

A Consuming Desire

1 Chronicles 21-29

Introduction:

Have you ever had a desire to do something deep within your being that just wouldn't go away? You wake up in the middle of the night and pick up the pen and notepad you have stored nearby and record the ideas that come to you then. You spend hours upon hours making detailed plans, wanting everything to go just right and not wanting any loose ends to remain undone. You commit your resources and make sure those resources are organized and ready for the accomplishment of the project you have in mind to do.

That is just what was happening inside of David.

David and the temple (1 Chronicles 21-29)

David has a consuming desire to see that the temple is built and gives his very best to insure the project is carried out

God told David that he is not the one to build the temple, while at the same time promising him that the temple would be constructed by his son Solomon. Though David wouldn't personally build the temple, the desire to see the project accomplished has a profound affect on his life. The construction of the temple is a consuming desire for David to which he dedicates large portions of his time and resources. The best of all that David has is given to insure the temple project is accomplished according to plan.

David is an example of a man after God's own heart. The chief concern of his life is that he please and glorify God. David demonstrates a heart for God in his attitude toward three areas:

His attitude toward God's ark (13-16)

David pleased God by his concern that God's people worship Him properly. God is pleased when we dedicate ourselves to worshipping Him.

His attitude toward God's covenant (17-20)

David pleased God by his willing submission to God's plan even though it was different than what he desired originally. God is pleased when we dedicate ourselves to obeying His revealed will.

His attitude toward God's temple (21-29)

David pleased God by his willing and wholehearted contribution of his very best toward the construction of the temple project.

God is pleased when we dedicate ourselves to giving our very best

God said to David that He never asked for a temple. God didn't depend on a magnificent structure built by human hands to display His glory and power. He displayed these in amazing ways in the exodus and in the desert when He revealed Himself to the people from a tent. God's chief concern is that His people worship Him because of who He is and what He has done. Wholehearted worship didn't depend on the type of structure in which God dwelt.

Why then was David so concerned to keep the vision of the temple alive in the hearts of the people?

Why does the author of Chronicles regard David's desire as praiseworthy while never criticizing him for it?

While God didn't need or ask for the temple to be built, the commitment of David and the people to build it reflected a proper recognition on their part of God's greatness and glory. It also served as a visible demonstration of their love and respect for God, Who had shown them such incredible love and mercy.

Another concern on David's heart is what is being communicated to the pagan nations around Israel. The pagan nations built fancy dwellings at the people's expense for their gods who had no real power or authority. By not providing an adequate house for Yahweh, Israel was making a statement to the nations around them that Yahweh wasn't that important to them. The temple would serve as a public testimony of Yahweh's value and importance to Israel.

David communicated the following expectation for the temple, *"the house to be built for the LORD should be of great magnificence and fame and splendor in the sight of all the nations"* (1 Chronicles 22:5).

**The establishment of the temple's location
(1 Chronicles 21-22:1)**

God blessed David with incredible military victories for his faithfulness. Satan takes advantage of these triumphs and tempts him to take a census to find out just how great his power has become (21:1-8). Joab, the commander of David's army, tries to talk David out of taking a census of his military. Unfortunately, Joab can't convince him and he has it done anyway.

What is so terrible about taking a census? By counting his military men, David is assessing his military capabilities. It wasn't his military might that resulted in his victories, but God's power. On God, David should have continued to put his full trust, not in the vast number of men in his army.

David later recognizes the evil of this project and seeks the Lord's forgiveness. He says to God, "I have sinned greatly by doing this. Now, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing" (21:8). Although God is merciful and does forgive David's sin, David still has to suffer the consequences for his sin.

