saul.

Let me fall, I pray, into the hand of Yahweh; for His mercies are very great. Let me not fall into the hand of man-

David appealed to God's mercy in the matter of Bathsheba (Ps. 51:1). Perhaps he learned from that, and chose to throw himself upon that same mercy. But the exact timing of this incident isn't clear. Perhaps it was because of learning about God's grace through this incident that he later learned to throw himself upon God's great mercy when he sinned with Bathsheba and against Uriah. David's experience of God's grace stayed with him when he faced up to the results of his errors in the future. From experience, he can ask to fall into the Lord's hand rather than man's, because "His *mercies* are *great*"- using the same two Hebrew words he had used when Nathan came to him in Ps. 51:1: "Have mercy upon me... according unto the *multitude* [Heb. 'greatness'] of thy *tender mercies*". And so the experience of God's gracious mercy over one sin fortifies us to believe in His grace when, sadly, we fall again; although, in passing, I think that here David himself didn't really do so much wrong. Yet he perceived himself to have sinned, so the point is still established.

Truly David is our example. David was very much involved in Israel his people. He saw himself as their representative. "The God of my rock is *my* shield... he is a shield to *all* them that trust in him" (2 Sam. 22:3,31). "*I am in a great strait; let us fall now into the hand of the Lord*" (2 Sam. 24:14) reflects this. When he sung Psalms, he invited them to come and sing along with him (Ps. 105:2; 107:22; 111:1). And many of these Psalms of praise seem to have their origin in his experience of forgiveness regarding Bathsheba. The Lord based His parables of the lost sheep and the man finding the treasure of the Gospel in a field on the statements of David (Ps. 119:162,176), as if He saw David as representative of all those who would truly come to Him. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven" (Ps. 32:1), David wrote, after experiencing God's mercy in the matter of Bathsheba. But Paul sees this verse as David describing "the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Rom. 4:6). Each of us are in need of a like justification; therefore we find ourselves in David's position.

God is kinder than men. It's better to be punished by Him than by men. This puts paid to the Catholic conception of God as a merciless torturer of wicked men. Clearly the doctrine of eternal torments was invented by men, not God.

1Ch 21:14 So Yahweh sent a plague on Israel; and seventy thousand men of Israel fell-

2 Sam 24:15 adds: "So Yahweh sent a plague on Israel from the morning even to the appointed time; and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy

thousand men".

"The appointed time" could refer to the time of the evening sacrifice, which David was to offer on Araunah's property and not at the sanctuary. Or the idea may be that there was an "appointed time" of suffering but it was not defined, because it was open ended- the terminus depended upon the intensity of David's prayers and sacrifice. The three day period of plague was changed because "Yahweh relented" (:15)- because of David's prayer shortening the stipulated time period. This is why there can be no prescriptive chronology of events in the last days, nor date set for the Lord's return. The appointed time is variable, depending upon factors such as human prayer, repentance and taking the Gospel to all the world.

LXX "So David chose for himself the mortality: and they were the days of wheat-harvest; and the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel from morning till noon, and the plague began among the people".

1Ch 21:15 God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. As he was about to destroy, Yahweh saw, and He relented of the disaster, and said to the destroying angel, It is enough; now stay your hand. The angel of Yahweh was standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite-

This could imply that Ornan's area was about to be destroyed. But it seems we have here an example of the summary being made, and then we read how that came about. Perhaps David was in Jerusalem, maybe praying at the sanctuary, and saw the Angel standing over the nearby hill of Jebus or Moriah. His prayer and obedient, urgent sacrifice then stopped the Angel right there. The Angel "stood" by the threshing floor (1 Chron. 21:15 AV), as if the Angel's path of destruction was stopped right there by the sacrifice offered in that place.

The encouragement for the later generation of Jews was that the evil planned upon Jerusalem could be relented from; if there was genuine repentance. God's hand here was "stayed", but the encouragement was that God would not "stay" His hand in His program of redemption; the same word is often translated "fail" in the assurance that God will not fail His people in ultimately restoring them.

This "destroying Angel" is surely "the destroyer" who operated in the wilderness. We see here one Angel having the ability to formulate a purpose and another blindly carrying it out until told not to- a scenario which we see repeated elsewhere (e. g. at the Passover and in Ez. 9). It was only David's prayer which lead to "the destroyer" ceasing. Notice how the Angel repented and then encouraged David to offer a sacrifice so the Angel would be "intreated for the land" (2 Sam. 24:19,25). Similarly, the Angel repented of punishing Israel and wanted to restore them, and to enable this to happen He encouraged the people through Ezra to be spiritual. Thus Angelic repentance has to be confirmed by human action.

1Ch 21:16 David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of Yahweh standing between earth and sky, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces- This says that the Angel had a "drawn sword" in hand, the same words used of the Angel before Balaam (Num. 22:23,31). His donkey "turned aside", using the same word for "stretched out" here. The sin of Balaam was connected with idolatry, and I suggested on :1 that this was the reason for God's anger being kindled against Israel. The sin of Balaam has connections with that of Israel, but not particularly with that of David. Again we get the impression the judgments were for the sake of the sins of the

people, the anger of Yahweh was with them, rather than with David for wanting to take a census.

1Ch 21:17 David said to God, Isn't it I who commanded the people to be numbered? It is even I who have sinned and done very wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Please let Your hand, O Yahweh my God, be against me, and against my father's house; but not against Your people, that they should be plagued-

This was effectively asking God to abrogate the promises about his family of 1 Chron. 17. Thanks to David building an altar at his own expense and asking God to kill him and his family, God stopped the plague upon Israel (2 Sam. 24:16,17- the stretched out hand of God in destruction was what David asked to be upon him and his family). Israel were suffering the effect of their own sin, in not paying the temple tax (Ex. 30:11-16); but in the spirit of Christ, David was willing to die for them. And his dominant desire was counted as if it had been done, and thanks to his self-sacrificial spirit, the people were saved when they personally were unworthy. The wrath of God can be turned away by the actions of those He is angry with (Num. 25:4; Dt. 13:15-17; Ezra 10:14; Jonah 3:7,10; 2 Chron. 12:7; Jer. 4:4; 21:12). And yet that wrath can also be turned away by the prayers of a third party (Ps. 106:23; Jer. 18:20; Job 42:7). This means that in some cases, our prayers for others can be counted as if they have repented. We can gain our brother for God's Kingdom (Mt. 18:15), as Noah saved his own house by his faithful preparation (Heb. 11:7). Through *our personal* dying to the flesh, the life of Christ is manifest not only in us, but is made available to others: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you" (2 Cor. 4:10-12). The life that is even now made manifest *in us* is also made available to work in others because death to the flesh has worked in us personally.

1Ch 21:18 Then the angel of Yahweh commanded Gad to tell David that David should go up, and make an altar to Yahweh in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite- 2 Chron. 3:1 implies David assumed that the spot where the Angel appeared to him in 2 Sam. 24:17,18 was where he should build the temple. It is another example of David's tendency to wildly over interpret, which led him to a mistaken obsession about building the temple and assuming Solomon to be his Messianic seed.

1Ch 21:19 David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spoke in the name of Yahweh-

David went along with the elders of Israel (:16), clothed in sackcloth. David is always presented as totally obedient to the prophets in his life (Samuel, Nathan and Gad), unlike Saul who was consistently disobedient to God's word through Samuel.

1Ch 21:20 Ornan turned back-

2 Sam. 24:20 "Araunah looked out", i.e. from the place in the threshing area where he was threshing wheat, where he and his four sons had hidden from the presence of the Angel. The records in Chronicles and Samuel perfectly fit with each other, although clearly focusing upon different elements of the scene; just like the gospel records.

And saw the angel; and his four sons who were with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat-

Chronicles has "saw the Angel". 2 Sam. 24:20 "saw the king". This may reflect the

confusion between malak ["Angel"] and melek ["king"], especially as ancient Hebrew didn't add the vowel points and the consonants of the two words are the same, m-l-k. Or it could be that Ornan saw David and also at the same time saw the Angel behind him in some form.

1Ch 21:21 As David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the threshing floor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground-
Clearly Ornan respected David, even though it seems he was a Gentile Jebusite, whose relatives may have been slain when David and Joab took Jebus at the start of David's reign.

1Ch 21:22 Then David said to Ornan, Give me the place of this threshing floor, that I may build thereon an altar to Yahweh. You shall sell it to me for the full price-
The urgent thing required was sacrifice to God represented by the Angel hovering over the hill where both men were standing, about to slay the people of Jerusalem. We wonder why David firstly asks to buy the threshing floor, as this was a long process which Araunah may have needed to think carefully about as it was his home. Maybe this is a hint that Araunah was not a worshipper of Yahweh and therefore the land must be bought before an offering to another God could be made upon it. There is more evidence for that on :23. Or it may be that David wanted to offer the most genuine sacrifice, which was thought to be offered upon one's own property. He offered to buy the threshing floor "for the full price" (1 Chron. 21:22), the same phrase used of Abraham's purchase of property from the Canaanites in Gen. 23:9. This confirms the impression that Araunah was a Canaanite and not an Israelite.

That the plague may be stopped from afflicting the people-
This is the very phrase of Num. 16:48,50 and Num. 25:8; Ps. 106:30, where the people of Israel suffered from plague because of their idolatry, and Aaron stopped it, standing between the living and the dead. David was in an identical position to Aaron, again acting as the High Priest. And again we have evidence that the essential sin being punished was not David's taking of a census, but Israel's sin (see on :1).

1Ch 21:23 Ornan said to David, Take it for yourself, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes. Behold, I give the oxen for burnt offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meal offering. I give it all-
LXX "and the wheels and furniture of the oxen for wood". "The threshing instruments" may have referred to quite a major and expensive piece of equipment. But Ornan totally senses the urgency of the situation and is willing to offer even this as wood.

1Ch 21:24 King David said to Ornan, No; but I will most certainly buy it for the full price. For I will not take that which is yours for Yahweh, nor offer a burnt offering without cost-

I have suggested that the historical records were in places edited and made relevant for the exiles; and given their mean attitude to offerings in Mal. 1:10,13,14, David's example and principle would have been pertinent. And this is an abiding principle; sacrifice is to be costly, we are to be left "minus", rather than being without cost to us.

1Ch 21:25 So David gave to Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the place-

1 Chron. 21:25 speaks of 600 shekels for "the place", whilst 2 Sam. 24:24 mentions

50 shekels for the threshing floor and oxen. The entire area was later bought, in order to build the temple on that site (1 Chron. 22:1; 2 Chron. 3:1).

1Ch 21:26 David built an altar to Yahweh there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called on Yahweh; and He answered him from the sky by fire on the altar of burnt offering-

Elijah in 1 Kings 18:24 takes the language of God 'answering by fire' from this account of David's intercession for the plagued, sinful people (same Hebrew words). Elijah saw himself as David, interceding to gain the forgiveness of impenitent third parties as a result of his sacrifice. And indeed there was an element of that. And in the final synthesis and unknowable equation of salvation, there is still a great role played by third parties in our salvation. This is just the language of God justifying Himself over Baal at the time of Elijah. I have suggested throughout that the plague was essentially punishment for Israel's idolatry; see on :1.

1Ch 21:27 Yahweh commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into its sheath-

We have here a visual representation of God's sensitivity to human prayer and repentance.

1Ch 21:28 At that time, when David saw that Yahweh had answered him in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there-

Burnt offerings always precede peace offerings (2 Sam. 24:25), because sacrifice is the principle upon which we can have peace with God. But David remained traumatized by the incident, fearing the sword he had seen (1 Chron. 21:30). This was a similar reaction by him to how he feared association with the ark for some period after the slaying of Uzzah (1 Chron. 13:12,13). The similarity in reaction is another indication that the record is true and the character portrayals absolutely consistent, as could only be true of a Divinely inspired record.

1Ch 21:29 For the tabernacle of Yahweh, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering, were at that time in the high place at Gibeon-

The wrong and unsatisfactory nature of having two sanctuaries is commented upon on 1 Chron. 16:40.

1Ch 21:30 But David couldn't go before it to inquire of God; for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of Yahweh-

"Afraid" is the word used of how the evil spirit from Yahweh troubled Saul. We could therefore read this as a slip backwards for David; his wrongful fear of God was confirmed by God. For this is the way He works with His Spirit. I suggested on :28 that this means that David remained traumatized by the incident, fearing the sword he had seen.

There was no revelation from God that the temple must be built there. David assumes that because he saw that the Lord had answered him there, and because he could not go to Gibeon, where the tabernacle was standing, to seek the Lord there, on account of the sword of the angel, i.e., on account of the plague.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 22

1Ch 22:1 Then David said, This is the house of Yahweh God, and this is the altar of burnt offering for Israel-

"Then..." suggests this was David's proclamation of the site he had just bought from Ornan as the only acceptable place for sacrifice. But this was David's own decision. The Law states that sacrifice would be offered at a location Yahweh would choose. David makes that choice for God; there is no word from God stating He had decided upon Jerusalem. David elsewhere claims God chose the place, but clearly it was his choice, and he was trying to railroad God into accepting it. Yet God graciously goes along with this without directly challenging it. His Son was later to teach that it was not in Jerusalem but in the hearts of men, in spirit and truth, that God sought worship. But that was in fact ever the case.

Or we could reason that the certainty of God's foreknowledge is reflected in the sureness of His word. Biblical Hebrew has a 'prophetic perfect' tense, which uses the past tense to describe future things which God has promised. Thus David said, "This *is* the house of the Lord God", when as yet the temple [as David understood it] was only promised by God. Such was his faith in that word of promise that David used the present tense to describe future things. Scripture abounds with examples of God's foreknowledge. God was so certain that He would fulfill the promises to Abraham, that He told him: "Unto your seed *have I given* this land..." (Gen. 15:18) at a time when Abraham did not even have a seed. During this same period before the seed (Isaac/Christ) was born, God further promised: "A father of many nations *have I made you*" (Gen. 17:5). Truly, God "calls those things which be not as though they were".

"Then" leads us to interpret the following chapters as following on from 1 Chron. 21 and 2 Sam. 24, David's disastrous numbering of Israel and his repentance for doing so. I have argued on 2 Sam. 24 that this was at the end of David's life. He is still wedded to his insistent desire to make the promises of 2 Sam. 7 come true in his building of a physical temple through Solomon, whom he has decided is the promised Messiah. He was seriously wrong on these things, and was in a way denying the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. His numbering of Israel was, I suggested, a result of his giving in to this 'satan' within him, confirmed by God pushing him down that bad path. He was seeking to establish his kingdom by human strength. But then like Balaam he is arrested in his ways, and repents- for the moment.

His last words in 2 Sam. 23 are, I argued there, his last prophetic words, the last words he spoke under direct Divine inspiration in the form of revelation. They cannot be his literal last words because the majority of David's recorded words are chronologically after that point, recorded in 1 Chron. 21-29. David in his last prophetic words was made to say that "He who rules over men must be just", and that was not him... and the kingdom of God was not going to be established through him nor his son at that time. He again repents for a moment, "My house is [indeed] not so with God", and again he marvels at God's grace. His remaining recorded words are recorded by inspiration, but they were not of Divine revelation. They contradict God's own statements in 2 Sam. 7. These recorded words of David were not prophetic words, not spoken by Divine revelation. That's why his claims as to what God had actually said to him about Solomon and the temple contradict what God Himself said in 2 Sam. 7 / 1 Chron. 17. And yet God reluctantly went along with the temple cult, just as He did with the idea of human kingship.

What we see in 1 Chron. 22-29 is therefore a case of David imagining a narrative and then expanding its envelope to a quite wrong extent. He set Solomon up for spiritual failure. And finally God's wrath came to its climax in His furious destruction of the temple and ending of the Davidic line of kings in Zedekiah's time. In the prophecies about those things

we sense God's wrath with the temple. 1 Chron. 22-29 just skim read gives the impression of a lot of numbering of Levites and others, and organizing them into a massive system of service- both to the temple, and to the Davidic kingdom based in Jerusalem. And a gathering together of massive resources to enable the building of the temple. All this was done in the very last months of David's life: "Of the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even of the Hebronites, according to their generations by fathers' households. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for / numbered, and there were found among them mighty men of valour at Jazer", and we go on to read how many (1 Chron. 26:31). This was all a studied denial of what David had learnt for a moment after the disastrous attempt to number Israel in 1 Chron. 21. The sin was not in the census of itself, but in his attitude. He realized that- at the time. He offered sacrifice, the three days plague was reduced to just a few hours... But now in 1 Chron. 22-29 he returns to the essence of those sinful attitudes. And dies like it, with the pathetic bedside scene of 1 Kings 1 as the close of a life not well lived at the end. He died unlamented. And yet for all this failure at the end, by grace will still be saved. Not only was David's failure in numbering everything... the numbers of Levites, how many sons the leaders of the shifts had, the weight of the temple vessels, ensuring there were ministers to count and manage the number of his animals, olive trees and other wealth sources. David's sin was also in trusting in all this human strength and supposing that it was required to worship God. The temple built was not that large, 90 ft. × 45 ft. × 30 ft. But he arranges thousands of people to serve it and a million talents of gold [so he claims] to overlay the walls with gold. This is all out of proportion, and quite against the spirit of the God who said He liked living in a goatskin tent.

1Ch 22:2 David gave orders to gather together the foreigners who were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to cut worked stones to build God's house-

It certainly looks appropriate in the type for us to see Gentiles working towards building up the house of God. But the reality was that this was a form of racism, using foreigners to do dogs body work; the more shameful if indeed they were as LXX "proselytes". It was repeated by Solomon. We also marvel at David's pointed disobedience to God's statement that "You shall not build Me a house to dwell in" (1 Chron. 17:4).

This marshalling of labour is the same essential sin David committed when he numbered Israel in the previous chapter. He repents, is forgiven, but slips from that level of intensity. And returns to the essence of the sin, and in this case, dies in that mindset. Yet will be ultimately saved! Solomon used 150,000 of these people as labourers and stone-cutters (1 Kings 5:15; 2 Chron. 2:16.). This reflects the ridiculous scale of David's self created narrative. This again shows how once we create and feed a false narrative, that narrative expands in size. The person who after twenty years saw their partner drunk on two occasions develops the narrative over the years to proclaim their partner an alcoholic... we see this going on all the time. As John's Gospel makes clear, the death of the Lord Jesus, His cross, His salvation and real forgiveness for us... is a call to absolute, radical truth. All the way through, David is living in denial of the actual commandment to him *not* to build a temple: ""Shall you build me a house for me to live in? (2 Sam 7:5)... You shall not build me the house to live in" (1 Chron. 17:4), and God's laboured redefinition of what a "house" for Him must be- a group of people, hearts indwelt by His Spirit. Not a building. And God's insistent grace, that *He* will build a house for *David*, and not David building for Him. David is simply trying to get around this by vicariously building the house through Solomon; he made the plans for it [wrongly claiming they were given by God], and makes huge efforts to virtually build it. And we see here the vicarious nature of so much modern sin; not murdering, fornicating or whatever, but doing these things vicariously through the experiences we choose in our screen life.

1Ch 22:3 David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the couplings; and brass in abundance without weight-

David prepared for the temple right down to the nails and hinges. He was obviously reasoning that he could 'get around' the prohibition against building a temple by getting Solomon to do it after his death. Or it could even be that David was planning to get Solomon to build it once Solomon was old enough to do so, even within David's lifetime. The reasons given as to why God didn't want a temple built were relevant for all time, and not just to David.

