

Survey of the Bible part 33 2Chronicles 1-

2Chronicles begins with Solomon taking his father's place as King and one of his first tasks is to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. He begins by going to the place it now resides which is at Gibeon.

2 Chronicles 1:3 ³ Then Solomon and all the assembly with him went to the high place which was at Gibeon, for God's tent of meeting was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness.

Solomon then ordered that a thousand burnt offerings be offered to the Lord at the tent of the meeting and that night God appeared to Solomon.

2 Chronicles 1:7 ⁷ In that night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask what I shall give you."

Imagine if the Creator God of the universe asked you such a question what do you suppose you would ask of God?

Notice what Solomon asks for.

2 Chronicles 1:8-10 ⁸ Solomon said to God, "You have dealt with my father David with great lovingkindness, and have made me king in his place. ⁹ "Now, O LORD God, Your ¹promise to my father David is fulfilled, for You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. ¹⁰ "Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of Yours?"

Keep in mind that not much earlier David had said this about his son.

1 Chronicles 29:1 ^{NAU} Then King David said to the entire assembly, "My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is still young and inexperienced and the work is great; for the temple is not for man, but for the LORD God.

What truth was David stating?

You can be around those who have wisdom and rule well and you can learn a lot from those people, but it isn't until you are given the reins yourself that the real learning begins.

Politicians are guilty of this all the time. How many of them promise the moon to get elected only to find that once they get in office they either have amnesia or discover that the real job doesn't allow Christmas 365 days a year.

And what they were saying only months before turns into a different tune because they now have to make the tough decisions. How many times have we heard Obama trash his predecessor for policies that he believes were either not good for the nation or weren't transparent and needed to be exposed to the light of day?

And so, today we have one of the most transparent administrations this country has ever known with policies that are working so well that unemployment is down to 4% and the economy is doing so well that every other country in the world is trying to emulate us. Oh wait a minute, that was Reagen's administration. Sorry.

But the point is that almost without exception politicians always look out for themselves while trying to make everyone else look bad in the process. And don't think for a moment that Solomon wasn't a politician.

By definition, at least in this world, a ruler must employ the discipline of being a person who can not only lead but also deal with the opposition, and this is called being political. But the difference between a godly politician and an ungodly politician is that the godly man will seek God in the process and actually have some sort of moral base that does look out for the good of the people.

These people are few and far between but they do exist.

And though Solomon grew up in a family that was never far from trouble in one form or another he had a father who did seek God and the Lord honored his father for that and Solomon appreciates that.

And now, with the growing reality that he is about to be thrust into one of the toughest jobs on earth he does what most people would not have done. He humbles himself before God and admits that he cannot do this without God's help.

The other thing that I like about Solomon, at least in the early part of his reign, is that he also knows to whom these people belong. In this country these days the government has taken the role of God and has assumed we belong to it, despite the fact that our founding

fathers made it clear that the government is employed by the people.

Solomon acknowledges that these people over whom he rules belong to God and he admits that he is simply a servant to be used by God to accomplish God's will with His people.

And notice God's response to this.

2 Chronicles 1:11-12 ¹¹ God said to Solomon, "Because you had this in mind, and did not ask for riches, wealth or honor, or the life of those who hate you, nor have you even asked for long life, but you have asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge that you may rule My people over whom I have made you king, ¹² wisdom and knowledge have been granted to you. And I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings who were before you has possessed nor those who will come after you."

A simple request of wisdom and knowledge turns into a yes answer from God. But the Lord doesn't stop there. On top of that He adds riches, wealth and honor such as no man has seen before or will see again.

By the way, this seem to be the opposite of where some Christians fall. If you watch any "Christian" television, many of today's televangelists are baiting Christians by using wealth and health to promote themselves. 'If you will finance God's work through our ministry, God will bless you with health and wealth.'

And yet, God actually commends Solomon by not asking or expecting wealth, riches and honor.

But having said that, keep in mind when Solomon was asking for wisdom and knowledge did he really not have any wealth, riches or honor?

I'm not down playing his humble and honest request. I'm just saying that at this point in his life his most immediate need was not wealth, riches and honor. He was born into a very wealthy and honored family.

The new prince that was born to William and his wife recently will never have to work a day in his life. And the work that he does do, be it military service, civil service or just being an ambassador for Great Britain around the world are things that couldn't pay him the

kind of money that he will already have inherited simply by being born into that family.

But if he were smart there is one thing that he should aspire to gain, and that is wisdom and knowledge to be an effective ruler if he were ever called upon to do that.

Solomon already had all that he needed for his personal well being, but he took seriously the responsibility to serve God and His people by asking for the one thing that he desperately needed; God's wisdom and knowledge.

And by the way, would that not be a good idea to ask for today even if we don't rule a people for God?

Paul understood where this kind of wisdom and knowledge comes from.

Romans 11:33-36 ³³ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! ³⁴ For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? ³⁵ Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? ³⁶ For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.

If we are to seek anything in this world, the first thing we should not be asking for is riches, wealth and honor. Those things, as we'll see later with Solomon, can actually have the opposite affect as to our walk with God. Instead, the kind of wisdom we should seek should be the kind of wisdom that leads us to Christ and enables us to seek Him continually.

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 ³⁰ But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, ³¹ so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."

Ephesians 1:15-19 ¹⁵ For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which *exists* among you and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention *of you* in my prayers; ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. ¹⁸ *I pray that* the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the

hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.

By the way, if you look at this passage you'll notice that Paul is asking for wisdom and knowledge to what end?

Ephesians 1:18-19 ¹⁸ *I pray that* the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.

Here is wisdom. What is the hope of God's calling?

^{NAU} **Romans 8:23** And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

This is what Paul spoke of when he addressed what he was hoping for.

Galatians 5:5 ⁵ For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.

If there is no hope then what is the point to life in this world? You're born, you live for a short period of time and then you die. That's not a life to look forward to and Paul understood this.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 18 ¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

What event is Paul talking about here?

Our resurrection to be with the Lord forever. Instead of having no hope in this world, which unfortunately even too many Christians are guilty of, we should take comfort from the words of God because we do have a hope in Christ.

But let's ask the other question Paul raises in Eph. 1:18 when it addresses, "what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints?"

Colossians 1:12-14 ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. ¹³ For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

In this passage what is connected to the inheritance of the saints as it relates to what we are transferred to?

The kingdom of His beloved Son.

Well, what is the kingdom of the Son in which we share in this inheritance?

It is all that God has made for mankind, from the most distant star to the very dirt under our feet. But the kingdom is more than mere physical stuff. The kingdom is the power and authority God has as He rules over all of His creation.

And this is what we will share in.

Revelation 5:8-10 ⁸ When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. ¹⁰ "You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

And again, this theme is repeated at the end of Revelation.

Revelation 22:1-5 ^{NAU} Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve *kinds of* fruit, yielding its fruit every

month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³ There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; ⁴ they will see His face, and His name *will be* on their foreheads. ⁵ And there will no longer be *any* night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

This is our eternal inheritance; to rule and reign with Christ on the New Earth forever and ever to His glory.

Hebrews 9:15 ¹⁵ For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Solomon's rule and reign is a picture of every believer who has trusted Christ for salvation; not that we should expect riches, wealth and honor in this world, but that as we humble ourselves before our God and Savior and live in the wisdom and knowledge of God through His word today, we will have the promise and hope of what Solomon gave us a picture of; a life with God where all our needs are met beyond our wildest dreams and the privilege of serving our God and Savior and King in a world where there is no curse or sin, only joy continually.