David's open disobedience obligates God to punish him and judge his kingdom. Some ask on this point, why did others in the kingdom have to suffer consequences when it was David who sinned? 2 Samuel 24:1 says, "Again the anger of the LORD burned against Israel." Judgment didn't fall on Israel only because of the open, public sin of David the king for taking a census. Judgment also came

because God is angry with His people—they were not just innocent bystanders. The purpose of the Lord had to be served—Israel needed chastened. The message came to David through the Prophet Gad that he has to choose his punishment from amongst three possibilities:

1. Three years of famine.
2. Three months in the hands of his enemies.
3. Three days under Yahweh's sword.

Though the author doesn't explain David's logic regarding the famine, David prefers to be in Yahweh's hands, even in judgment, to falling into the hands of men. A plague hits Israel that kills 70,000 men (21:8-14).

God converts a tragedy into a blessing at the threshing floor of Araunah (21:15-22:1)

Describing God's reaction in human terms, the author says that as He is about to destroy Jerusalem, He is grieved. Literally, He relents and stops the plague at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. We know that God planned ahead to be merciful and knew exactly what He would do at this point. God did not change His mind. However, from the human perspective of those observing the event as it occurred, God changed his mind just in time.

At that moment, David and the elders saw the angel ready to destroy Jerusalem and fell on their faces, clothed in sackcloth. They pleaded with God to be merciful upon the city. David, acknowledging his

own sin in counting the fighting men, asks that any further judgment fall on him and his family and that the people be spared. David and the elders of course are not aware of the fact that God had already given the order to stop the judgment.

Did God sovereignly determine ahead of time that He would be merciful and stop the judgment before it hit Jerusalem? Yes. Was it significant that David and the elders prayed at this time for God's mercy in sparing Jerusalem? Yes. Why was prayer important? Hadn't God already decided to stop the judgment? Here we see an important lesson on prayer. God has already sovereignly determined what He will do. At the same time, God planned that our prayers be a part of the process of His getting His work done.

The Angel of the LORD commands Gad to tell David to build an altar on the threshing floor so that he might offer appropriate sacrifices. To do this, it is necessary to acquire the threshing floor from its owner who was Araunah the Jebusite. As David approached Araunah, he bowed down before him with his face to the ground and made him an offer.

Araunah offers his property to David for free for him to build an altar to the LORD there

David rejects Araunah's offer and insists on paying full price, not wanting to offer God anything that costs him nothing (21:24)

After purchasing the property, David builds an altar and offers up burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. God's response to David's offerings is favorable as indicated by His answering with fire from heaven and His ordering the angel to remove the sword.

Araunah's threshing floor is declared to be the future site of the temple

This site for the temple is strategic. Having the temple built here would serve as a continual, visual reminder to Israel of both God's judgment and of His mercy and how the two work together without either being compromised or laxed.

I want us to ponder a moment on David's reason for rejecting Araunah's offer of his property for free. What would David have communicated about the value of the LORD in his life if the offering he made cost him nothing? David insisted on paying the full price so that He could offer something of value to God which communicated the importance of the LORD in his life. David insisted on giving God His best.

What does the offering of our resources in terms of our giving of time and money communicate about the value of God in our lives? Are we giving to Him

first of our best or are we giving to Him last out of our leftovers, if there are any left? Are we giving the fat or the crumbs?

**WILL WE OFFER TO GOD
THAT WHICH COSTS US NOTHING?**

Preparations for the temple's construction (22:2-23:1)

Wanting to assure the construction of the temple: David spares no expense in making extensive preparations of building materials (22:2-5; 14-16)

David gathers a huge quantity of materials. He begins to prepare rocks and iron for the building. He collects more bronze than can be weighed and more cedar logs than can be counted. He also provides:

100,000 talents of gold=3,750 tons (@ \$570/oz)=68 billion 400 million dollars
 1,000,000 talents of silver=37,500 tons (@\$11.00 oz)=13 billion 200 million dollars.
 + price of temple area paid to Araunah=600 shekels of gold=15 pounds=\$136,800

David's contribution demonstrates the grandeur of the structure he considers necessary for a temple worthy of Yahweh

This wasn't going to be an ordinary structure. This was to be the dwelling place of the God of the

universe Who created heaven and earth. A half way job just wouldn't do. It had to reflect the awesome greatness and glory of God. It had to be of "*great magnificence and fame and splendor in the sight of all the nations*" (22:5).