1Ch 22:4 and cedar trees without number; for the Sidonians and Tyrians brought cedar trees in abundance to David-

David's own house was built of cedar (1 Chron. 17:1), and there was a very good spiritual reason God's dwelling place was not in cedar but beneath tents (1 Chron. 17:3-6). But David was driven by guilt because of his cedar house; and instead of trusting God to remove that guilt, he wanted to build God a cedar house. And the same kind of quasi spiritual psychologies go on in Christian minds today.

1Ch 22:5 David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be built for Yahweh must be exceedingly magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all nations. I will therefore make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death-

"David said" may mean that he said this in his heart (as in 1 Sam. 27:1). He speaks of how "the house is to be built for Yahweh", but totally misses the point- that God rejected that and instead offered to build a house for him. But the grace of it all seemed too much, and he wanted to instead do works. God had promised that He would build up Israel, the faithful community, the house of David, to have "fame and glory" in the Gentile world (Dt. 26:19 s.w.). But David wanted to make a building of bricks and mortar which would have "fame and glory". He is totally missing the point. "Fame" is the word for "name"; and it was Yahweh's Name which was to be made glorious through His people's manifestation of that Name in their characters (s.w. Is. 63:12,14; Jer. 13:11). This was to be the witness to "all nations", and not a magnificent building in Jerusalem.

After conviction of his sin with Bathsheba, David had vowed to take the message of God's grace to the Gentile world, based on his example. He never did that. Instead now he focuses on the idea that a grandiose temple will attract the surrounding nations to Jerusalem. He has slipped from spirituality to mere religion, and died like that- to be saved ultimately by grace. God's promise was that He would build David a house. But David is now obsessed with building God a house. He shied away from the huge grace shown to him in the promises made to him.

1Ch 22:6 Then he called for Solomon his son, and commanded him to build a house for Yahweh, the God of Israel-

This sounds as if David asked Solomon to do this during David's lifetime. He was clearly seeking to 'get around' God's forbidding of himself to do it, by getting it done in Solomon's name. But that was to miss the point of all the reasons given as to why God didn't want a temple built.

1Ch 22:7 David said to Solomon his son, As for me, it was in my heart to build a house to the name of Yahweh my God-

God's response to this had been to tell David that He would build David a house for His Name to dwell in; the idea being of a community of people who would manifest the

characteristics of that Name (2 Sam. 7:13). God's Name was already dwelling in the sanctuary (Dt. 12:5), and David had been wrong to suggest that this Name would dwell in a physical building. But he ignores God's perspective on this, and claims that God was "for" his project, but just had some hang ups about David doing it. This is a misrepresentation of the reasons God gave for forbidding David to build the temple (1 Chron. 17:4-7).

1Ch 22:8 But the word of Yahweh came to me saying, 'You have shed blood abundantly, and have made great wars. You shall not build a house to My name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight-

Given the fact that David has willfully misrepresented God's response to him and the prohibition of 1 Chron. 17:4-7, I suspect this was not what God said. It was David's attempt to justify God's refusal of his plan. God had said that David would not build a house because *He* was going to build a house and place David and his Messianic Son in it, eternally- at some point after David had died, thereby implying resurrection at the last day. David has twisted that just as folk today, taking a word or two of a Bible verse out of context and building an entire narrative upon it. And that narrative directly contradicts the spirit and essence of God's revelation. In 1 Kings 5:3 Solomon tells Hiram that David couldn't build the temple because he was busy fighting Yahweh's wars. Again the envelope has expanded. Once you start a false narrative, others repeat it and take it as gospel truth, but in their turn add to it and twist and transform it. David falsely claims that God debarred him from temple building because he had shed much blood. There is no ethical reason why blood shedding of itself precluded from building a temple. David twists this narrative further to say that therefore no iron weapon or tool must be used on the stones of the house. His false assumptions led to more wrong and at best irrelevant thinking. Solomon in turn twists this narrative to say that it was because David had fought Yahweh's battles that he couldn't build a temple. False narratives always gets expanded, and the expansion is likewise false.

But taking what he said as being actually some unrecorded revelation of God to him, there does seem some appropriacy in the reasons given. Although in this case, it seems therefore inappropriate for David to tell Solomon from his deathbed to shed the blood of all his potential competitors. It seems that David's revelling in the blood of the condemned, as so often seen in his Psalms (e.g. Ps. 58:10) is out of step with the God who takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ez. 33:11). It was perhaps because of David's attitude to "blood" rather than simply his shedding of blood which disqualified him from building the temple; God was not pleased with this attitude. See on :9. Many have struggled to reconcile the statement that David was a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14) with the fact that his life contains many examples not only of failure, but of anger and a devaluing of human life. He was barred from building the temple because of the amount of blood he had shed (1 Chron. 22:8). The figure of 'shedding blood' takes us back to the incident with Nabal, where David three times is mentioned as intending to "shed blood" (1 Sam. 25:26-33), only to be turned away from his sinful course by the wisdom, spirituality and charm of Abigail. David started out as the spiritually minded, humble shepherd, full of faith and zeal for his God. Hence Jehoshaphat is commended for walking "in the first ways of his father David" (2 Chron. 17:3). It seems to me that the comment that David was "a man after God's own heart" refers to how he initially was, at the time God chose him and rejected Saul. But the trauma of his life, the betrayals, jealousies and hatred of others, led him to the kind of bitterness which so often surfaces in the Psalms and is reflected in several historical incidents where he lacks the value of others' lives which we would otherwise expect from a man who walked so close with his God.

Consider the collective force of some of those incidents:

- When told to slay 100 Philistines, he slays 200 for good measure (1 Sam. 18:25,27)

- David's eager taking of the sword of Goliath (1 Sam. 21:9- "There is none like that; give it me") contrasts sadly with his earlier rejection of such weapons in order to slay Goliath. And David later reflects how he knew that his faithless taking of that sword and the shewbread would lead to the death of Abiathar's family ((1 Sam. 22:22). But still he did it.
- His anger with Nabal and desire to slay all "that piss against the wall" who lived with "this fellow" ((1 Sam. 25:21,22 AV) is expressed in crude terms; and he later thanks Abigail for persuading him not to "shed blood" and "avenging myself with mine own hand" ((1 Sam. 25:33)- the very things he elsewhere condemns in his Psalms (e.g. Ps. 44:3). Time and again in the Psalms, David uses that Hebrew word translated "avenging myself" about how God and not man will revenge / save him against his enemies, for God saves / avenges the humble in spirit not by their strength and troops but by His. But in the anger of hot blood, David let go of all those fine ideas. He had some sort of an anger problem.
- David says that the servants of Saul are "worthy to die" because they fell asleep as a result of "a deep sleep from the Lord" which fell on them, and therefore didn't protect Saul (1 Sam. 26:12,16). Were they really that guilty of death for this? There doesn't appear to be any Biblical command David was quoting.
- "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul" is surely a collapse of faith (1 Sam. 27:1). And it led to the way in which David deceived Achish by pretending he was attacking Jewish towns, when in fact he was going out and attacking the Amalekite settlements, killing all men, women and children in them so that nobody was left alive to tell that it was David who had attacked them (1 Sam. 27:8-10). Innocent people were slain by David's sword for the 'political' reason that he had to keep Achish 'in the dark' about what he was really up to. And so in case a 5 year old say something incriminating later, David simply killed the little boy. We get the impression this was another example of his wrong attitude to the shedding of blood (1 Chron. 22:8). Indeed, when Achish later says that David would be best not to go with him to fight Saul, David hypocritically says: "But what have I done? And what have you found in your servant so long as I have been with you unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies [i.e. Saul] of my lord the king?" (1 Sam. 29:8). This was hardly an example of the "integrity" and "uprightness" which David glorifies in his Psalms, and which he insisted he was full of (Ps. 25:21). Indeed he claims that his integrity is the basis of his acceptance by God (Ps. 26:1).
- It's recorded that in the ethnic cleansing which David performed, he took the spoil of those settlements for himself (1 Sam. 27:9). Indeed when he destroyed Ziklag, he took away their herds "and said, This is David's spoil" (1 Sam. 30:20). We get the impression this was another example of his wrong attitude to the shedding of blood (1 Chron. 22:8).
- When Saul is killed, a young Amalekite hopeful comes to David with the story that he had killed Saul, trying to curry favour with David and secure his own release as a prisoner of war. David executed him (2 Sam. 1:15). It seems to me that this was an over the top reaction, and yet again betrays a lack of value and meaning attached to the human person. There was no attempt to convert the frightened young man to grace, to the God of Israel. The summary slaying of Rechab and Baanah has some similarities (2 Sam. 4:12).
- David made the captives lay down in three lines. He arbitrarily chose one line to keep alive, and killed the other two lines (2 Sam. 8:2). This can't be justified as some careful obedience to some Mosaic law. It reads like something out of the Holocaust, an arbitrary slaying of some in order to exercise the whim of one's own power. No wonder David was barred from building the temple because of his attitude to bloodshed. Likewise when Rabbah is captured, David proudly puts the crown of the king on his head, grabs their spoil for himself (not following Abraham's example), "and he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon" (2 Sam.

12:31). Now all that is torture. It's one thing to obey Divine commands about slaying enemies; it's another to willfully torture them, Auschwitz-style. These incidents reveal David at his worst. And again- did he really have to ensure that every male in Edom was murdered (1 Kings 11:15,16)- was that really necessary? What about the mums, wives, sisters left weeping, and the fatherless daughters, left to grow up in the dysfunction of a leaderless Middle Eastern home? Those men were all somebody's sons, brothers, fathers, grandfathers. Was David really obeying some Divine command here, or was this the dictate of his own anger and dysfunctional bloodlust?

- David's murder of Uriah and his sin with Bathsheba again reflects this same lack of value of the human person, even of his faithful friends.

- When David is asked to give seven men of the family of Saul as a blood sacrifice to appease the rain god who was not sending rain, David agrees. He doesn't make the Biblical argument that rain being withheld indicates the need for repentance before Yahweh, and that sacrificing humans is wrong and won't change anything in this context. He gives in to the false understanding of the Gibeonites, breaking his undertakings to Saul and Jonathan by doing so, and selects seven men to be slain and hung up. We read of the mother of two of them, Rizpah, lovingly watching over the bodies of her sons day and night, with all the distraction of true love (2 Sam. 21:10). David didn't have to do this. But he did. We get the impression this was another example of his wrong attitude to the shedding of blood (1 Chron. 22:8). He doesn't seem to have cared for the mother's feelings, nor for the lives of her sons. And note that David makes up the total of seven men by having the five foster sons of his own estranged wife Michal slain. Was this not David somehow hitting back at Michal, who had mocked him for his style of worship in 2 Sam. 6? And how did Adriel, the father of those five sons, feel? He wasn't of the house of Saul, but because of David's desire to placate someone else, he lost all his sons, just because his wife had died and Saul's daughter had raised them. And yet this same David is recorded as saying soon afterwards: "I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his ordinances were before me; And as for his statutes, I did not depart from them. I was also perfect toward him; And I kept myself from mine iniquity. Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, According to my cleanness in his eyesight" (2 Sam. 22:22-25).

- David seems to glory in how he destroyed his enemies- "I might destroy them that hate me... then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth, I did stamp them as the more of the street, and did spread them [i.e. their body parts] abroad" (2 Sam. 22:41-43). Can this really be justified as obedience to Divine commands? Is this not the expression of blood lust and anger? And isn't it therefore self-righteous to style himself "the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Sam. 23:1)? Was he really "sweet"?

- David earlier forgave Shimei for cursing him. But he tells Solomon to bring down that old man's white hairs to the grave with blood on them- again, a crude image for the murder of an old man. And he uses the same awful turn of phrase to ask Solomon to do this also to his lifelong friend Joab (1 Kings 2:6,9). Surely grace would've found another way?

1 Chron. 22:8; 28:3 are reported speech by David. We wonder if he wasn't imagining this. Why should it be morally objectionable for David to build the temple because he was a man of war? Yahweh is a man of war, yet He was to build David's house. We only learn about God's objection to David building the temple from the passages where David reports what God apparently told him, and from Solomon repeating this. If God did actually say this, then there is a logical contradiction between this and His statements about not wanting a house at all. If He was saying 'I want a physical house, but not built by David', then this appears irreconcilable with the reasons He is actually recorded as giving David for not wanting a house (see on 2 Sam. 7:7-11). Either God wanted a house or He didn't. See on 1 Chron. 28:5,6.

Solomon's take on this is in 1 Kings 5:3: "You know how that David my father could not build a house for the name of Yahweh his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until Yahweh put his enemies under the soles of his feet". Solomon had a way of spinning things, even God's word, in his own selfish way. David had insisted that God had told him that he couldn't build the temple because he had shed so much blood in war (1 Chron. 22:8). But Solomon just slightly spins this when he asks Hiram to come and help him build the temple, because, he says, his father David hadn't had the time to get around to the job because of being busy fighting wars (1 Kings 5:3). He says nothing about David shedding blood; the moral aspect of it all is nicely ignored by Solomon.

1Ch 22:9 Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of peace. I will give him peace from all his enemies all around; for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days-

"Solomon" is what David and Bathsheba named him, seeking to make him a "man of peace" so that he might fulfill the promise that the Son of David would be a man of peace. But 2 Sam. 12:25 is clear that God named him not Solomon but Jedidiah: "The LORD loved the boy and commanded the prophet Nathan to name the boy Jedidiah, because the LORD loved him" (GNB, CEV; ISV "she [Bathsheba] bore a son whom he [David] named Solomon. The LORD loved him, and sent a message written by Nathan the prophet to call his name Jedidiah"). David named the child Solomon because he so itched for the promise to him to be fulfilled in his lifetime. God corrected him on this point, rather seeking to redirect David's attention to His love and grace to that child. But David had fed and nursed his own narrative and now he claims that God had commanded him to name the child Solomon- when in fact the opposite was the case. He named him Solomon and immediately afterwards he gets a message from Nathan to name the child not Solomon but Jedidiah- a name David never once used for the child. There was not peace in Solomon's reign- as the Kings record makes clear, there was much unrest from within and without his kingdom (1 Kings 11:14,23,26). And if indeed David is correct and Solomon was God's named fulfillment of the Messianic "man of peace"... how ever can it be explained that Solomon went so badly wrong and was not at all the Messiah figure? Solomon was really set up for spiritual failure by David. For he assumes that he is the Christ, the Messiah, "the anointed one" (O Lord God, do not reject Your anointed one", 2 Chron. 6:42).

David claimed about Solomon: "Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of peace. I will give him peace from all his enemies". But these words are alluded to and applied to the Lord Jesus: "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom" (Is. 9:6,7). Clearly God's view is that David was simply wrong to insist upon Solomon as the candidate for His begotten Son, according to His promise to David. The Son was to be the Lord Jesus; He was to be the man / prince of peace, the Son born and given. And David was intended to figure this out. But his obsession with his own narrative led him to depart from the things of the Lord Jesus and His Kingdom.

I wonder whether God did in fact say :8,9, or whether they are David's assumptions of what he thought God had said. We are told in Is.66:1 that it is not possible to build God a house; and we have seen above that the house God wants is a household of believers, built by Himself through Christ. So we have to conclude that David was deeply puzzled as to why he couldn't build God a house, and he concluded that it must be because he had shed so much blood; and therefore he eventually came to the conclusion that God had actually said this to him. It is quite likely that David was paranoid about being guilty of the blood of Saul's house

(2 Sam. 3:28,29; 4:11,12; 1:16 cp. 16:8); see how aware of this he felt in 1 Sam. 22:22; 24:5; 26:9. This would not be the first time Yahweh's servants have done this kind of thing- speculating upon what they wish God had said, until they come to the conclusion that this is actually what He wants. Nathan initially told David to build the temple, sure that this was what God would say- but not so. The sad thing is that Solomon took this as Scripture. David's immediate response to the promises to him says nothing about Solomon building the temple; rather does David praise God for His plan of salvation in Christ. One wonders how accurate was David's account of the promises in 1 Chron. 22:9: "A son shall be born to thee... I will give him rest from all his enemies [without mentioning any conditions]... his name shall be Solomon". Due to his apostasy, Solomon did *not* have rest from his enemies (1 Kings 5:4). Note that the fact the record is undoubtedly inspired does not mean that all inspired words are factually accurate- the speeches of Job's friends are recorded under inspiration, as are the claims of Sennacherib, but what they say is criticized within Scripture as being inaccurate.

1Ch 22:10 He shall build a house for My name; and he shall be My son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever'-

This again is a misrepresentation of what God said. He said that David need not build any physical temple, but He would build for David a house, and this would be achieved through a special Messianic descendant of David. But the record in 2 Sam. 7 was clear that the achievement of this was to be conditional upon the obedience of that special Davidic seed. The essential contradiction with the letter and spirit of the actual promises is such that I conclude that here we have David stating his assumptions as God's word. This is a basic human failure we see going on all the time.

"I will establish the throne of *his* kingdom" contrasts with what God said in 1 Chron. 17:14: "I will settle him in My house and in *My* kingdom forever". David is no longer focused upon the kingdom of God, because his narrative has conflated it with Solomon's kingdom.

1Ch 22:11 Now, my son, may Yahweh be with you and prosper you, and build the house of Yahweh your God, as He has spoken concerning you-

David liked to imagine that Solomon would "prosper" because he built the temple (1 Chron. 22:11); but such prosperity was conditional. The exiles wanted the "prosperity" of the Kingdom immediately (s.w. Ps. 118:25); but this prosperity was conditional upon their obedience to the covenant (s.w. Josh. 1:8); they would never "prosper" whilst disobeying it (s.w. Dt. 28:29), nor could they "prosper" to enter the land as intended whilst faithless (Num. 14:41 s.w.). The faithful minority amongst the exiles believed God would prosper them in rebuilding Solomon's temple (Neh. 2:20), and He was indeed eager to do so (Is. 55:11); but this was not to be, because the majority were faithless. This prosperity was to finally only be through the work of the Lord Jesus (Is. 53:10), seeing Solomon and the later potential 'servant' figures of the restoration all failed (Is. 48:15).

1Ch 22:12 May Yahweh give you discretion and understanding, and put you in charge of Israel; that so you may keep the law of Yahweh your God-

The conditionality of the promises is rather skirted around here. David thinks that his prayer can result in God giving Solomon the wisdom required to be obedient to His law. Solomon's personal volition in that obedience doesn't seem to figure. And therefore God had to specifically appear to Solomon and warn him about this. He went wrong exactly because he assumed that as David's chosen son, he could not go morally wrong.

1Ch 22:13 Then you will prosper, if you observe to do the statutes and the ordinances which Yahweh gave Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and courageous. Don't be afraid, neither be dismayed-

Solomon's prophetic sonship of David was conditional upon him preserving or observing Yahweh's ways (1 Kings 2:4; 1 Chron. 22:13; 2 Chron. 7:17); but he didn't preserve nor observe them (1 Kings 11:10,11); despite David praying that Solomon would be given a heart to observe them (1 Chron. 29:19). We can pray for God to work upon the hearts of others, but He will not force people against their own deepest will and heart position. Solomon stresses overmuch how God would keep or preserve the righteous (Prov. 2:8; 3:26), without recognizing the conditional aspect of this. Why did Solomon go wrong? His Proverbs are true enough, but he stresses that obedience to *his* wisdom and teaching would preserve his hearers (Prov. 4:4; 6:22; 7:1; 8:32; 15:5), preservation was through following the example of the wise (Prov. 2:20); rather than stressing obedience to *God's* ways, and replacing David his father's simple love of God with a love of academic wisdom: "Yahweh preserves all those who love Him" (Ps. 145:20). Being "afraid and dismayed" is the term used of how Israel generally were terrified of Goliath, whereas David by faith wasn't (1 Sam. 17:11). David in turn uses it to his son Solomon (1 Chron. 22:13; 28:20). He was thereby urging Solomon not to worry if he was out of step with all Israel; if they were dismayed and terrified, he was still to walk in faith as David had done at the time of the Goliath crisis. It is also used to urge the people toward the spirit of David rather than that of Israel in 2 Chron. 20:15,17. The same phrase is also used in urging the people of Judah in Hezekiah's time to consider the Assyrians to be as a Goliath which they like David could vanquish (2 Chron. 32:7). The exiles likewise were urged not to be dismayed and terrified at the reproach of men (Is. 51:7; Jer. 30:10), very clearly making the history with Goliath relevant to their times.

David's speech is filled with allusion to the need to keep the law of Moses (Dt. 7:11; 11:32); and the exhortation to be strong and of good courage alludes to God telling His people likewise in exhorting them to be faithful to the covenant (Dt. 31:6; Josh. 1:7,9). Again we see the wrong expansion of the envelope in David's thought- he came to see his own narrative as being that of God, and obedience to it was obedience to God's law. He hijacks Bible verses and pressgangs them into the service of his own narrative. Just as people do all the time.

1Ch 22:14 Now, behold, I have made a great effort in preparing for the house of Yahweh one hundred thousand talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance. I have also prepared timber and stone; and you may add to them-

"Made a great effort" is RVmg. "in my low estate". David makes a juxtaposition between his own lowness, and the super abundance of wealth he has given for the temple. He makes an appropriate distinction between his wealth and himself personally. However the figures seem so exaggerated and not literal. The more wealthy Solomon only received 666 talents of gold / year (1 Kings 10:14), so 100,000 talents of gold is an unrealistic figure. Although if Chronicles was rewritten in exile, the talents may refer to Persian talents, which were far less than Hebrew talents. Again we get the impression David was obsessed with numbers and exaggerated them; as it seems he did later with the numbers of Levites, comparing his claimed numbers with those recorded in the book of Numbers. He reduced the age for counting them to 20 (1 Chron. 23:24) and possibly expanded the definition of a Levite. And it could be argued that the system David established effectively made all Levites able to serve as priests, whereas this was not at all the teaching of the Mosaic law; see on 1 Chron. 23:31.

1Ch 22:15 There are also workmen with you in abundance, cutters and workers of stone and timber, and all kinds of men who are skilful in every kind of work-

Solomon however didn't begin the work until after David's death. David had prepared the workmen at this stage but it seems they were not used, and so when Solomon began the work, he had to seek such workmen again (2 Chron. 2:7).

1Ch 22:16 of the gold, silver, brass and iron, there is no number. Arise and be doing, and may Yahweh be with you-

David makes no reference to how these things were to happen when he slept with his fathers (2 Sam. 7:12). Rather does he tell Solomon to get on and begin the building work immediately, now he had the commission. "Arise and be doing" is quoted in Ezra 10:4 about the work of the restoration of the temple.

1Ch 22:17 David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying-

This again sounds like David was asking them to give Solomon their immediate and instant support. David makes no reference to how these things were to happen when he slept with his fathers (2 Sam. 7:12).

1Ch 22:18 Isn't Yahweh your God with you? Hasn't He given you rest on every side? For He has delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand; and the land is subdued before Yahweh and before His people-

David "subdued" the nations, using the word often used of the command to subdue the nations of Canaan (Num. 32:22,29; Josh. 18:1). He is presented as a second Joshua, subduing the land as it ought to have been subdued, and therefore becoming what Adam ought to have been in Eden (Gen. 1:28 s.w.). This is another indication that the garden of Eden was effectively the *eretz* or land promised to Abraham.

However, David's presentation of himself and his kingdom being at peace is hardly accurate. He suffered rebellions, revolution, putsch and betrayal right to his death bed, where with his last breath he has to try to put down Adonijah's power grab, and he just about lived to see lifelong supporters like Joab turn against him politically in his closing days. He has in his mind the idea that peace is required for the temple to be built, and so he assumes that situation has now come. Such was his obsession and desire to see things coming true.

1Ch 22:19 Now set your heart and your soul to seek after Yahweh your God. Arise therefore, and build the sanctuary of Yahweh God, to bring the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of Yahweh-

Indeed it is the state of the human heart which is critical. But David wrongly sees the natural outcome of a heart focused upon Yahweh as wanting to build the temple. Although God had forbidden it. God had clearly stated that the ark was where He wanted it- in a tent, behind curtains. And He did not want a brick house around it. And yet David urges people to enable the very opposite- to build a sanctuary in terms of a physical building, and to place the ark within it. The whole land was seen by God as a sanctuary / holy place s.w. Ex. 15:17). "Let them make Me a sanctuary" (Ex. 25:8) uses a very general word for making / doing, whereas David is trying to localize and define the sanctuary / holy place and is implying God had no such holy place- until it had been built according to his plans. The Kohathites are described as carrying "the sanctuary" (s.w., Num. 10:21); it was the ark which was the essential sanctuary or holy place. But David speaks about the building he proposed around that ark as being the sanctuary. And so form had replaced content, the external the internal, as so often happens when the pole of religion overtakes that of spirituality.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 23

1Ch 23:1 Now David was old and full of days; and he made Solomon his son king over Israel-

The very language used of the death of the patriarchs, as if to show that David was directly their seed, and also in spirit. "Full of days" rather than full of years could mean that his days had been filled with significance, rather than living the same day over and over year after year. The term is clearly not the same as just meaning "old".

1Ch 23:2 He gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites-
We now have four chapters describing the Levites, the 24 orders of priests and singers, and the divisions of the gatekeepers / porters. David's idea was that the Levites were to be divided up to do tasks and hold offices according to the various families which are listed in these chapters. They are effectively genealogies, and the idea was that the descendants of those families were to have specific roles. This was a level of division of labour which was not found in the law of Moses.

1Ch 23:3 The Levites were numbered from thirty years old and over: and their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty-eight thousand-

Joab had refused to do this earlier, although he was specifically counting the Levite soldiers, whereas this was a general census of Levites available for religious service (1 Chron. 21:3-6). David numbered the Levites from 30 years old (1 Chron. 23:3), in accordance with the law which said Levites were to serve between the ages of 30 and 50 (Num. 4:3,23,35,39). But in 1 Chron. 23:24 we are told that David numbered the Levites from 20 years old. We note in Num. 8:23 that there appeared some flexibility within the Mosaic law; the Levites could be numbered from 25 years old. This is one of many examples of how the Mosaic law was not set in stone. It was principle and spirit rather than letter of the law, and within it there are examples of where one law overrode another, or one principle overrode letter of the law. The law was not designed as a simple test of obedience, for it was far more detailed than that. It was designed to inculcate a spirit of living which looked forward to the spirit of the Lord Jesus. And so David felt free to number the Levites from 20 years old, even though we also read that he numbered 'the Levites from 30 years old', suggesting that this was a technical term rather than a literal description. This would go toward explaining why 38,000 Levites were numbered by David in 1 Chron. 23:3, although "thousand" may mean a division rather than a literal 1000. At the time of Num. 4:47,48 there were only 8,580. And Levite males from a month old were 22,000 in Num. 3:39 and 23,000 at the time of Num. 26:62. This suggests a great increase in the number of Levites by David's time; or perhaps he more generously counted who was a Levite, because he wanted to have as many as possible involved in his grandiose plans for the temple services. There was no need for such large numbers of Levites in order to serve God effectively, for there were far fewer Levites at the time of the figures given in the book of Numbers, and the sanctuary and Divine service still continued.

The fact David initially counted the Levites from 30 and then later reduced the age to 20 (1 Chron. 23:24) suggests that progressively, he was obsessed with numbers, wanting to have as many as possible serving his narrative about the temple.

1Ch 23:4 David said, Of these, twenty-four thousand are to oversee the work of the house of Yahweh; six thousand are to be officers and judges-

"Thousand" can not be a literal 1000 but rather a division. These 24 divisions may connect

with the 24 orders of singers in 1 Chron. 25. Solomon taught that if the ants can be so zealous, well why can't the ecclesia of God be zealous [for it was 'believers' that he was teaching]. The ants scurry around, working as if there is no tomorrow, to build up something so precarious that is in any case so tragically short lived. Can't we be yet more zealous, with a like loving co-operation, building the eternal things that we are (Prov. 6:6,7)? And Solomon pressed the point further, in that ants are self-motivated; they need no "guide, overseer or ruler". This was surely a reference to the complex system of overseers which Solomon had to place over Israel in order to build the temple and build up the Kingdom. The same Hebrew word for "overseer" is found in 1 Chron. 23:4; 26:29. Yet ideally, he seems to be saying, every Israelite ought to be a zealous worker. Prov. 12:24 says the same: "The hand of the diligent [*whoever* he / she is] shall bear rule [in practice]" [s.w. Prov. 6:7 "ruler"]. And we must ask ourselves, whether for whatever reason the new Israel hasn't slumped into the same problem, of lack of self-motivation, waiting to be asked to do something before we do it, over-relying upon our "overseers". The ants aren't like this. They see the job to be done, and naturally get on with it.

1Ch 23:5 four thousand are to be doorkeepers; and four thousand are to praise Yahweh with the instruments which I made for giving praise-

"Thousand" here may not be literally 1000, but may be a technical term for a division of people, similar to the "divisions" of :6. The "doorkeepers" were literally, the openers or dividers of the gates. The word is also translated "porters". To have so many suggests David envisaged his future temple as having many gates which were to be guarded. The instruments "made" can simply mean 'appointed', although note Am. 6:5, which implies David did indeed make the instruments. It all seems however rather narcissistic, the fantasy of an old man, all about himself and how he dreamed of things becoming in this temple complex.

The temple building was not that large. 4000 doorkeepers is another example of grandiose dreaming, reflecting how David's self narrative for the temple had spun out of control.

1Ch 23:6 David divided them into divisions according to the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari-

I suggested on 1 Chron. 22 that David arranged for everything to be ready for the temple to be built even during his lifetime, and urged Solomon and the princes of Israel to get on with it immediately, whilst he was still alive. Solomon however didn't begin the work until after David's death. David had prepared the workmen at this stage but it seems they were not used, and so when Solomon began the work, he had to seek such workmen again (1 Chron. 22:15 cp. 2 Chron. 2:7). And likewise it seems David had even prepared the Levites in great detail to actually start officiating in the new building. But it seems likely that all his careful plans regarding all the intended individuals weren't quite used by Solomon, or at least not for some time, by which time some of the individuals may have died. Solomon obeyed the general pattern, however (2 Chron. 8:14; 29:25).

1Ch 23:7 Of the Gershonites: Ladan and Shimei-

The idea was that those in David's time who were from these branches of the Gershonites were to serve in the new temple complex he had planned.

1Ch 23:8 The sons of Ladan: Jehiel the chief, Zetham and Joel, three-

Zethan and Joel were grandsons (1 Chron. 26:22), but "son of..." is a Hebrew phrase with very elastic meaning.

1Ch 23:9 The sons of Shimei: Shelomoth, Haziel and Haran, three. These were the heads of the fathers' households of Ladan-

As this Shimei was from Ladan, he is not the Shimei of :7 but some other descendant of Ladan. The Shimei of :10 is that of :7.

1Ch 23:10 The sons of Shimei: Jahath, Zina, Jeush and Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei-

This is the Shimei of :7, not the one of :9.

1Ch 23:11 Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second: but Jeush and Beriah didn't have many sons; therefore they combined to become a father's house-

Heb. 'in one reckoning' or 'office' (:18). The descendants of these branches of the family were to have the same 'office' in David's planned temple. This could imply that all the other 'father's houses' also had a specific 'office' planned for them by David. He certainly made very detailed plans, to the point of obsession.

1Ch 23:12 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four-

"Gershon" can mean 'expelled', maybe meaning that like Reuben he was expelled from the role of firstborn [he is mentioned first as if he was the firstborn]. This is a theme of the Genesis record. But perhaps because of these weaknesses, the line to the high priest ran through Kohath.

1Ch 23:13 The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses; and Aaron was sanctified, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons, forever, to burn incense before Yahweh, to minister to Him, and to bless in His name, forever-

This is alluded to by the Lord in Jn. 17:17: "Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth". The reference is to how the Levites were sanctified. The Levites were initially consecrated in God's eyes by their zeal to rid Israel of apostasy; this is what constituted them Yahweh's "holy (sanctified) one" (Dt. 33:8,9). They sanctified themselves to God, and He sanctified them. Through His allusions to this, the Lord was telling the disciples not to be frightened to stand alone from the Israelite community they knew; for it was deeply apostate. So often, the Lord is speaking of the development of a new Israel, with new Rabbis and Levites taken from the ranks of very ordinary and dysfunctional people who had believed in Him.

1Ch 23:14 But as for Moses the man of God, his sons were named among the tribe of Levi-

The sense is that the sons of Moses were not priests, but Levites, general servants of the priests. This was purposeful, because Moses was also descended from Amram and Kohath. His sons could have been priests, but God specifically didn't want any cult of pride or personality developing around the descendants of Moses, who was Israel's greatest leader. Perhaps the legendary meekness of Moses led he himself to insist upon this. He thereby showed his appreciation of servant leadership.

1Ch 23:15 The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer-

In reading the genealogies we must be aware that people often had more than one name. They were given a birth name, reflecting their parents' hopes or situation at the time of the birth; and then later acquired a name which reflected their character and life experience. Some retained their birth name; "Gershom" was named by Moses in reflection of how he had been a stranger in a strange land. And his son apparently retained that name, as it would have also fitted his own life experience.

1Ch 23:16 The sons of Gershom: Shebuel the chief-

"Shebuel", 'returned of God', would be an appropriate name for a child born in the wilderness who entered Canaan.

1Ch 23:17 The sons of Eliezer were: Rehabiah the chief. Eliezer had no other sons; but the sons of Rehabiah were very many-

We note from 1 Chron. 23:15-17 that there were descendants of Moses through Gershom and Eliezer in Israel at David's time, who could demonstrate their pedigree. They were given designated roles of service within David's plans for the new temple system; which is why they are mentioned in 1 Chron. 23. So we can deduce from this that they did not remain in Midian but identified themselves with Israel. It seems that the marriage of Moses and Zipporah broke up, and she returned to her father in Midian with the two boys. But Jethro brought them all back to Moses (Ex. 18:2-4). He advises Moses not to work so hard and to delegate more- perhaps in order to have more time for his wife and family. Moses agrees, and then Jethro returns home alone (Ex. 18:27), the implication being that Zipporah and the boys now remained with Moses.

1Ch 23:18 The sons of Izhar: Shelomith the chief-

Six family groups emerged from Amram but only one from Izhar. This could have been because of lack of commitment to their priestly calling; or quite simply the genealogical records were lacking.

1Ch 23:19 The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth-

These would have all been born in Egypt, and it is noteworthy that they all retain the Yahweh Name somewhere in their names. For it seems Israel generally turned away to the gods of Egypt at that time, taking the gods of Egypt with them through the Red Sea (Ez. 20).

1Ch 23:20 The sons of Uzziel: Micah the chief, and Isshiah the second-

Micah, 'who is like Yah?', was an appropriate name for a child born in a faithful family whilst Israel was in Egypt, surrounded by false gods which they largely accepted.

1Ch 23:21 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar and Kish-

"Mahli" and "Mushi" mean 'sickly' and 'sensitive' respectively. This confirms the suggestion I have often made, that names were given in response to later character and life experience. Sometimes in these genealogies we read the birth names, at others, the names they were given later in life. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 23:22 Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters only; and their brothers the sons of Kish took them as wives-

The levirate law of Num. 36:5-12 was that a man should marry his relative's widow to raise up children to keep the inheritance through in dead man's name. But the Levites had no inheritance. So they were obeying the spirit rather than the letter of the law. To take extra wives and have extra children was a financial burden, so they did this in obedience to the spirit of the law and respect for Eleazar. And that is recorded and remembered in the record to this day. See on :23 for another example.

1Ch 23:23 The sons of Mushi: Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three-

Mushi has a son who has the same name as his brother, Mahli (:21); which meant 'sickly', so

perhaps he died, and he raised up a son in his brother's name, seeing that Mahli's young son Eleazar died childless (1 Chron. 24:28). This may be as in the spirit of :22 (see note there).

1Ch 23:24 These were the sons of Levi after their fathers' houses, even the heads of the fathers' houses of those who were counted individually, in the number of names by their polls, who did the work for the service of the house of Yahweh, from twenty years old and over-

For the difference with :3 where they were apparently numbered from 30 years old, see on :3. David was trying to increase the numbers of Levites, failing utterly to learn the lesson about not numbering Israel and not trusting in numbers. He now reduces the age Levites can serve, from 30 to 20. And the upper limit of 50 is apparently just ignored by David now. He dies obsessed with numbers and human strength, unilaterally deciding to change and ignore God's laws.

1Ch 23:25 For David said, Yahweh, the God of Israel, has given rest to His people; and He dwells in Jerusalem forever-

David had in his mind that he couldn't build the temple because he had been a man of war. But he wanted Solomon to build the temple, in his name, to get around God's prohibition of David building it. But this was all in David's mind. God's reasons for not wanting a temple were nothing to do with David's personal history. And so in line with this twisted thinking, David wishes to present Israel as being at rest. Even though the nation was in turmoil and David faced a putsch from his son Adonijah even on his deathbed. He also overlooks the conditional nature of God's promise to dwell "forever" in Jerusalem; as well as the fact God had said that instead of dwelling in a physical place, He would dwell in the hearts of His people, David's "house".

1Ch 23:26 Also the Levites will no longer need to carry the tabernacle and all its vessels for its service-

David was enthralled with the idea that the tabernacle would now not be carried but would have a permanent place. But this was at variance with God's explanation to him of why He didn't want such a permanent place; He was a God on a journey, as He always had been, mobile and forging forward. But David's religious pole quite blinded him to the spiritual pole of perceiving the dynamic nature of God. And we see that tendency in all His people.

1Ch 23:27 For by the last words of David the sons of Levi were numbered, from twenty years old and over-

This could be a different numbering from that of :3, which counted them from 30 years old. But see note there. Perhaps David was desperate to show he had an ever larger number of Levites, whom he could use in his various plans [fantasies?] for the new temple system. Even though the sanctuary had operated quite fine with a fraction of the numbers he was now claiming.

David's last words were in fact of disobedience in that he ordered the Levites to be numbered for service from 20 years old, when the law stated from 30 years old. He died obsessed with the need for numbers, for human strength, refusing to learn the lesson from his earlier recent disastrous numbering of Israel. His repentance at that time wasn't maintained until his final death, just as his forgiveness of Shimei wasn't. Perhaps this is the force of the note that these were his "last ordinances".

1Ch 23:28 Their ministry was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of Yahweh, in the courts, and in the rooms, and in the purifying of all holy things, even the work

of the service of God's house-

See on :31. "Their ministry was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of Yahweh" is strictly "was to be at the side of the sons of Aaron", as if all Levites were being elevated to the level of priests, equal with them. The translators have generally shied away from this. The number of Levites David claims as available for service was out of proportion to the number of priests. The whole scale of the new temple system was quite beyond the more humble set up of the tabernacle, which God's law had established. The danger was that the priests were elevated to a high position, effectively having thousands of servants, which was beyond what the law of Moses envisaged. The priests were to teach the people, but there is little evidence this happened in Solomon's temple. The focus was all upon offering far more sacrifices and doing far more rituals than the law of Moses stipulated. And David should have remembered the lesson taught through his sin with Bathsheba and his wilderness years away from the sanctuary- that sacrifice and offering were not really what God was looking for, but rather contrite hearts (Ps. 40:6,7). And Solomon therefore totally failed to understand this.

1Ch 23:29 for the showbread also, and for the fine flour for a meal offering, whether of unleavened wafers, or of that which is baked in the pan, or of that which is soaked, and for all kinds of measure and size-

These things were all required under the law of Moses, but David envisaged setting up thousands of Levites and priests to offer them in the temple- rather than being out in the provinces, teaching the people. He clearly thought God would be better served by offering the required offerings but on a far grander scale- rather than teaching simple village folks about God's ways. We sense that David rather lost his spirituality at the end of his life, although he still died in faith.

1Ch 23:30 And to stand every morning to thank and praise Yahweh, and likewise in the evening-

These regular offerings would have been made by just a fraction of the number of Levites and priests which David now had in mind. So he presumably wanted to bring in all this extra labour to the temple because he imagined huge numbers of offerings being made, far beyond those required by the law.

1Ch 23:31 and to offer all burnt offerings to Yahweh, on the Sabbaths, on the new moons, and on the set feasts, in number according to the ordinance concerning them, continually before Yahweh-

"In number..." is misleading, because I have suggested above that the greater number of Levites and priests brought in to the temple was because David envisaged offering far greater numbers of sacrifices than stipulated. And Solomon began the temple dedication with huge numbers of offerings. The sense is rather as GNB "Rules were made specifying the number of Levites assigned to do this work each time".

"To offer all burnt offerings" raises the possibility that the Levites were now being allowed by David to act as priests. His own self created narrative of a huge temple system led him to reduce the service age of the Levites to 20 from 30 (1 Chron. 23:24). And now he reduces the qualification for priestly service- he allows any Levite to do priestly work. Whereas under the law of Moses, all priests were Levites but not all Levites were priests. "Their ministry was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of Yahweh"(:28) is strictly "was to be at the side of the sons of Aaron", as if all Levites were being elevated to the level of priests, equal with them. The translators have generally shied away from this.

In :32, the Levites generally are told to "keep watch on the sanctuary", but this was specifically for the Kohathite priests to do (Num. 18:5). But David is now declaring, unilaterally and without any Divine word, that any Levite can do this. His splitting up of the temple duties, described in detail in Chronicles, do not specify which duties should be done by the Kohathites, Merarites and Gershonites. He overlooks that entirely. David had been taught in the incident of Uzzah that Divine commandment about who did priestly service was to be taken seriously. And he apparently repented and did things properly at the time. But now he throws all that Divine teaching to the winds... he who boasted of how he loved God's law and studied it all the day and hated his disobediences to it. This is what happens when narratives become so dominant in religious people. We think of William Golding's novel *The Spire*, where the bishop becomes obsessed with building a huge spire, subconsciously understanding it as a phallic symbol. The same is happening here with David.

It is clear from the usage of Persian terms like "Darics" that Chronicles was written or rewritten during the captivity to encourage the exiles to return and accept a Davidic Messiah, and reestablish his kingdom and temple. But the commands and laws in Ez. 40-48 about the temple are in many points at variance with the system of worship set up by David and described in such detail in Chronicles. Surely that is an implied criticism of David's system.

1Ch 23:32 and that they should keep the duty of the Tent of Meeting, and the duty of the holy place, and the duty of the sons of Aaron their brothers, for the service of the house of Yahweh-

See on :31. The allusion is to the commands about the Levites assisting the priests in Num. 18:2-7. But those commands repeatedly state that they were to assist in "the service of the tent" (LXX), or tabernacle. But David purposefully replaces "tent" with "house". And that is exactly out of step with God's reasons for not wanting a temple. He wanted a tent, and not a house. David was really obsessed with his own vision, rather than faith in the grace offered to him in the promise to build him a house of redeemed people.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 24

1Ch 24:1 These were the divisions of the sons of Aaron. The sons of Aaron: Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar-

This continues the major Biblical theme, that the firstborn is often not used by God and is replaced. This is His style, to exalt the under dogs.

1 Chron. 24:4 describes David carefully dividing up the priests according to their numbers, how many to each course etc. Again the impression is of a man obsessed with numbers. Or again in 1 Chron. 25:1 "The number of them that did the work was...", and the number of Heman's sons is noted as being 14 in 1 Chron. 25:5 and the whole of 1 Chron. 25 carefully records exact numbers... "The number of them was 288" (1 Chron. 25:7) etc. The exact numbers were clearly important to David as he was counting carefully.

The Levites who were numbered are called "valiant men" (1 Chron. 26:8), the same term used of how David had wrongly numbered the valiant men of Israel in 2 Sam. 24. He is repeating the same mistake which at the time he had repented of. 1 Chron. 27:1-15 lists the leaders of the military divisions David established, with 24000 different men serving every month. Clearly this was yet another attempt to in essence number Israel militarily. David in 1 Chron. 27:23 claims to have learnt from the mistake Joab made when numbering all Israel... But the error was clearly David's and Joab tried to stop him. David is rewriting even a recent narrative to exonerate himself, when at the time he took some responsibility, arguing with God that the sheep were innocent and only he was guilty. Then in 1 Chron. 28:1 we read David had appointed captains over hundreds and over thousands. This was another way of numbering Israel. Not to the last man, as he had attempted to earlier, but good enough so as to have an accurate rough idea of his numbers. He was repeating the essence of his sin... David also appointed officers over his donkeys, his fields, olive trees etc. This was another way of taking an account of his total wealth. And he does it in the last year of his life, probably in the last months. He is totally obsessed with counting his human strength even when he is facing his own death. So many men have done the same, rather than focusing on the things of God's future Kingdom and His Son. Yet still David will be saved...

And yet in 1 Chron. 28:9 David rightly says that God searches or seeks for every human heart and he has much to say about the need for the right heart in 1 Chron. 29. He had searched and found David's heart. In the midst of all David's unspiritual numbering, he still had a heart for God. And that was what saved him. Yet right after saying that he tells Solomon to "be strong" and build the temple, wrongly speaking of spiritual strength as doing something which God had not commanded and was opposite to His stated plan. This is a classic example of religious men urging that fulfilling their wrong narrative is in fact spiritual strength. "Strong in the truth" is a phrase that has so often been mispurposed. 1 Chron. 28:12 says David claimed the Spirit had given him a plan to build treasuries for the wealth of the temple. But God despises human wealth... The David who had once been a poor man who despised wealth ends his days demanding that all the gold and silver temple vessels be weighed, even the weight of the lamps separate from the candlesticks (1 Chron. 28:15 etc.). There is no such commandment in the law of Moses. He again is obsessed with numbers and miserably failed to learn the lesson of not numbering Israel. And all this was done by him in his last few months of life, as bizarre as the wealthy man dying in a hospice who is obsessed with counting up his wealth...

1Ch 24:2 But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children; therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office-

Despite having gone up Sinai and witnessing the theophany of Ex. 24:9, their desire to 'play

God' for personal power had been stronger than their awe at God's presence and majesty. Visible acts of God are often desired by His servants, but they do not of themselves inculcate spirituality. The language here clearly alludes to Num. 3:4: "Nadab and Abihu died before Yahweh... and they had no children". But "Before Yahweh" is replaced with "before their father". Aaron was the manifestation of Yahweh and is thus spoken of as Him, just as the Lord Jesus can be spoken of likewise. The other references to their death repeatedly speak of it as being 'before Yahweh'. Why does Chronicles alone imply that Aaron was present with them when they made the offering? Perhaps it is to highlight the weakness of Aaron and indeed of the whole priesthood; for these genealogies were likely prepared whilst Judah were in captivity and the priesthood no longer functioned because of their sins.

"And had no children" may not be intended literally. The genealogy is speaking of the Levites who did Divine service, and the idea is that their children did not serve God. And so we see His perspective on family life over the generations of history- if our children don't enter into His service, it's as if we had no children.

1Ch 24:3 David with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them according to their ordering in their service-

"According to their duties" (GNB). We are the new priesthood; each of us have specific duties or ministries intended for us. Man is never better than when he perceives his calling before God, and does it. Pray earnestly that you will realize what were the good works before ordained for you to do (Eph. 2:10).

1Ch 24:4 There were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar. They were divided like this: of the sons of Eleazar there were sixteen, heads of fathers' houses; and of the sons of Ithamar, according to their fathers' houses, eight-
We must remember that we are reading here of how David wished to divide up the descendants of these family groups, so that they could perform certain duties in the new temple system he was planning. "There were... found" would therefore refer to how at his time, there were found more of Eleazar than Ithamar. Perhaps not all were willing to participate in his grandiose plans, or maybe simply the genealogical records had been lost for some.

1Ch 24:5 Thus were they divided impartially by drawing lots; for there were princes of the sanctuary, and princes of God, both of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar-
This may be one of several places in the Old Testament where the lines of Judah and Levi overlapped, so that these men were in fact king-priests. This is what we are designated in Rev. 5:10. The Lord Jesus, although directly in the line of Judah, was likewise a king-priest. These historical points of overlap between the two tribes were surely to psychologically prepare the people for the coming of their king-priest Messiah. Our sensitive Father likewise seeks to prepare the way for us to accept things.

1Ch 24:6 Shemaiah the son of Nethanel the scribe, who was of the Levites, wrote them in the presence of the king, and the princes, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and the heads of the fathers' households of the priests and of the Levites; one father's house being taken for Eleazar, and one taken for Ithamar-

"The king" is David. He took this division of the Levites very seriously, because his planned grandiose temple system required a huge amount of labour. "The alternate drawing here described could have lasted only for the first sixteen lots; in the last eight drawings the descendants of Eleazar must have drawn against each other only".

1Ch 24:7 Now the first lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah-

According to Ezra 2:37, only four courses of priests returned from exile, when there were supposed to be 24 of them, namely Pashhur, Jedaiah, Immer, and Hardin (1 Chron. 24:7, 8,14). The priesthood had been deeply corrupt at the time of the exile, and it seems most of them preferred to remain in Babylon.

Joiarib was drawn to serve first in 1 Chron. 24:7, but presumably the lots came out differently when they were drawn at the restoration, and in Neh. 12:6 he was drawn 17th out of 22 orders.

1Ch 24:8 the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim-

The planned temple system required much labour, it was a glorification of works rather than faith, and so the Levites had to come and serve there for a certain amount of time each year. And the various jobs to be done likewise had to be split up. So there was a system of lots to arrange these things.

1Ch 24:9 the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin-

"Malchijah", 'Yah is king', was the name of 10 separate Israelites. It reflected an awareness amongst the faithful that the human system of kingship was not at all what God really wanted, and Yahweh was Israel's true king. As the generations went by, it would have been hard to retain this awareness; although it was revived by the removal of the royal line of kings at the exile.

1Ch 24:10 the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah-

From whence came Zacharias, father of John the Baptist (Lk. 1:5). If the temple records of the genealogies drawn up by David (:6) were destroyed when Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, then what we are reading here in Chronicles may have been an inspired replacement for them, and it was clearly in usage in the time of Jesus.

1Ch 24:11 the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah-

In Neh. 10:4; 12:14 "Shebaniah". It is easy in written Hebrew to confuse B and C, so we have here an example of where there may have been slight copying errors in the Divinely inspired text.

1Ch 24:12 the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim-

'God will restore' and 'God will raise up', names appropriate to the restoration.

1Ch 24:13 the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab-

These names are completely secular in meaning, and are a tacit reflection of the fact that the priesthood and Levitical service was largely seen as a merely secular job for much of Israel's history. The nation's apostasy can largely be blamed upon the spiritual failure of the priesthood in practice.

1Ch 24:14 the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer-

The descendants of Bilgah were some of the few faithful priests who returned at the time of Neh. 10:8; 12:5.

1Ch 24:15 the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizziez-

AV "Aphses", an Egyptian name, hinting (as noted on :13) at the corruption of the priesthood.

1Ch 24:16 the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel-

Or "Ezekiel". Perhaps these names of the orders were later changed when David's list was rewritten at the time of the restoration, to reflect faithful characters like Ezekiel.

1Ch 24:17 the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul-

"Gamul" means 'weaned' (s.w. Gen. 21:8). This was the name given at birth, and in this case it stuck. It confirms the suggestion I have often made, that sometimes in these genealogies we read the birth names, at others, the names they were given later in life. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 24:18 the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah-

'Yah has delivered' and 'Yah has rescued / saved', names appropriate to the restoration.

1Ch 24:19 This was their ordering in their service, to come into the house of Yahweh according to the ordinance given to them by Aaron their father, as Yahweh, the God of Israel, had commanded him-

It is not defined here for how long each order of priests served. 2 Kings 11:9 speaks of the priests 'coming in' and going out on the Sabbath, as if they served for a week at a time; Josephus supports this (*Antiquities* 7.14.7). Yet if there were 24 lots, perhaps they served for just over 2 weeks each. But the lots may also have been drawn with respect to what work they did, not only what time of the year they came to the temple to work.

1Ch 24:20 Of the rest of the sons of Levi: of the sons of Amram, Shubael; of the sons of Shubael, Jehdeiah-

Having listed the priests, we now read of the other Levites who were to support them in their work, although not themselves being priests. In 1 Chron. 25 we have listed the musicians, in 1 Chron. 26:1-19 the doorkeepers, and in 1 Chron. 26:20-32 the scribes and guards of the treasures.

1Ch 24:21 Of Rehabiah: of the sons of Rehabiah, Isshiah the chief-

"Isshiah", 'lent to Yah', was perhaps named after the influence of Hannah (who was not a Levite), who considered her giving of Samuel to the Levitical ministry as a lending of him to Yahweh (1 Sam. 1:28).

1Ch 24:22 Of the Izharites, Shelomoth; of the sons of Shelomoth, Jahath-

The four families arising from Kohath are listed in order, Amram (:20), Izhar (:22), Hebron (:23) and Uzziel (:24).

1Ch 24:23 The sons of Hebron: Jeriah, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth-

I discussed on :13,15 how and why some of the names in this list are completely secular. But these all have the name of God in them.

1Ch 24:24 The sons of Uzziel, Micah; of the sons of Micah, Shamir-

Micah, 'who is like Yah?', was an appropriate name for a child born in a faithful family whilst Israel was in Egypt, surrounded by false gods which they largely accepted.

1Ch 24:25 The brother of Micah, Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah, Zechariah-

"Isshiah", 'lent to Yah', was perhaps named after the influence of Hannah (who was not a Levite), who considered her giving of Samuel to the Levitical ministry as a lending of him to

Yahweh (1 Sam. 1:28).

1Ch 24:26 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Jaaziah: Beno-
"Mahli" and "Mushi" mean 'sickly' and 'sensitive' respectively. This confirms the suggestion I have often made, that names were given in response to later character and life experience. Sometimes in these genealogies we read the birth names, at others, the names they were given later in life. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 24:27 The sons of Merari: of Jaaziah, Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri-
"Merari" means "bitter"; from these rather unpromising beginnings were to arise those who gave their lives to the service of God and His people. And we see similar transformation in the lives of so many.

1Ch 24:28 Of Mahli: Eleazar, who had no sons-
1 Chron. 23:23 says that Mushi, brother of Mahli, had a son who has the same name as his brother, Mahli (1 Chron. 23:21); which meant 'sickly', so perhaps he died, and he raised up a son in his brother's name, seeing that Mahli's young son Eleazar died childless (1 Chron. 24:28). This may be as in the spirit of 1 Chron. 23:22 (see note there). We marvel at how the huge amount of data given in these lists contains no contradictions; which would only be possible in a Divinely inspired account.

1Ch 24:29 Of Kish; the sons of Kish: Jerahmeel-
"Jerahmeel" means "God will be compassionate", and that was how Jerahmeel was, reflecting God's compassion in his own compassion. For we read in 1 Chron. 23:22 that "Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters only; and their brothers the sons of Kish took them as wives". The levirate law of Num. 36:5-12 was that a man should marry his relative's widow to raise up children to keep the inheritance through in dead man's name. But the Levites had no inheritance. So they were obeying the spirit rather than the letter of the law. To take extra wives and have extra children was a financial burden, so they did this in obedience to the spirit of the law and respect for Eleazar. And that is recorded and remembered in the record to this day.

1Ch 24:30 The sons of Mushi: Mahli, and Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the sons of the Levites after their fathers' houses-
Mushi seems to have had a son called "Mahli", the name of his brother, because the 'sickly' Mahli had died; see on :28.

1Ch 24:31 These likewise cast lots even as their brothers the sons of Aaron in the presence of David the king, and Zadok, and Ahimelech, and the heads of the fathers' households of the priests and of the Levites; the fathers' households of the chief even as those of his younger brother-

These lists have repeat the list of Levitical family groups found in 1 Chron. 23:6-23, but omitting the Gershonites (1 Chron. 23:6-11). "Gershon" can mean 'expelled', maybe meaning that like Reuben he was expelled from the role of firstborn [he is mentioned first as if he was the firstborn]. This is a theme of the Genesis record. Perhaps because of these weaknesses, the line to the high priest ran through Kohath.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 25

1Ch 25:1 Moreover, David and the captains of the army set apart for the service certain of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, stringed instruments and cymbals. The number of those who did the work according to their service was-

See on 1 Chron. 24:1. According to Ezra 2:41, of the singers, only 128 of the children of Asaph returned. This was very poor response. We note that apparently the famous singing families of Heman and Jeduthin didn't return (1 Chron. 25:1). "Captains of the army" could be "captains of the host", referring to the chiefs of the various family groupings now listed, and not referring to military captains. See on :2.

1Ch 25:2 Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah and Asharelah, the sons of Asaph, under the hand of Asaph, who prophesied after the order of the king-

'Prophecy' refers to speaking forth God's word, not necessarily predicting the future. But it would seem great presumption on David's part to arrange 'prophets' who would speak God's word through the music they sung (:1). This would be after the pattern of 1 Sam. 10:5 and 2 Kings 3:15: "While the minstrel played, the hand of the Lord [i.e., the spirit of prophecy] was upon him". Perhaps the idea was that they would only sing music which had been already given by Divine inspiration in the gift of prophecy. But now we read that they were to prophesy "after the order of" David. This could mean they would take it in order to prophesy according to the sequence or order which David had prepared. Or it could mean they would prophesy at David's order, suggesting he imagined he would still be alive when this new temple system had been built by Solomon, thus getting around God's order for him not to build it himself. Even if the "order" is the 'sequence', we are still left with an unpleasant tension between prophesy being from God's instigation and initiative; and David considering that it was to be done according to his 'order', either the sequence he commanded, or his direct command. His spirituality is getting edged out by his evident love of religion. Just as David ordered men to prophesy / speak forth God's word, so it seems he pretty well made up God's word in his own mind...

1Ch 25:3 Of Jeduthun; the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiiah, Hashabiah and Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun with the harp, who prophesied in giving thanks and praising Yahweh-

They were known for prophesying in their praise. As discussed on :2, this could mean that the Spirit came upon them, and the songs they sung were directly inspired by God. But as discussed on :2, it was therefore inappropriate to demand that they did so only at a specific place in the program David had created. That was effectively trying to constrain the Spirit of God.

1Ch 25:4 Of Heman; the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-Ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir and Mahazioth-

The meanings of these names forms an appropriate sentence: "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy upon me; I have magnified and exalted Your help; I spake of it sitting in affliction; grant us still Your visions". This would have been so relevant to the situation at the restoration, and perhaps the Divinely inspired editor of that time arranged the list in this order.

1Ch 25:5 All these were the sons of Heman the king's prophet of the words of God, to lift up

the horn. God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters-

This probably doesn't refer to the use of a literal horn in worship, but rather is it to be connected to the preceding reference to the gift of a large family to Heman. To life up the horn was a Hebraism for power and ability. Heman wanted to fulfill his calling, and God gave him a large and musically gifted family to enable him to do so.

1Ch 25:6 All these were under the hands of their father for the singing ministry in the house of Yahweh, with cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, for the service of God's house: Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman being under the order of the king-

This could mean they would take it in order to prophesy according to the sequence or order which David had prepared. Or it could mean they would prophesy at David's order, suggesting he imagined he would still be alive when this new temple system had been built by Solomon, thus getting around God's order for him not to build it himself. Even if the "order" is the 'sequence', we are still left with an unpleasant tension between prophesy being from God's instigation and initiative; and David considering that it was to be done according to his 'order', either the sequence he commanded, or his direct command. His spirituality is getting edged out by his evident love of religion.

1Ch 25:7 The number of them, with their brothers who were instructed in singing to Yahweh, even all who were skilful, was two hundred and eighty-eight-

They were supposed to be prophets, receiving God's word and expressing that divine input in the words they sung under the influence of prophesy. But here we read that they were singing "to Yahweh". It is the same confusion as when David wants to build God a house, but God replies by saying that He will build David a house.

1Ch 25:8 They cast lots for their offices, all alike, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar-

These Levites were to support the 24 orders of priests listed in chapter 24. They weren't to chose which order they wanted to support or serve together with- that decision was taken by lot. Otherwise, the cliquey spirit which characterizes so many of God's servants would have developed, and this is often the church's greatest disadvantage.

The Hebrew could be "Lots for attendance", as if they were asked to come up from the provinces and serve at the temple at the times of year which the lot defined. But the lots could refer to the order in which they presented their music, which would require all to be present in Jerusalem all the time.

Notice the stress on the equality of the priests and the studied irrelevance of their personal wealth (1 Chron. 24:31; 25:8; 26:12). The Law was geared around the assumption that the priests would be so caught up in Yahweh's work that they would never be rich (consider Dt. 14:29), and the wonder of doing His work would compensate for their lack of physical possessions (Num. 18:23). The early church began by having all things common, in imitation of how the priests had "like portions to eat" (Dt. 18:8). Yet the early church couldn't sustain the intensity of their initial realization of these things.

1Ch 25:9 Now the first lot of Asaph came forth to Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, he and his brothers and sons were twelve-

There were a total of 4000 Levites envisioned as making music (1 Chron. 23:5), so these would have been split up amongst these 24 orders.

1Ch 25:10 the third to Zaccur, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

The record reads as if the lots were cast at David's time. Yet this was before the temple had been built. But the scale of his grandiose plans for the temple required this huge number of

Levites and singers. So we assume he was really running ahead of his time, as if quite obsessed, by working out the musical plans and actually drawing lots for who was going to serve when; although the temple hadn't been built.

1Ch 25:11 the fourth to Izri, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

None of the leaders of these 24 courses were firstborn sons. This confirms God's style of preferring to work with those whom man would place far down the list. 1. Joseph was the second son of Asaph. 2. Gedaliah the eldest son of Jeduthun. 3. Zaccur the eldest of Asaph. 4. Izri the second of Jeduthun. 5. Nethaniah the third of Asaph. 6. Bukkiah the eldest of Heman. 7. Jesharelah the youngest of Asaph. 8. Jeshaiah the third of Jeduthun. 9. Mattaniah the second of Heman. 10. Shimei the youngest of Jeduthun. 11. Azareel the third of Heman. 12. Hashabiah the fourth of Jeduthun. 13. Shubael the fourth of Heman. 14. Mattithiah the fifth of Jeduthun. 15. Jeremoth the fifth of Heman. 16. Hananiah the sixth of Heman. 17. Joshbekashah the eleventh of Heman. 18. Hanani the seventh of Heman. 19. Mallothi the twelfth of Heman. 20. Eliathah the eighth of Heman. 21. Hothir the thirteenth of Heman. 22. Giddalti the ninth of Heman. 23. Mehazioth the fourteenth of Heman. 24. Romamti-ezer, the tenth of Heman.

1Ch 25:12 the fifth to Nethaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

The groups of 12 relatives would have formed a small musical band, maybe a choir, or some instrumentalists and some choir.

1Ch 25:13 the sixth to Bukkiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

These names appear to refer to actual Levites living at the time of David who were chosen by lot to perform. We wonder what they did in the seven years [at least] between this time and the completion of the temple. Perhaps they did sing in the existing tabernacle in Zion.

1Ch 25:14 the seventh to Jesharelah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

Another name for Uzziel, son of Heman.

1Ch 25:15 the eighth to Jeshaiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

'Yah saves'. The words 'Yahweh' and 'saved' occur so often in the life of David and in his Psalms, and so we wonder whether this child had been named in memory of that fact.

1Ch 25:16 the ninth to Mattaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

Nearly all these names have God's Name within them. They were clearly all committed followers of Yahweh, at least in name.

1Ch 25:17 the tenth to Shimei, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

Shimei isn't mentioned in :2-4 in the Hebrew, but his name occurs there in the LXX.

1Ch 25:18 the eleventh to Azarel, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

Uzziel of :4.

1Ch 25:19 the twelfth to Hashabiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

'Yahweh has imputed', perhaps reflective of how someone had perceived the wonder of Yahweh's imputation of righteousness by grace, as the basis of salvation. This had been taught to Israel by God's response to David's sin with Bathsheba. See on :23.

1Ch 25:20 the thirteenth to Shubael, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
Shebuel of :4.

1Ch 25:21 the fourteenth, to Mattithiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
'Gift of Yah', as in :16. This was the name given at birth, and in this case it stuck. It confirms the suggestion I have often made, that sometimes in these genealogies we read the birth names, at others, the names they were given later in life. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 25:22 the fifteenth to Jeremoth, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
Keil observes: "The order of succession was so determined by lot, that the four sons of Asaph (:3) received the first, third, fifth, and seventh places; the six sons of Jeduthun, the second, fourth, eighth, twelfth, and fourteenth; and finally, the four sons of Heman (first mentioned in :4), the sixth, ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth places; while the remaining places, 15-24, fell to the other sons of Heman. From this we learn that the lots of the sons of the three chief musicians were not placed in separate urns, and one lot drawn from each alternately; but that, on the contrary, all the lots were placed in one urn, and in drawing the lots of Asaph and Jeduthun came out so, that after the fourteenth drawing only sons of Heman remained".

1Ch 25:23 the sixteenth to Hananiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
'The grace of Yah'. Grace was and is the distinctive feature of the one true faith and God. David's sin with Bathsheba would have underlined it to all that generation. See on :19,25.

1Ch 25:24 the seventeenth to Joshbekashah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
This name stands out from all the others- 'stiffnecked liver'. Sometimes in these genealogies we read the birth names, at others, the names they were given later in life. This was surely one of the latter. And therefore the same person can have more than one name.

1Ch 25:25 the eighteenth to Hanani, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
I have noted on :19,23 the number of names from David's generation which allude to grace, and this is another one. God's grace to David would have gripped an entire generation of believers at that time.

1Ch 25:26 the nineteenth to Mallothi, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
'Speaker forth', an appropriate name for one who was to be involved in speaking forth God's praises. It is s.w. Ps. 106:2 "Who can utter / speak forth the mighty acts of the Lord". All those who perform public service, especially in the area of worship, should be in the grip of a deep sense of inadequacy for their task before the wondrous spiritual realities they seek to articulate. See on :27.

1Ch 25:27 the twentieth to Eliathah, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
'For the God who consents' would continue the same idea as in :26; a sense of awe that God has allowed us to be involved in His service.

1Ch 25:28 the twenty-first to Hothir, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
'Those caused to remain' would have been an appropriate name to speak to those at the time of the exile and restoration.

1Ch 25:29 the twenty-second to Giddalti, his sons and his brothers, twelve-

'One made great' would perhaps reflect the repeated teaching of David from his own life, and which had affected that generation of believers, that it is God's grace / gentleness that makes any of us great (Ps. 18:35).

1Ch 25:30 the twenty- third to Mahazioth, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
'Receiver of visions', an appropriate name for one whose music was to express the visions of God (see on :2,3).

1Ch 25:31 the twenty-fourth to Romamti-Ezer, his sons and his brothers, twelve-
'Raised up from a heap', a name encouraging to the exiles, and perhaps reflecting Hannah's awareness when she gave Samuel over to Levitical service, that such service is performed in gratitude for having been raised up like Job from the heap (1 Sam. 2:8).

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 26

1Ch 26:1 For the divisions of the doorkeepers: of the Korahites, Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph-

This would have had special relevance for the returned exiles at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, who had to guard the gates and new walls of the temple. The list of the names of the families who were to do this work in Nehemiah contrasts sharply with the list we find here- the Levites simply didn't all do that work, which was so vital during the period of rebuilding. Ezra 2 says that the Gentile nethinim, probably the Gibeonites, were pressed into service as porters / doorkeepers. And so Nehemiah was glad to use anyone willing to do it. We see here the principle of 'The end justifies the means' being put to the test. That principle cannot be applied universally; but we see how by the same token, legalistic obedience to command cannot be allowed to stop the essence of His work being done.

1Ch 26:2 Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah the firstborn Jediah the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth-

1 Chron. 23:5 says that there were 4000 such porters or "gatekeepers". The Mosaic tabernacle had functioned without these huge numbers. But the scale of David's grandiose plans for the temple required this huge number of Levites and singers. He made the mistake which Solomon followed, in thinking that mere scale of worship was somehow pleasing to God; when instead David ought to have learned from his sin with Bathsheba that God looks upon the heart.

1Ch 26:3 Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh-

The "porters and singers" at the restoration were Levites (Neh. 7:1). The use of Levites to guard the gates was a conscious attempt to restore the situation in Solomon's temple (1 Chron. 9:17-22; 26:12-19), suggesting these huge numbers were not just to be porters but also literal defenders of the gates. We should also remember that the Levites and priests accounted for about half the population of Jerusalem (Neh. 11:6-19 cp. 1 Chron. 9:9-22). According to Ez. 44:11-14, the repentant Levites were to be the gatekeepers in the restored temple. But there is no evidence they did repent, indeed the record in Nehemiah shows they were on the side of the Samaritan opposition, intermarrying with them; and so the Kingdom situation possible at the restoration was precluded.

1Ch 26:4 Obed-Edom had sons: Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sacar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth-

Obed-Edom had faithfully cared for the ark when others, including David, didn't want to know about it and even considered it to bring cursing rather than blessing. But he is given no special reward for that spiritual maturity and all those years of quiet work. His family were made mere gatekeepers (Ps. 84:10). And recognition of our quiet service will likewise not be in this life.

1Ch 26:5 Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peullethai the eighth; for God blessed him-
Eight sons was seen as a special blessing. God made Obed-Edom a 'house' because he had truly cared for the ark. David had failed to learn from this point. For God had told him that He didn't want this temple, but rather wanted to make David a house of people.

1Ch 26:6 Also to Shemaiah his son were sons born, who ruled over the house of their father; for they were mighty men of valour-

The great blessing of Obed-Edom's "house" or family is stressed; they were "mighty men of valour", "capable men" (:7). But "just" gatekeepers (Ps. 88:10). As noted on :5, God blessed Obed-Edom by building him a house, just as He had promised to do to David. But David didn't seem interested in that, so fixated was he on his plan to build God the house which God didn't want.

1Ch 26:7 The sons of Shemaiah: Othni, Rephael, Obed and Elzabad, whose brothers were capable men, Elihu and Semachiah-

See on :6. We note all these names have God in them and are not at all secular. They reflect the abiding spirituality of Obed-Edom's family. And he himself was a mere Edomite ["Edom"] servant ["obed"].

1Ch 26:8 All these were of the sons of Obed-Edom: they and their sons and their brothers, able men in strength for the service; sixty-two of Obed-Edom-

1 Chron. 26:8 speaks of a group of 62 relatives of Obed-Edom, whereas 1 Chron. 16:38 speaks of 68. The extra six may refer to "Asaph and his brothers, who are referred to in the otherwise strange reference in 1 Chron. 16:38 to "Obed-Edom with their brothers". The preceding verse (1 Chron. 16:37) has spoken of "Asaph and his brothers". See on 1 Chron. 24:1.

1Ch 26:9 Meshelemiah had sons and brothers, valiant men, eighteen-

The reference to "valiant men" suggests that the work of being a "gatekeeper" indeed focused upon the defence of the gates, although the Hebrew word can equally mean "porter".

1Ch 26:10 Also Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons: Shimri the chief, (for though he was not the firstborn, yet his father made him chief)-

Again continues the theme so often noted in the Biblical record and these name lists, that the firstborn is rejected and others take his place.

1Ch 26:11 Hilkiyah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth. All the sons and brothers of Hosah were thirteen-

Hosah along with Obed-edom was one of those with the honour of carrying the ark (1 Chron. 16:38), but he is still made a humble gatekeeper (Ps. 88:10).

1Ch 26:12 Of these were the divisions of the doorkeepers, even of the chief men, having offices like their brothers, to minister in the house of Yahweh-

The idea is that the chief men as well as their [lesser] "brothers" were all still brethren, and

the experience of serving God was to level them. Notice the stress on the equality of the priests and the studied irrelevance of their personal wealth (1 Chron. 24:31; 25:8; 26:12). The Law was geared around the assumption that the priests would be so caught up in Yahweh's work that they would never be rich (consider Dt. 14:29), and the wonder of doing His work would compensate for their lack of physical possessions (Num. 18:23). The early church began by having all things common, in imitation of how the priests had "like portions to eat" (Dt. 18:8). Yet the early church couldn't sustain the intensity of their initial realization of these things.

1Ch 26:13 They cast lots, the small as well as the great, according to their fathers' houses, for each gate-

This continues the theme discussed on :12, of all these men, of whatever secular standing, being united together in the Lord's service. And that is an abiding principle. True unity and brotherhood is found from serving together, and is never an outcome of merely theoretical agreement.

1Ch 26:14 The lot eastward fell to Shelemiah. Then for Zechariah his son, a wise counsellor, they cast lots; and his lot came out northward-

David's temple envisaged the temple having four main gates, and presumably having a large square wall around it. For the gates he envisages are simply divided according to the points of the compass.

1Ch 26:15 To Obed-Edom southward; and to his sons, the storehouse-
"The gates of the stores", which apparently had two entrances to it (:17).

1Ch 26:16 To Shupim and Hosah, westward, by the gate of Shallecheth, at the causeway that goes up, watch against watch-

'Shallecheth' means "sending or throwing down", and may mean that this was to be "the refuse gate". That is possibly the vision for the west gate behind Ez. 46:19,20. However :18 seems to describe this west gate as having a colonnade and causeway. It could be that this was "the entering in of the house of the Lord". See on :18. It would have led up to the Temple either from Ophel on the south, or from the Western part of the city across the Tyropoeon Valley. Archaeologists have discovered remnants of two such causeways "Wilson's Arch" and "Robinson's Arch".

1Ch 26:17 Eastward were six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and for the storehouse two and two-

The storehouse gate was on the south (:15), so this refers to the south gate with two entrances, rather than the west gate, which is described in :18.

1Ch 26:18 For the colonnade on the west, four at the causeway, and two at the colonnade-

See on :16. It seems David envisaged the entrance as being from the west. But in fact in God's vision of the temple in Ez. 40-48, the east gate, the very opposite, is the entrance. The original word *parvaim* is Persian and means "lighted by the sun", explaining why later these precincts became a place for sun worship (2 Kings 13:11 s.w.). AV "Parbar westward" became the name of a 1980s Christadelphian rock band, named after what they considered was one of the Bible's obscurest verses.

1Ch 26:19 These were the divisions of the doorkeepers; of the sons of the Korahites, and of the sons of Merari-

"Merari" means "bitter"; from these rather unpromising beginnings were to arise those who gave their lives to the service of God and His people. And we see similar transformation in the lives of so many.

1Ch 26:20 Of the Levites, Ahijah was over the treasures of God's house, and over the treasures of the dedicated things-

We note from :26-28 that Samuel, Saul and Joab, as well as David, had dedicated spoils won in battle to the work of the sanctuary. Yet despite that generosity and all those victories, Joab and Saul apparently died unspiritual men and in condemnation. Saul certainly. So generous giving and victories for the Lord are no guarantee at all of true spirituality.

1Ch 26:21 The sons of Ladan, the sons of the Gershonites belonging to Ladan, the heads of the fathers' households belonging to Ladan the Gershonite: Jehieli-

We note that both Moses and Aaron had sons called Gershon (Ex. 2:22). Such repetition of names within families and in the same generation was quite common, and is one thing which makes the study of the genealogies difficult in places.

1Ch 26:22 The sons of Jehieli: Zetham and Joel his brother were over the treasures of the house of Yahweh-

These were "brothers" of Jehieli (1 Chron. 23:8), demonstrating how elastic are the Hebrew terms for "brothers" and "sons of".

1Ch 26:23 Of the Amramites, of the Izharites, of the Hebronites, of the Uzzielites-
That is, the Kohathites (1 Chron. 23:12).

1Ch 26:24 and Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was ruler over the treasures-

This is, I believe, the only reference to any direct descendant of Moses having any public role in the work and worship of Israel. The Bible is carefully against all nepotism, personality cults and inherited sense of spiritual leadership and worthiness. All are to serve God from their own experience and from forging their own personal relationships with Him.

1Ch 26:25 His brothers: of Eliezer, Rehabiah his son, Jeshaiiah his son, Joram his son, Zichri his son and Shelomoth his son-

This could refer to four generations, but the idea was that the descendants of each of these families was to have a specific duty in the temple system. So probably these are all the sons of Rehabiah (1 Chron. 23:17).

1Ch 26:26 This Shelomoth and his brothers were over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which David the king, and the heads of the fathers' households, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the army, had dedicated-

The promises God makes involve a solemn commitment by Him to us- the serious, binding nature of His oath to us is easy to forget. God swore to David "by my holiness" (Ps. 89:35). The Hebrew for "holiness" is the very same word translated "dedication". David's response to God's dedication to him was to dedicate [s.w.] all the silver and gold which he had won from this world, to the service of God's house (1 Chron. 26:26; 2 Chron. 5:1). Our response to God's dedication to us should be a like dedication of what we have to Him. Covenant relationship with God requires much of both Him and us. The case of David is a nice illustration of the meaning of grace. David wanted to *do* something for God- build Him a house, spending his wealth to do so. God replied that no, He wanted to build *David* a house. And He started to, in the promises He gave David. And David's response to that grace is to

still *do* something- to dedicate his wealth to God's house, as God had dedicated Himself to David's house. This is just how grace and works should be related in our experience.

1Ch 26:27 They dedicated some of the spoil won in battles to repair the house of Yahweh- This could refer to a separate fund set up for the long term maintenance or repairing of the house. The fund was evidently empty by the time of 2 Chron. 24:5.

1Ch 26:28 All that Samuel the seer, Saul the son of Kish, Abner the son of Ner and Joab the son of Zeruiah had dedicated, whoever had dedicated anything, it was under the hand of Shelomoth, and of his brothers-

Samuel, Saul and Joab, as well as David, had dedicated spoils won in battle to the work of the sanctuary. Yet despite that generosity and all those victories, Joab and Saul apparently died unspiritual men and in condemnation. Saul certainly. So generous giving and victories for the Lord are no guarantee at all of true spirituality.

1Ch 26:29 Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons were for the outward business over Israel, for officers and judges-

Solomon taught that if the ants can be so zealous, well why can't the ecclesia of God be zealous [for it was 'believers' that he was teaching]. The ants scurry around, working as if there is no tomorrow, to build up something so precarious that is in any case so tragically short lived. Can't we be yet more zealous, with a like loving co-operation, building the eternal things that we are (Prov. 6:6,7)? And Solomon pressed the point further, in that ants are self-motivated; they need no "guide, overseer or ruler". This was surely a reference to the complex system of overseers which Solomon had to place over Israel in order to build the temple and build up the Kingdom. The same Hebrew word for "overseer" is found in 1 Chron. 23:4; 26:29. Yet ideally, he seems to be saying, every Israelite ought to be a zealous worker. Prov. 12:24 says the same: "The hand of the diligent [*whoever* he / she is] shall bear rule [in practice]" [s.w. Prov. 6:7 "ruler"]. And we must ask ourselves, whether for whatever reason the new Israel hasn't slumped into the same problem, of lack of self-motivation, waiting to be asked to do something before we do it, over-relying upon our "overseers". The ants aren't like this. They see the job to be done, and naturally get on with it.

1Ch 26:30 Of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brothers, men of valour, one thousand seven hundred, had the oversight of Israel beyond the Jordan westward, for all the business of Yahweh, and for the service of the king-

"Across Jordan westward" suggests this was written from the perspective of being on the Persian side, suggesting this was a Divinely inspired edit carried out when Chronicles was written up or rewritten in captivity. The context is of the temple service, so perhaps these people were not mere administrative officials, but responsible for gathering the tithes from those areas.

1Ch 26:31 Of the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even of the Hebronites, according to their generations by fathers' households. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour at Jazer of Gilead-

That is, at the very end of David's life. He was active in making his plans right up to the end of his life. Even if building a temple was a case of misplaced ideals and obsession, we have to give him credit for zealously working and planning for the Lord's work right to the end of his days, even when he knew he would not live to see it coming to reality. "There were found" could suggest the problem with finding people according to the genealogical system worked

out. Working out who actually were the living descendants of ancient families would not have been easy.

1Ch 26:32 His brothers, men of valour, were two thousand seven hundred, heads of fathers' households, whom king David made overseers over the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of the Manassites, for every matter pertaining to God, and for the affairs of the king- David was clearly concerned that the tribes on the other side of Jordan might wander both spiritually and politically, and not pay their tithes to the temple. 2700 overseers in their territory was a lot. We note that their brief was to assist them *firstly* in things "pertaining to God". We can assume that as these were Levites, their duty was to teach these separatist tribes about God. We should be concerned firstly about the spiritual wellbeing of weaker, isolated brethren- and only secondly be concerned about their identity with our particular community. Solomon however abused this system by using this system of overseers to eventually whip the people with heavy taxes, which all went to him; even when he had turned away from Yahweh worship.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 27

1Ch 27:1 Now the children of Israel after their number, the heads of fathers' households and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and their officers who served the king, in any matter of the divisions which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year- of every division were twenty-four thousand-

See on 1 Chron. 24:1. Twelve groups of 24,000 men mean that David's total army numbered 288,000 men- probably the majority of the fit men of Israel. David's earlier desire to number the fighting men of Israel would rather suggest that this system didn't work that well in the longer term. If he could trust the leaders to rally their men, then he wouldn't have needed to number them. We have an idealized picture of David's Kingdom presented in Chronicles [hence the omission of his sin with Bathsheba]. This may be because it was understood by the time Chronicles was written that David was a prototype of Messiah. However it could be that the reference to David's numbering in :24 suggests that David sought to number all Israel- as if he felt the 288,000 soldiers weren't enough and wondered how many other men there were available in Israel. In this case he was acting like the wealthy man who counts up his investments and panics that he really needs more.

1Ch 27:2 Over the first division for the first month was Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-

"Jashobeam" was one of David's followers in the wilderness (1 Chron. 11:11). Indeed, nearly all of those mentioned in the list of army commanders here were with him then. Those faithful in the wilderness years were exalted to leadership in David's kingdom, and that is how it shall be with the loyal servants of the Lord Jesus.

1Ch 27:3 He was of the children of Perez, the chief of all the captains of the army for the first month-

This massive system of rotating army service matched that described in previous chapters for serving in the temple. I am uncomfortable with the spiritual implications of all this. It was not envisioned in the Mosaic law, and smacks of the kind of centralized control which is political and religious, rather than spiritual. And as often mentioned, the tabernacle didn't require such huge amounts of labour; the whole temple system which did require it was of David's creation, not God's, although He worked through it.

1Ch 27:4 Over the division of the second month was Dodai the Ahohite, and his division; and Mikloth the ruler; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-

"Thousand" is often used not of 1000 literal persons but of an administrative or military division, and that may be the case here.

1Ch 27:5 The third captain of the army for the third month was Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, chief; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-

Those who followed David in his wilderness years became the senior officials in his Kingdom. There's a clear parallel with the Lord Jesus and we His followers. As a priest, he must have often been unable to fully achieve his priestly calling during the wilderness years. It could even be that Benaiah was not a priest (1 Chron. 4:36 suggests he was a Simeonite), but functioned as one during the years of exile from the sanctuary. This may have led David to himself act as a priest when the ark was brought to Zion.

1Ch 27:6 This is that Benaiah, who was the mighty man of the thirty, and over the thirty; and of his division was Ammizabad his son-

Benaiah was one of David's senior military commanders (2 Sam. 8:18; 1 Chron. 27:5), and the Hebrew of 2 Sam. 23:20 can be translated "Benaiah the son of Jehoiada the priest, as head", i.e. of a group of David's mighty men. The Jehoiada in view as his father would therefore be Jehoiada the priest. The idea is that priests were also military leaders within David's army, indeed it seems there were a large group of them as ordinary soldiers in 1 Chron. 12:27. This shows how priesthood was not understood as abstract spirituality, but that spirituality was articulated in practice.

1Ch 27:7 The fourth captain for the fourth month was Asahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-

Asahel was long dead at this time (2 Sam. 2:23), so the names of these 'captains' may not refer to living men, but rather to symbolic heads. At the very end of David's life, Joab was disloyal to him and Solomon slew him. So we wonder to what extent these detailed plans of David were in fact fulfilled.

1Ch 27:8 The fifth captain for this fifth month was Shamhuth the Izrahite; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-

Izrahite means from the family of Zerah (1 Chron. 2:4,6), meaning he was from the tribe of Judah.

1Ch 27:9 The sixth captain for the sixth month was Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-

He too was from Judah if from Tekoah; these army captains are not evenly spread out throughout the 12 tribes, but many of them were from Judah, thus retaining national control in the hands of David and his immediate tribal and social circle.

1Ch 27:10 The seventh captain for the seventh month was Helez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his division were twenty-four thousand-

He is called a man of Ephraim here, but Beth-Palet [he was a "Paltite", 2 Sam. 23:26] was a town in the tribe of Judah. See on :9.

1Ch 27:11 The eighth captain for the eighth month was Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the

Zerahites; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-
He too was from Judah, from the family of Zerah (1 Chron. 2:4,6); see on :9.

1Ch 27:12 The ninth captain for the ninth month was Abiezer the Anathothite, of the Benjamites; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-
Anathoth was a priestly town, so this may have been a faithful priest from Benjamin who would have been disillusioned with Saul's unspirituality.

1Ch 27:13 The tenth captain for the tenth month was Maharai the Netophathite, of the Zerahites; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-
This is now the third person from the subdivision of Zerah in Judah. The choice of leaders was clearly not representative of all the tribes of Israel, but rather power was being concentrated in the hands of David's tribe and immediate circle.

1Ch 27:14 The eleventh captain for the eleventh month was Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-
Pirathon was in Ephraim (Jud. 12:15), and there was always antipathy between Judah and Ephraim. So as noted on :12, here again was a man who stepped out from his surrounding cultural expectations in loyalty to David.

1Ch 27:15 The twelfth captain for the twelfth month was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel; and in his division were twenty-four thousand-
This was near Jerusalem and the Levitical singers lived there after the exile (Ezra 2:22; Neh. 11:28); so he too may have been a Levite living in Judah. See on :9.

1Ch 27:16 Furthermore over the tribes of Israel: of the Reubenites was Eliezer the son of Zichri the ruler: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maacah-
Gad and Asher are omitted here- perhaps because they were not that loyal to David?

1Ch 27:17 of Levi, Hashabiah the son of Kemuel: of Aaron, Zadok-
This suggests the Levites had two 'rulers', perhaps one over the priests and another over the soldiers, or for the other Levites.

1Ch 27:18 of Judah, Elihu, one of the brothers of David: of Issachar, Omri the son of Michael-
In 1 Chron. 2:15, David is placed seventh of seven sons, but elsewhere eighth of eight (1 Sam. 14:10,11; 17:12). Perhaps the eighth son was the Elihu of 1 Chron. 27:18. Or perhaps one of the sons died without children, and is therefore not included in 1 Chron. 2:15. LXX gives Eliab. Again we see the concentration of power in David's immediate circle (see on :9).

1Ch 27:19 of Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah: of Naphtali, Jeremoth the son of Azriel-
The only other mentions of Obadiah and Azriel in Chronicles refer to Levites. So these men may have been Levites from those areas. Which fits in with the suggestion on :9 that David was appointing a leadership which was loyal to him; for the priesthood was loyal to him, and so the Levites likely were too.

1Ch 27:20 of the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiah-
"Hoshea" is s.w. Joshua, who was also of the tribe of Ephraim (Num. 13:8), and was likely named after him.

1Ch 27:21 of the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo the son of Zechariah: of Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner-

Jaasiel is the son of the Abner who was Saul's cousin (1 Chron. 9:36; 1 Sam. 14:50). This is a departure from the common theme in these lists of David concentrating power in his own circle (see on :9). It was perhaps a sign of David's abiding softness and kindness towards the house of Saul, which is all the more notable because David was an astute politician and was used to cementing his own power through political appointments.

1Ch 27:22 of Dan, Azarel the son of Jeroham. These were the captains of the tribes of Israel- We note that many if not all of these leaders of the tribes, and their fathers, had Godly names.

1Ch 27:23 But David didn't take the number of them from twenty years old and under, because Yahweh had said He would increase Israel like the stars of the sky-

See on 1 Chron. 24:1. This certainly seeks to present David positively. For his desire to take a census of Israel at the time of 2 Sam. 24:1 was a result of his lack of faith, and David himself took guilt over what he had done. We have an example here of God yet again imputing righteousness to David, as He did over the sin with Bathsheba. Or it could be that his refusal to number Israel under the age of 20 was indeed because of his faith that God would multiply Israel, yet at the same time he lacked faith in taking the census of all the fighting men. This co-existence of faith and unbelief in a person is quite typical; how many of us have prayed "Lord I believe, help my unbelief" (Mk. 9:24).

1Ch 27:24 Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but didn't finish; and there came wrath for this upon Israel; neither was the number put into the account in the chronicles of king David-

See on :1. The wrath came "upon Israel" because they sinned by not paying the temple tax due when they were numbered. The sin is presented as theirs, which is why they were punished. David was unwise in leading them into that sin, but he seems to have taken false guilt upon himself over the matter. Which is why they and not he were punished by God.

1Ch 27:25 Over the king's treasures was Azmaveth the son of Adiel. Over the treasures in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the towers, was Jonathan the son of Uzziah-

This could imply that David had his own extensive personal wealth, including vineyards (:27), servants who worked the ground (:26). This was exactly what Samuel had warned Israel about; a human king would take Israel's men to till their ground, and would take their vineyards from them (1 Sam. 8:12,14). That all suggests that David slipped spiritually at the end of his life. For he came from a poor family, and to have all these things meant he had taken them for himself, and had ignored these warnings of his one time mentor Samuel.

1Ch 27:26 Over those who did the work of the field for tillage of the ground was Ezri the son of Chelub-

See on :24. This clearly alludes to the warning of the misbehaviour of Israel's king in 1 Sam. 8:12, so Ezri's job was to ensure that this work was done. We note that the overseers over this (Ezri, Shimei in :27 and Baal Hanan in :28) don't have Godly names but rather secular names.

1Ch 27:27 And over the vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite. And over the increase of the vineyards for the winecellars was Zabdi the Shiphmite-

See on :25,26.

1Ch 27:28 And over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that were in the lowland was Baal Hanan the Gederite. And over the cellars of oil was Joash-

"The lowland" refers to the Shephelah, one of the five subdivisions of the territory of Judah. Baal Hanan may have been a Gentile (1 Chron. 1:49).

1Ch 27:29 And over the herds that fed in Sharon was Shitrai the Sharonite. and over the herds that were in the valleys was Shaphat the son of Adlai-

"Sharon" seems to refer to the pastureland between mount Carmel and Joppa.

1Ch 27:30 And over the camels was Obil the Ishmaelite. And over the donkeys was Jehdeiah the Meronothite. And over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagrite-

The Hagrites were Gentiles who had been defeated by Israelites (1 Chron. 5:18-22). There is quite a theme of the former enemies of David becoming converted to his God and firmly personally loyal to him. We think of the Gittites being so faithful to David, the very men of Gath whose champion he had killed. This kind of radical transformation of human relationships is a major testament to the real power of God in human lives.

1Ch 27:31 All these were the rulers of the substance which was king David's-

This may mean that there was a difference between David's personal wealth, and that of the Kingdom.

1Ch 27:32 Also Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counsellor, a man of understanding, and a scribe. Jehiel the son of Hachmoni was with the king's sons-

Again as noted on :9, we get the impression that David installed his own tribe and personal circle as the leaders of Israel. This list was presumably an older list, and not written at the time the lists of the temple orders were written, which was at the end of David's life. And here we have a mention of David's uncle. But he could be David's nephew, see 2 Sam. 21:21.

1Ch 27:33 Ahithophel was the king's counsellor. Hushai the Archite was the king's advisor-

2 Sam. 23:34 tells us that Bathsheba's father Eliam was "the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite". And he and Uriah were both amongst David's "mighty men". Eliam was the father of Bathsheba, making Ahithophel her grandfather. We can more readily understand why he turned against David after his shameful behaviour with his granddaughter.

1Ch 27:34 and after Ahithophel was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar. The captain of the king's army was Joab-

Joab was given this role but had it removed at least twice. So this list is a snapshot of David's kingdom at some particular point, perhaps taken earlier in his reign.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 28

1Ch 28:1 David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, the captains of the companies who served the king by division, the captains of thousands and hundreds, and the rulers over all the substance and possessions of the king and of his sons, with the officers and the mighty men, even all the mighty men of valour, to Jerusalem-

See on 1 Chron. 24:1. We note again that there was "all the substance and possessions of the king and of his sons". David came from poverty, but now at the end of his life he has personal ownership of substance and possessions. David had his own extensive personal wealth,

including vineyards (1 Chron. 27:27) and servants who worked the ground (1 Chron. 27:26). This was exactly what Samuel had warned Israel about; a human king would take Israel's men to till their ground, and would take their vineyards from them (1 Sam. 8:12,14). That all suggests that David slipped spiritually at the end of his life. For he came from a poor family, and to have all these things meant he had taken them for himself, and had ignored these warnings of his one time mentor Samuel. We noted that the overseers over this (Ezri, Shimei in 1 Chron. 27:27 and Baal Hanan in 1 Chron. 27:28) don't have Godly names but rather secular names.

1Ch 28:2 Then David the king stood up on his feet-

As if standing was now difficult for him, with reduced strength and faculties in his old age.

And said, Hear me, my brothers and my people! As for me, it was in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, and for the footstool of our God; and I had prepared for the building-

See on Ps. 132:8. The ark is called both the throne of God and also His footstool (Ps. 94:5; 132:7,8; 1 Chron. 28:2). Above or sitting upon the cherubim, the pagan mind expected to see Israel's God. But there was (to their eyes) an empty throne. Yahweh had to be believed in by faith. And His supreme manifestation was through the blood of sacrifice. Cassuto gives evidence that the Egyptians and Hittites placed their covenant contracts in a box beneath the throne of their gods; and the tables of the covenant were likewise placed beneath the throne of Yahweh. This similarity begged the comparison yet stronger- Israel's God was *not* seated there. He had to be believed in by faith. Such a concept of faith in an invisible god was quite foreign to the pagan mind; and yet the whole tabernacle plan was designed to have enough points of contact with the pagan tabernacles in order to elicit this point in very powerful form: the one true God is invisible and must be *believed in*.

Or it could be argued that Yahweh was enthroned upon the cherubim, and the ark was His footstool. It was to the ark that Israel came to worship, although it was invisible to them, only visible to the priesthood.

David again expands his narrative, now speaking of the temple as a "house of rest for the ark". But God's resting or abiding was never in anything physical, but always through the abiding / resting of His Spirit in the human spirit / heart.

1Ch 28:3 But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name, because you are a man of war, and have shed blood'-

1 Chron. 22:8; 28:3 are reported speech by David. We wonder if David wasn't imagining this. Why should it be morally objectionable for David to build the temple because he was a man of war? Yahweh is a man of war, yet He was to build David's house. We only learn about God's objection to David building the temple from the passages where David reports what God apparently told him, and from Solomon repeating this. If God did actually say this, then there is a logical contradiction between this and His statements about not wanting a house at all. If He was saying 'I want a physical house, but not built by David', then this appears irreconcilable with the reasons He is actually recorded as giving David for not wanting a house (see on 2 Sam. 7:7-11). Either God wanted a house or He didn't. See on 1 Chron. 28:5,6.

Shimei called David a "bloodthirsty man" (2 Sam. 16:7,8 s.w.). And the same words are [supposedly] used by God about David. So we can wonder whether David was too quick in Ps. 5:6 to assume that the 'man of blood' was hated by God and was of course not him. But there is the possibility that God did say this, but it wasn't earlier recorded. So often in the psalms, David reveals a vicious desire for the blood of his enemies (see on Ps. 21:11). Perhaps it was because of this bloodlust that David was precluded from building the temple

because he had been a man of wars and had shed blood (1 Chron. 28:3). Solomon also shed blood as did many of God's servants, so that alone seems no reason why David couldn't build the temple. Perhaps it was his bloodthirsty attitude, albeit tinged with moments of great grace, forgiveness and gentleness, which led to God's prohibition.

1Ch 28:4 However Yahweh, the God of Israel, chose me out of all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever. For He has chosen Judah to be prince; and in the house of Judah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father He took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel-

David is arguing that Judah had been chosen as the kingly tribe, and then the family of Jesse chosen, and then David. But there is no evidence for these statements. God chose Saul of Benjamin, and worked to provide him every potential to be the king of Israel. It was only because of his failure that God removed him, and then chose not Judah nor Jesse's family, but David personally. That calling was by grace, and in personal response to the spiritual heart which David had at that time. But David now repositions all that, because he is leading up to arguing that therefore Solomon has likewise been "chosen" in a sovereign way by God. But that too was really a forcing of God to fit the narrative which David had decided upon. David here misrepresented God as having chosen David on the basis of lineal descent, when that wasn't at all the case. But David does so because he wants to thereby justify Solomon as the chosen son on the basis of lineal descent.

1Ch 28:5 Of all my sons (for Yahweh has given me many sons), He has chosen Solomon my son to sit on the throne of Yahweh's kingdom over Israel-

David had many sons, but clearly Solomon was the favourite, the love child, effectively, of David's relationship with Bathsheba, the married woman he had become besotted with. It was this favouritism which no doubt provoked Absalom and his other sons to make the rebellions they did, no doubt deeply irked by prophecies like this in Ps. 72, which served the same function as Jacob's giving the priestly coat to Joseph. And it led Solomon to ultimate spiritual failure, because he came to assume that he would automatically fulfil the promises to David about a Messianic son. And so he came to consider himself spiritually inviolate, and came to live a life of debauchery rather than spirituality. David of course claimed that God had chosen Solomon out of all his sons (1 Chron. 28:5), but there is no record of that happening; rather do we suspect that David came to imagine that his own choice was in fact God's. Psalm 72 was David's declaration that he believed Solomon would be the Messianic ruler; but that was proven wrong, because Solomon did not reign with justice and turned away from Yahweh. The words will come true in the person of the Lord Jesus, but David was wrong to insist they must apply to Solomon.

So it was David who chose Solomon, but he is trying to make God be the one who preferred Solomon. As discussed on :4, David had misrepresented God as having chosen David on the basis of lineal descent, when that wasn't at all the case. But David does so because he wants to thereby justify Solomon as the chosen son on the basis of lineal descent. When Adonijah briefly seized power, David was forced to make a statement in support of Solomon; but beyond the reference to a personal comment to Bathsheba that he wanted Solomon to succeed him, David had never made his position on Solomon clear before that time. And there was no recorded word from Yahweh saying that Solomon was to succeed him.

1Ch 28:6 He said to me, 'Solomon, your son, shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him to be My son, and I will be his father-

David specifically claims God has stated the promise of having a son would be fulfilled in Solomon. But the promise itself said this would happen after David slept with his fathers. And the NT specifically applies these words to Jesus and not Solomon.

There can be no doubt that David was proud about his sons; his sappy obsession with Absalom indicates that he cast both spirituality and rationality to the winds when it came to them. The words of 1 Chron. 28:5,6 indicate this: "Of all my sons (for the Lord hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord over Israel. And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house *and my courts*: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father". We have to ask: Is this what God actually said? The records of the promises to David in 2 Sam. 7 and 1 Chron. 17 contain no specific reference to Solomon, nor do they speak of him building physical courts for God. The Davidic promise is fundamentally concerning David's greater household, rather than a physical house. So it seems that David became obsessed with the idea of Solomon being the Messiah, building a physical house for God, and being king over the eternal Messianic Kingdom. The words of Ps. 110:1 are applied by the NT to Jesus, but there is no reason to think that they were not primarily spoke by David with his eye on Solomon, whom he addresses as his Lord, such was his obsession: "The Lord saith unto my Lord..." (RV), and the rest of the Psalm goes on in the language of Ps. 72 to describe David's hopes for Solomon's Kingdom. 'Solomon' was actually called 'Jedidiah' by God through Nathan (2 Sam. 12:25). The 'beloved of God' was surely prophetic of God's beloved Son. When God said "This is my beloved Son", He was surely saying 'Now *this* is the Jedidiah, whom I wanted Solomon to typify'. But David calls him Solomon, the man who would bring peace. I suggest that David was so eager to see in Solomon the actual Messiah, that he chose not to use the name which God wanted- which made Solomon a type of a future Son of God / Messiah. And this led to Solomon himself being obsessed with being a Messiah figure and losing sight of the future Messiah.

1Ch 28:7 I will establish his kingdom forever, if he continues to do My commandments and My ordinances as he does at this time'-

It is clear from :8 that David didn't understand "forever" as meaning 'eternal life' but rather passing on an inheritance down generations without end. But in his earlier Psalms, David had indeed understood the idea of life eternal at the resurrection of the body. He seems to have slipped from that in his old age. David recognizes the conditional nature of the promises to him about his seed, but then he seems to say that the condition of the seed's obedience will be met if the leaders are obedient (:8). All the time, David is wriggling out of the clear statements of God. He had told David not to build a temple for reasons quite other than David's personal history.

1Ch 28:8 Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of Yahweh, and in the audience of our God, observe and seek out all the commandments of Yahweh your God; that you may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever-

The phrase for "inherit good" is used by Solomon in Prov. 28:10, as the reward for the "blameless". But to describe the wise as "blameless" is an example of his over simplistic worldview. All have sinned, none are blameless (Rom. 3:23), as David reflected in his Bathsheba Psalms. But Solomon had whitewashed his parents' sin, and knew nothing of the grace David had discovered at that time. The Lord's parables of the lost in LK. 15 may be seeking to deconstruct Solomon's attitude. The self righteous older son, who considered himself blameless, connects with the 99 sheep who "need no repentance". But "all we like sheep have gone astray", those 99 only thought they needed no repentance, and being so snug in their sheepfold actually only enhanced their sense of self righteousness, and that they were

not in fact the lost. The phrase "inherit good" is only found again here in 1 Chron. 28:8, where David says that this is to be the outcome for those who "seek" for obedience to God's ways. But 'seeking' is not being "blameless". None are blameless, but the spiritually minded seek for God's ways and will therefore "inherit good". Solomon totally lacked this humility and spiritual reality of David.

1Ch 28:9 You, Solomon my son, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind;

To know God is to serve Him, and eternal life will be about knowing God, as it is now (Jn. 17:3). Despite evidence for a spiritual slip in his old age, David quite rightly emphasizes the place of a willing and united heart in serving God. Although we wonder whether he had in mind the idea that Solomon would be literally "perfect". Solomon seems to have assumed that, as he clearly had no conscience of personal sin or possibility of spiritual failure. And this pride led to his undoing.

For Yahweh searches all hearts, and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever-
In :8, Solomon has directed the elders of Israel to seek God. And perhaps he is directing this sentence to them rather than Solomon, whom he liked to think would be "perfect" before God.

1Ch 28:10 Take heed now; for Yahweh has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary-

God had clearly stated that the ark was where He wanted it- in a tent, behind curtains. And He did not want a brick house around it. And yet David urges people to enable the very opposite- to build a sanctuary in terms of a physical building, and to place the ark within it (1 Chron. 22:19). The whole land was seen by God as a sanctuary / holy place s.w. Ex. 15:17). "Let them make Me a sanctuary" (Ex. 25:8) uses a very general word for making / doing, whereas David is trying to localize and define the sanctuary / holy place and is implying God had no such holy place- until it had been built according to his plans. The Kohathites are described as carrying "the sanctuary" (s.w., Num. 10:21); it was the ark which was the essential sanctuary or holy place. But David speaks about the building he proposed around that ark as being the sanctuary. And so form had replaced content, the external the internal, as so often happens when the pole of religion overtakes that of spirituality.

Be strong, and do it-

This is quoted in Ezra 10:4 about the work of the restoration of the temple.

1Ch 28:11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch of the temple, and of its houses, and of its treasuries, and of the upper rooms of it, and of the inner rooms of it, and of the place of the mercy seat-

This sounds as if David handed over to Solomon some architectural plans at this formal gathering, before all Israel (:1). The emphasis upon the porch must be noted. There was no such equivalent to this in the plan of the tabernacle; this was purely of David's grandiose device. Nor were there any "upper rooms" in the tabernacle. "The inner rooms" presumably refer to the holy and most holy places. Yet God had stressed that the ark, upon which was "the mercy seat", the lid of the ark where the cherubim were, was to dwell in "tents". This was His desire, but David speaks of "rooms" for it. If these plans were indeed from God, we would expect to read about the point when a prophet declared them by a "word of the Lord". But instead we have David presenting his plans and visions for the divisions of the Levites, and only then claiming that this was from God's revelation to him (:19).

1Ch 28:12 and the pattern of all that he had in mind for the courts of the house of Yahweh,

and for all the surrounding rooms, for the treasuries of God's house, and for the treasuries of the dedicated things-

See on 1 Chron. 24:1. The key phrase is that this was all that David "had in mind". He will later claim in :19 that God made him understand this. But that would require God to have totally reversed His reasons for not wanting a temple, which He clearly stated when David first had the idea. I suggest David wriggled around those reasons by assuming it was because he personally had shed much blood and Israel was not peaceful enough. He became obsessed with his plans, and assumed that these were in fact from God. When they were of his own device.

David seems to have become obsessed with preparing for the physical building of the temple in his old age. He truly commented: "The zeal of Your house has eaten me up" (Ps. 69:9). The RV margin of 1 Chron. 28:12 makes us wonder whether the dimensions of the temple were in fact made up within David's own mind: "David gave to Solomon his son the pattern... the pattern that he had in his spirit [AV "by the spirit"] for the... house of the Lord". There are several other examples of David wildly over-interpreting. See on 2 Chron. 3:1; 2 Sam. 16:10.

The "surrounding rooms" were chambers around the temple court where the holy vessels and tithes were to be stored (1 Chron. 28:12; 2 Chron. 31:5,11,12; Neh. 13:4-9). It could be to these rooms which the Lord Jesus alludes when He says that in God's house / temple, there are many such rooms and He will go to die on the cross to prepare them for our use (Jn. 14:1-3). He clearly has in view the temple as a spiritual house, comprised of people not bricks. The idea is that His death achieved for us not only salvation, but eternal service as priests within God's "house", being about God's work and business for the sake of others' salvation and implementing their relationship with God. This is what eternity will be about. And it is in this life which we develop our desire to do these things, so that the Kingdom will be a time when all the frustrations and barriers to such service are removed.

1Ch 28:13 also for the divisions of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of Yahweh, and for all the vessels of service in the house of Yahweh-
We have been reading of these divisions in the previous chapters, and David is going to claim in :19 that all this was from God's direct revelation. Yet throughout those chapters we noted David's preference for appointing leaders not from all Israel, but mainly from Judah and his own inner circle. And some of the people mentioned, such as Asahel and David's uncle, had already died. So the schema needed revision. Yet David claims this whole packet of documentation was all directly inspired and revealed by God (:19), when instead, as noted on :12, it was all from David's mind and spirit.

1Ch 28:14 of gold by weight for the gold, for all vessels of every kind of service; for all the vessels of silver by weight, for all vessels of every kind of service-

This was indeed a measure of David's obsession, calculating the exact weight of gold for each vessel. Even though this was not specified in the commands for building the tabernacle. 1 Kings 7:47 implies Solomon tried to calculate the total weight of all the vessels once they had been made, but the inventory was so huge that he left off. Yet so many vessels were not required by the tabernacle service. This was a completely different, grandiose religious system of David's own device; and in the end, all these vessels of mere religion were taken off into captivity (2 Kings 25:14-16 emphasizes this).

1Ch 28:15 by weight also for the lampstands of gold, and for its lamps, of gold, by weight for every lampstand and for its lamps; and for the lampstands of silver, by weight for every lampstand and for its lamps, according to the use of every lampstand-

See on :14. "The candlestick" or menorah is only ever spoken of in the law of Moses in the singular, but here David has decided there were to be multiple such candlesticks. By doing so, he ignored the symbolism of the one candlestick, such was his obsession with mere religion.

1Ch 28:16 and the gold by weight for the tables of show bread, for every table; and silver for the tables of silver-

The table of show bread was to be made of acacia wood (Ex. 25:23), but David planned to make it of pure gold, and even worked out the weight of gold required for it (1 Chron. 28:16). And Solomon indeed made it of gold (1 Kings 7:48), leading to it being known as "the pure table" (2 Chron. 13:11). Religion had overtaken spirituality, form had eclipsed content. Likewise the "tables of silver" David ordered to be made (1 Chron. 28:16) do not feature in the tabernacle. He was missing the point- that God wanted His holiest symbols made of common, weak things like acacia wood. For His strength and glory is made perfect in weakness. David claims these plans were from God (1 Chron. 28:19), although as discussed on 1 Chron. 28:12, they were in fact from his own mind. The way these things were taken into captivity, with no record of this golden table ever being returned, surely reflects God's judgment upon this kind of religious show. He prefers a humble house church in an inner city room, rather than a gold plated cathedral. The way some exclusive churches speak of 'maintaining a pure table' suggests they have made the same essential mistake as David did.

1Ch 28:17 and the forks, and the basins, and the cups, of pure gold; and for the golden bowls by weight for every bowl; and for the silver bowls by weight for every bowl-

There was little point in making forks and basins of pure gold, a soft metal. This was all for religious show, and not at all stipulated in the Divine design for the tabernacle.

1Ch 28:18 and for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the chariot, the cherubim, that spread out, and covered the ark of the covenant of Yahweh-

Here we have a clear association between the cherubim and the idea of a chariot. The idea of the cherubim is that this is God in motion. And so we behold the contradiction. David wants this cherubim chariot fixed in one place; whereas God had told David that He didn't want a temple, because He was a God on the move. His ark and the associated cherubim had always been moving and therefore the ark was to be portable. But David was seeking to tie down the ever moving God in one place. This is what religion ever seeks to do to spirituality.

1Ch 28:19 All this, said David, I have been made to understand in writing from the hand of Yahweh, even all the works of this pattern-

In the previous chapters, we have David presenting his plans and visions for the divisions of the Levites, and only now claiming that this was from God's revelation to him. See on :11,12. If these plans were indeed from God, we would expect to read about the point when a prophet declared them by a "word of the Lord". The "said David" is highly significant. Here we see the difference between inspiration and revelation. The record of the words is inspired, but this is not Divine revelation. LXX "David gave all to Solomon in the Lord's handwriting". This was David's claim, trying to make his plans equivalent to Yahweh's writing the ten commandments in His handwriting. But there is no record of this at all. David is desperate to make his narrative God's and even reasons that his handwriting is God's. And so all expanded narratives end up a playing God.

1Ch 28:20 David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and courageous, and do it. Don't be afraid, nor be dismayed; for Yahweh God, even my God, is with you. He will not fail you, nor

forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of Yahweh is finished-

The "service" of Yahweh is never finished, and yet David speaks as if it will finish when the temple is built. This reflects his obsession with the project. But maybe the words of David to Solomon here came to the Lord's mind in Mt. 27:46: "My God (cp. "My God, My God") is with you... He will not... forsake you". Recognizing He had now been forsaken, the Lord Jesus agreed "It is finished". Indeed, from the moment He left the Upper Room the work was finished and therefore the presence of the Angel departed (Jn. 17:4 "I have finished the work...").

Being "dismayed and terrified" is the term used of how Israel generally were terrified of Goliath, whereas David by faith wasn't (1 Sam. 17:11). David in turn uses to his son Solomon (1 Chron. 22:13; 28:20). He was thereby urging Solomon not to worry if he was out of step with all Israel; if they were dismayed and terrified, he was still to walk in faith as David had done at the time of the Goliath crisis. It is also used to urge the people toward the spirit of David rather than that of Israel in 2 Chron. 20:15,17. The same phrase is also used in urging the people of Judah in Hezekiah's time to consider the Assyrians to be as a Goliath which they like David could vanquish (2 Chron. 32:7). The exiles likewise were urged not to be dismayed and terrified at the reproach of men (Is. 51:7; Jer. 30:10), very clearly making the history with Goliath relevant to their times.

1Ch 28:21 Behold, there are the divisions of the priests and the Levites, for all the service of God's house. There shall be with you in all kinds of work every willing man who has skill, for any kind of service. Also the captains and all the people will be entirely at your command-
The language of willing men with skill recalls that of the building of the tabernacle by skilled workmen (Ex. 35:35), using materials supplied by willing hearts (Ex. 35:5,21). But David was wrong to imply that this temple he had conceived was some kind of tabernacle. For on point after point, he goes against both the letter and spirit of the directions regarding the tabernacle. But he is shrouding his whole project in the language of the tabernacle.

1 CHRONICLES CHAPTER 29

1Ch 29:1 David the king said to all the assembly, Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, is yet young and tender-

"Whom alone..." is a political statement. David of course claimed that God had chosen Solomon out of all his sons (1 Chron. 28:5), but there is no record of that happening; rather do we suspect that David came to imagine that his own choice was in fact God's. Psalm 72 was David's declaration that he believed Solomon would be the Messianic ruler; but that was proven wrong, because Solomon did not reign with justice and turned away from Yahweh. The words will come true in the person of the Lord Jesus, but David was wrong to insist they must apply to Solomon.

So it was David who chose Solomon, but he is trying to make God be the one who preferred Solomon. As discussed on 1 Chron. 28:4, David had misrepresented God as having chosen David on the basis of lineal descent, when that wasn't at all the case. But David does so because he wants to thereby justify Solomon as the chosen son on the basis of lineal descent. When Adonijah briefly seized power, David was forced to make a statement in support of Solomon; but beyond the reference to a personal comment to Bathsheba that he wanted Solomon to succeed him, David had never made his position on Solomon clear before that time. And there was no recorded word from Yahweh saying that Solomon was to succeed him.

And the work is great; for the palace is not for man, but for Yahweh God-

This is true on one level, but not on another. The greatness of God is not necessarily responded to by lavish decoration of buildings, as we see in the Orthodox churches. God dwells in the hearts of men and not in such buildings

1Ch 29:2 Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, the brass for the things of brass, the iron for the things of iron and wood for the things of wood; onyx stones and stones to be set, stones for inlaid work and of various colours, all kinds of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance-

The reference to precious stones would suggest that David was seeking to make new robes for the high priest, including a new breastplate. But the scale of the materials suggests David was going far beyond that, and instituting a new religious system with opulence everywhere, with "inlaid work" on fixtures which was not stipulated in the tabernacle plans. This was quite contrary to God's desire to live in the hearts of people; those hearts were precious stones to Him. And He specifically stated He wanted the ark to dwell in a tent. LXX "Parian marble"; the word is only used of the decadent palace of Esther 1:6. The spiritually minded amongst the exiles would have observed the parallels.

1Ch 29:3 In addition, because I have set my affection on the house of my God-

"Affection" here is s.w. :17 of God's "pleasure" in righteousness. David assumes that God has pleasure / affection towards him because he has this obsession with building a temple- which God had said He didn't want. The whole story here is a parade example of where religion overtakes spirituality, and form eclipses content. This is the same word David used in saying that God doesn't "delight" or set His affection upon sacrifices, but rather upon broken, contrite hearts of repentant sinners (Ps. 51:16 "You do not delight in / have affection to burnt offering, or I would give it"). But now David's delight is in burnt offerings and rituals, and a temple where they could be offered in larger number than in the tabernacle. He has slipped back from spirituality to religion at the very end of his journey; and yet still will be saved.

Since I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, I give it to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house-

What we have is not ours because we worked for it- although that, I know, is how it feels. It is ours on loan. Surely this of itself ought to mean that each of us leaves our property, if we own any, to the Lord's work, after the pattern of how David left all his personal wealth to the work of the temple, rather than to Solomon personally.

But as with Haman offering huge amounts of money, we wonder where exactly David acquired all this personal wealth from. David had his own extensive personal wealth, including vineyards (1 Chron. 27:27), servants who worked the ground (1 Chron. 27:26). This was exactly what Samuel had warned Israel about; a human king would take Israel's men to till their ground, and would take their vineyards from them (1 Sam. 8:12,14). That all suggests that David slipped spiritually at the end of his life. For he came from a poor family, and to have all these things meant he had taken them for himself, and had ignored these warnings of his one time mentor Samuel. See on :12.

1Ch 29:4 even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, with which to overlay the walls of the house-

This is a huge amount of wealth to now additionally offer, for the sake of rendering the temple with gold. This kind of opulence is quite opposed to the humble spirit of the tabernacle construction. The amount may be less if we recall that Chronicles was rewritten under Divine inspiration for the exiles, and "talents" may refer to Persian talents which were

considerably less than Hebrew talents. But it may well be that David is wildly exaggerating, in order to elicit yet more such donations from other wealthy people. David boasts in 1 Chron. 29:4 that his gold is "of Ophir", whereas in reality Solomon covered the house with gold "of Parvaim" (2 Chron. 3:6). This suggests that David may not in fact have had in hand all the fantastic personal wealth he boasted of donating for the rendering of the house with gold. The figures also contradict David's claim in 1 Chron. 22:14 "I have made a great effort in preparing for the house of Yahweh one hundred thousand talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance. I have also prepared timber and stone". The amount of gold and silver David claims to have donated to the temple is beyond credibility. At the height of Solomon's power he only received 666 talents / year. He is in fantasy about himself and the temple. In the same way he refers to Solomon as young and tender (29:1) when he was at least 30 years old. As always, this was the narrative David wanted to present and believe. Likewise his claim that God had chosen only Solomon out of all David's sons. Earlier, David clearly had ambitions for his sons Ammon and Absalom to be the Messianic son of David. But they messed up and we're dead. So the claim God had only chosen Solomon is false. All this confirms my suggestion that 2 Sam. 23 was indeed the last prophetic, Divinely inspired words of David. All the rest was said by him not by revelation, although the record of what he said is Divinely inspired. He is again caught up in his own narrative, about his own wealth and power, and how the temple will be so opulent. He has totally ignored God's words about preferring to dwell in a tent. Again we see the consequence of getting lost in a false narrative; it always expands. The David who has never previously presented as materialistic, now presents as obsessed with his own wealth and trumpeting his generosity to the narrative he has created- of the temple God never wanted.

1Ch 29:5 of gold for the things of gold, and of silver for the things of silver, and for all kinds of work to be made by the hands of artisans. Who then offers willingly to consecrate himself this day to Yahweh?-

David was almost covetous for the donations of others, and therefore appears to overstate his own voluntary donation (see on :5). This is all an example of how he was obsessed with the project. What God required was willingly consecrated hearts, not consecration to God through impressive material donations towards a project God didn't want anyway.

To "consecrate" is literally to fill one's hand to the Lord, meaning to provide oneself with something which one brings to the Lord, as in Ex. 32:29. We note the paradox. To give something to God means your hand is full with it, you retain it in the spiritual sphere but not in the literal, material world. And yet whatever we thought was in our own hand was in fact in God's hand and is anyway in His hand: "From You came the riches and the glory ... and in Your hand it is" (:12,14,16).

1Ch 29:6 Then the princes of the fathers' households, and the princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers over the king's work, offered willingly-

As in :3, we wonder from where the leaders of Israel had such huge wealth. I noted on 1 Chron. 27 and elsewhere that David had appointed leaders who were largely from his own tribe and personal circle. The impression we get now is that they had all enriched themselves at others' expense. See on :3.

1Ch 29:7 and they gave for the service of God's house five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold, and of silver ten thousand talents, of brass eighteen thousand talents and of iron a hundred thousand talents-

The mention of darics, a Persian measurement, suggests this record was rewritten [under inspiration] in exile. See on :4. This would mean that "talents" may refer to Persian talents, which were considerably less than Hebrew talents. "Darics" certainly shows Chronicles was written or rewritten in exile, encouraging the Jews to prepare for a Davidic Messiah to arise and to rebuild the temple. This is one reason why David is sanitized in the Chronicles record-to present him as a type of the Messiah they could potentially have had at the restoration.

But the sum of 5000 talents is still barely credible. (5000 talents equals about 150 tonnes, i.e. 150000 kilograms of gold). This is in addition to the 3000 talents which David supposedly gave. It is doubtful whether there was that amount of gold in one place anywhere in the ancient world. Again we get the impression that David is eagerly counting every penny, and more than that, exaggerating grossly. He ends his days totally failing to learn from the sin of numbering Israel and trying to establish God's Kingdom immediately by his human strength. And also he has an eye for material wealth and strength rather than the trust in Yahweh which had characterized his earlier, younger life. Yet he will still be saved.

1Ch 29:8 They with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of Yahweh, under the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite-

The only precious stones required were those for the breastplate and garments of the high priest. These were given by the rulers of the people (Ex. 35:9,27). But we have the impression that a huge amount of precious stones was gathered from the leaders. Far more than the 12 stones of the breastplate. Again, the simple, humble nature of the tabernacle was being subverted by a mistaken idea that God is honoured by opulence- a lesson Pentecostalism has failed to learn.

The language in this chapter clearly reflects that of Israel giving the required materials for building the tabernacle. The precious stones sound like those used in the High Priest's garments. David was not only wanting to build a temple but had expanded his narrative to create an entire worship system. None of us this was asked for by God. Once we begin down a path of our own creation, our narrative expands. None of this would have happened had David taken God at His word when God explained why He didn't want a temple and preferred a tent and to dwell on the hearts of the seed of His future Son. No lie remains alone, it expands, false narratives likewise expand. We are to love truth and hate untruth. Otherwise we will believe an ever expanding lie.

1Ch 29:9 Then the people rejoiced, because they offered willingly, because with a complete heart they offered willingly to Yahweh: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy-

It is true that even if all this opulence was a case of misplaced idealism, genuine giving to God rather than retaining for ourselves is a source of personal joy. We will note on :14,18 that this attitude of heart was also given by God. But we wonder whether the record here, although inspired by God in its recording, was really the summary of the narrative David wished to believe. Because the language of the people rejoicing for their willing giving recalls the descriptions of the people willingly offering for the building of the tabernacle (Ex. 25:2; 35:21,22,29). But David was not building or rebuilding the tabernacle; he was building a grandiose religious system which in letter and spirit was out of step with the tabernacle specifications. And although the people in the wilderness offered so willingly, they were far from God in their hearts and turned back to Egypt. They were not justified by their apparent generosity.

1Ch 29:10 Therefore David blessed Yahweh before all the assembly; and David said, You are blessed, Yahweh, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever-

This public praise of God "before all" appears out of step with the real spirit of praise and

worship. This prayer ends with the people prostrating themselves before David, which all seems so spiritually inappropriate for the man who was initially loved as the shepherd boy with a humble heart. See on :20.

1Ch 29:11 Yours, Yahweh, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory and the majesty! For all that is in the heavens and in the earth is Yours. Yours is the kingdom, Yahweh, and You are exalted as head above all-

The common rubric found in the histories of the kings is that the "might" of a king was recorded at his death (1 Kings 15:23; 16:5,27; 22:45; 2 Kings 10:34; 13:8,12; 14:15,28; 20:20). "His might that he showed" uses a word for "might" which has the sense of victory / achievement. But the contrast is marked with the way that David so often uses this word for "might / victory / achievement" in the context of *God's* "might"; notably in 1 Chron. 29:11, which the Lord Jesus places in our mouths as part of His model prayer: "Yours is the power [s.w. "might"], and the glory and the majesty". The kings about whom the phrase is used were those who trusted in their own works. It therefore reads as a rather pathetic memorial; that this man's might / achievement was noted down. But the unspoken further comment is elicited in our own minds, if we are in tune with the spirit of David: "But the only real achievement is the Lord's and not man's". All human victory and achievement must be seen in this context. The same word is used in Jer. 9:23,24: "Don't let the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might [s.w.]... but let him who glories glory in this, that he has understanding, and knows Me, that I am Yahweh who exercises loving kindness, justice, and righteousness, in the earth". The glorification of human "might" is often condemned. "Their might [s.w.] is not right" (Jer. 23:10; also s.w. Jer. 51:30; Ez. 32:29; Mic. 7:16 and often).

David prayed "Yours is the Kingdom" when madly going about to build up his own kingdom with his son as the head of it. But this is the same easily made error that we can all make when praying the Lord's prayer.

1Ch 29:12 Both riches and honour come from You, and You rule over all; in Your hand is power and might; it is in Your hand to make great, and to give strength to all-

David appears to have himself in view, the one from a poor family who had been "made great" by God's gentleness and grace (Ps. 18:35). Yet I suggested on :3 that David had really made himself great by taking wealth not intended for him. And we hear the same today, people praising God for having blessed them with what in fact they blessed themselves with, often by unethical means.

1Ch 29:13 Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name-

David has used the same phrase in Ps. 66:2; but the following context of the Psalm is of his praise of God's grace in redeeming and saving His unspiritual people. But now, David appears to be praising God for the works which he himself is able to do. This is the inverse image of how God had told David that He didn't want a temple built, but rather wanted to build David a house of people whom He had redeemed by grace.

1Ch 29:14 But who am I-

This was David's response when God first told him that He didn't want a temple, but rather would build a house for David from his descendants. David has totally misrepresented God's response as saying that He did in fact welcome the idea of a grandiose physical temple, and so by repeating his response at the time, he is surely guilty of a false humility.

And what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly as this?-

The idea is that even the desire to offer willingly was given by God, as well as the actual

materials given. As will be noted on :18, God can give desires and motives to people, working directly on the human heart. And He can do so today, in the hearts of those open to the working of the Holy Spirit.

For all things come from You, and of Your own have we given You-

God insisted through Malachi (3:8-12), you are *robbing me* if you don't give back, or even if you don't give your heart to Him in faith. *And will a man rob God?* Will a man...? We must give God what has His image stamped on it: and we, our bodies, are made in His image (Mt. 22:21); therefore we have a duty to give ourselves to Him. We are not our own: how much less is 'our' money or time our own! Like David, we need to realize now, *in this life*, before the judgment, that all our giving is only a giving back to God of what we have been given by Him. The danger of materialism is the assumption that we are ultimate owners of what we 'have'. When Eli and his sons kept part of God's sacrifices for themselves, he was condemned: "You trample upon My sacrifice and My offering" (1 Sam. 2:29 RVmg.). This is what we are doing by considering that anything that is God's is in fact ours- we are trampling upon that which is His.

1Ch 29:15 For we are strangers before You, and foreigners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is no remaining-

Foreigners were sometimes allowed to reside in the capital city of another nation under the immediate protection of the king or of the heads of the state (cp. 1 Sam. 22:3,4; 27:3; 15:19). David appeals to God on the ground that Israel is likewise living in His city and therefore under God's protection (Cp. Ps. 39:12). The idea anyway is of usufruct, not owning the land, but allowed to eat what grows upon it. And that should be the spirit of our living on this earth at this time.

David uses the language of Gentiles, appreciating that their Hebrew roots, in ethnic terms, were of no real value in achieving their salvation. Their inherent mortality as men, of whatever ethnic background, meant that they were saved by grace and not because of their ethnicity. Because we brought nothing into the world and can carry nothing out, i.e. because of our very nature, we shouldn't be materialistic and should be content (1 Tim. 6:7,8). In saying this, Paul is alluding to how Job faced up to the reality of our condition by saying that we entered this world naked and return naked (Job 1:21). Paul is saying that we are all in Job's position, facing up to the loss of all things, and should count it a blessing to have even clothing. David said that just because "our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding", therefore he wanted to be as generous as possible in providing for the work of God's house (1 Chron. 29:14-16).

1Ch 29:16 Yahweh our God, all this store that we have prepared to build You a house for Your holy name comes from Your hand, and is all Your own-

David sees the wealth which he and the leaders of Israel had offered as having come from God. But I explained on :3 that in fact they appear to have acquired that huge wealth by unGodly means. This kind of thing goes on often. Men build up wealth in their own strength, often by unGodly means; and then piously claim it is all God's blessing, and they are giving it back to God. This is far from just the tendency of the very wealthy; it applies to people on all levels of wealth.

1Ch 29:17 I know also, my God, that You try the heart, and have pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these things. Now have I seen with joy Your people, that are present here, offer willingly to You-

But David clearly advertised his own huge giving in order to elicit such donations from other wealthy people. So to then praise God for their willing hearts is somewhat less than truthful.

"Willingly offered" is LXX "with a single eye". Speaking in the context of serving *either* God *or* mammon, the Lord uttered some difficult words: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth...the light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness...how great is that darkness!" (Mt. 6:19-22). All this is in the context of not being materialistic. The Lord is drawing on the OT usage of "an evil eye"- and consistently, this idiom means someone who is selfishly materialistic (Prov. 22:9; 23:7; 28:22; Dt. 15:9). The NIV renders some of these idioms as "stingy" or "mean". A single eye refers to a generous spirit (1 Chron. 29:17 LXX), and a related Greek word occurs in 2 Cor. 8:2; 9:11,13 with the sense of "generous". So surely the Lord is saying that our attitude to wealth controls our whole spirituality. Whether we have a mean or generous spirit will affect our whole life- an evil [stingy] eye means our whole body is full of darkness.

1Ch 29:18 Yahweh, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Israel our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and prepare their heart for You-

NET: "Maintain the motives of your people and keep them devoted to you". This is a clear example of how God through His Spirit can work directly on the human heart, giving motivations and preparing minds. And this is really what we so earnestly need in our spiritual lives.

1Ch 29:19 Give to Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies and Your statutes, and to do all these things, and to build the palace, for which I have made provision-

As in 1 Chron. 28:9 we marvel that David has so little insight into the state of the human heart. David's heart was on balance with God, but as with every man apart from the Lord, his human heart was very corrupt as well. But David refuses to see this, preferring a simplistic binary division of men into being either sinners or having perfect hearts. Whilst we can argue that perfect reflects the Hebrew sense of complete, David imagines his son will be God's Son and therefore perfect morally.

As noted on :18, David understood God to have the ability to work directly upon the human heart, and to make people obedient. This is the function of the Holy Spirit today. But as with Solomon, God will never force a person to be obedient if this is not in fact what they themselves truly want.

Solomon's prophetic sonship of David was conditional upon him preserving or observing Yahweh's ways (1 Kings 2:4; 1 Chron. 22:13; 2 Chron. 7:17); but he didn't preserve nor observe them (1 Kings 11:10,11); despite David praying that Solomon would be given a heart to observe them. It seems David assumed his prayer was answered, and Solomon was somehow made righteous and even perfect. This would account for Solomon's lack of personal conscience of sin and possible failure, which was to be his spiritual undoing. We can pray for God to work upon the hearts of others, but He will not force people against their own deepest will and heart position. Solomon stresses overmuch how God would keep or preserve the righteous (Prov. 2:8; 3:26), without recognizing the conditional aspect of this. Why did Solomon go wrong? His Proverbs are true enough, but he stresses that obedience to *his* wisdom and teaching would preserve his hearers (Prov. 4:4; 6:22; 7:1; 8:32; 15:5), preservation was through following the example of the wise (Prov. 2:20); rather than stressing obedience to *God's* ways, and replacing David his father's simple love of God with a love of academic wisdom: "Yahweh preserves all those who love Him" (Ps. 145:20).

Solomon keeps saying that his zealous work for the temple was the result of God's promise to David having fulfillment in him (1 Kings 8:24-26), and to some extent this was

true. David earnestly prayed for Solomon to be the Messianic King (e.g. Ps. 72), and therefore David asked for Solomon to be given a truly wise heart (1 Chron. 29:19). These prayers were answered in a very limited sense- in that Solomon was given great wisdom, and his Kingdom was one of the greatest types of Christ's future Kingdom. Our prayers for others really can have an effect upon them, otherwise there would be no point in the concept of praying for others. But of course each individual has an element of spiritual freewill; we can't force others to be spiritual by our prayers; yet on the other hand, our prayers can influence their spirituality. David's prayers for Solomon is the classic example of this. Those prayers were heard most definitely, in that God helped Solomon marvellously, giving him every opportunity to develop a superb spirituality; but he failed to have the genuine personal desire to be like this in his heart, in his heart he was back in Egypt, and therefore ultimately David's desire for Solomon to be the wondrous Messianic King of his dreams had to go unfulfilled.

1Ch 29:20 David said to all the assembly, Now bless Yahweh your God! All the assembly blessed Yahweh, the God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads and prostrated themselves before Yahweh and the king-

Such prostration before David was surely inappropriate. David was really playing God, and the whole scene, although it includes many spiritual words and ideas, smacks of pride and inappropriate opulence.

1Ch 29:21 They sacrificed sacrifices to Yahweh, and offered burnt offerings to Yahweh, on the next day after that day, even one thousand bulls, one thousand rams and one thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel-

This was clearly out of step with what David had earlier been taught after his sin with Bathsheba; that God did not want thousands of sacrifices, but rather broken, contrite hearts (Ps. 40:6-8). And Solomon repeats David's failure in this, by again offering such huge numbers of sacrifices. Which, like the temple, God didn't want.

1Ch 29:22 and ate and drink before Yahweh on that day with great gladness. They made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed him to Yahweh to be prince, and Zadok to be priest-

It seems that this was "that day" when David had made his public prayer. So Solomon was made king shortly before David actually died. "The second time" refers to how the first time, David had hurriedly pronounced Solomon king at the time of Adonijah's rebellion. We note that *they* anointed him to be king, whereas Saul and David were anointed by God to be king. Zadok was made high priest because the other high priest Abiathar had supported Adonijah's rebellion and had been demoted.

1Ch 29:23 Then Solomon sat on the throne of Yahweh as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him-

Solomon would only prosper if he was obedient to the Divine commandments (s.w. 1 Chron. 22:13). But he didn't do so, and so his prospering was in appearance.

1Ch 29:24 All the princes, the mighty men, and also all the sons of king David submitted themselves to Solomon the king-

Again the record appears to be reflecting the narrative which David and Solomon wanted to believe. For Solomon slew his brother Adonijah and any other potential competitors for his throne. Those who remained presumably only submitted themselves out of fear.

1Ch 29:25 Yahweh magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed on him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel-

Despite all the unspirituality of this situation, God was willing to work with what He had. He likewise worked through a human kingship system, although it was a rejection of Him; and He was to inhabit the temple, although He never wanted it built in the first place. Solomon, like Saul, was set up with the potential for being the Messianic seed / king; but he failed to use the huge potential given him.

1Ch 29:26 Now David the son of Jesse had reigned over all Israel-

"All Israel" is stressed. The exiles for whom Chronicles was rewritten were commanded to participate in a renewed Davidic kingdom, which was intended to comprise the repentant remnants of both Judah and the ten tribes.

1Ch 29:27 The time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned seven years in Hebron, and he reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem-

Solomon, David and Saul are all stated to have reigned 40 years, and it may be a non literal number. If Saul reigned 40 years (Acts 13:21), this creates various chronological problems. Paul's argument in Acts 13:21 seems to be seeking to draw a parallel between Israel's 40 years in the desert and Saul's reign. Numbers are simply not used in Semitic literature in the literalistic way that they are in the writings of other cultures. To this day an Arab may describe a hot day as being 100 degrees C, when it is not that literally. But the Arab is not lying nor deceiving; it's a case of using numbers within a different context of language usage. David beginning his reign at 30 may be intended to recall how the Levites began serving at 30 (Num. 4:3), because David was set up to be the priest-king who would replace the high priesthood according to Hannah's song. And at times he clearly did act like this, although his failures meant that the potential was reapplied and reframed to fulfilment in the Lord Jesus.

1Ch 29:28 He died in a good old age, full of days, riches and honour; and Solomon his son reigned in his place-

This again presents David from a very idealistic viewpoint, part of the narrative which David and Solomon wished to believe. For I discussed on :3 how his wealth was perhaps wrongly acquired. And he hardly died with universal honour, for the last years of his life, right up to Adonijah's rebellion when he was on his death bed, were characterized by discontent with him. The record of the words is inspired, but that is not to say that we are not reading a history written by someone who wished to justify the David-Solomon narrative.

1Ch 29:29 Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the history of Samuel the seer, in the history of Nathan the prophet and in the history of Gad the seer-

"The history" is literally 'the words'. The reference may not be to the books of Samuel; the Hebrew title for The Books of Chronicles is "The words (or the acts) of the days". And that book may well be a compilation of the three sources listed here.

1Ch 29:30 with accounts of all his reign and his might, and the circumstances which he and all Israel experienced, and those of all the kingdoms of the surrounding countries-

"Circumstances" is "the times". But this history or "times" needs to be interpreted, as it was by those of 1 Chron. 12:32. It seems from this that the histories of :29 included histories of the nations surrounding Israel, and it would appear that these are being referenced as if they

existed somewhere. It seems that when Chronicles was rewritten under inspiration in exile, there developed a body of such literature, although the texts of :29 are not all preserved.