**WHAT DOES OUR GIVING REFLECT ABOUT
HOW MUCH WE VALUE
AND DESIRE TO HONOR OUR GOD?**

**David solemnly charges his son Solomon with
the work (22:6-16)**

As David considers the magnitude of the project of building the temple and the youth and inexperience of his son Solomon, he is concerned. David has a father to son talk with Solomon, instructing him how this project should be done.

David tells him the story of his own dream to build the temple. He recounts how God didn't let him be the one to construct it because he is a man of war. The person who was to lead the nation in this project had to be a man of peace. God would grant Solomon peace so this project could be accomplished.

Solomon is given the same promise that had been given to David. He would enjoy a special relationship with Yahweh, as a father-son. Yahweh would establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.

David reminds Solomon that in order to enjoy the

prosperity God promised him, David needs to be faithful to Him and obey His laws. The first demonstration of faithfulness was the construction of the temple. In this task, David encourages Solomon to be strong and courageous and not to be afraid or discouraged. With the LORD's enabling presence, Solomon had nothing to be afraid of. David informs Solomon of all of the great pains he has gone through to collect materials necessary for the job. All Solomon needs to do is get busy and start doing the work.

David charges Israel's leaders to help Solomon (22:17-23:1)

David commissions all the leaders of Israel to stand behind Solomon in temple project. He points out how God has been with Israel and has granted rest on every side. The land was now subject to the LORD and His people. It's time for the people to do their part. It's time to devote heart and soul to seeking the LORD and to building the temple for His name. After it is built, the ark, which symbolized the presence of God, can be placed within it. With this exhortation, David prepares himself to turn the throne and the task of building the temple over to Solomon. David has done his part; not it's the new generation's responsibility to take the next step. Before passing the baton, there remains one more gigantic administrative task for David as king.

Organization for the ministry (23:2-27:34)

Organization of the temple ministry participants (23:2-26:32)

David assigns respective groups of leaders their administrative duties which each one was to carry out according to their family and ability. David organizes those who are to participate in the different temple ministries: the Levites (23:2-32), priests (24), musicians (25), gatekeepers (26:1-19), and other officials (26:20-32).

Organization of civil servants (27)

He also organizes those involved in government positions. He names the military chiefs (27:1-15); the officials responsible for governing each tribe (27:16-22); and the officials in the royal court (27:23-34).

Ministry preparations are done carefully and everyone is given a role to carry out.

David dedicated a lot more than an afternoon to this organizational project. An administrative plan of this size took him weeks if not months. He wanted everything to be well organized so that the building of the temple would be done just right. Therefore, he planned carefully.

David's plan is that everyone get involved.

The temple and its ministry required the work and cooperation of several different groups of people. Everyone had a task to do and is held responsible

for doing their share of the work

ARE WE EACH DOING OUR PART IN THE MINISTRY?

Final instructions (28-29:21)

Before he dies, David calls together the people in public assembly to encourage them to move ahead with the temple construction plans.

For the official leaders (28:1-8)

David rehearses the story of his desire to build the temple and shares what God revealed in response to David's expressed desire. David affirms God's choice of his son Solomon not only to succeed him on the throne, but also to be the one who would build the temple. David confirms once again the special father son type relationship Solomon would enjoy with Yahweh. David reminds the leaders that in order to enjoy the blessings of God, Solomon and they would have to remain faithful by carefully following all the commands of the LORD.

David directs these words to the leaders of the nation so that they would respect the authority God place in Solomon as king of Israel and so they might unite their efforts under his leadership to be faithful to Yahweh and obey His commands.

For Solomon (28:9-21)

After David's exhortation to the leaders in general, he gives specific challenges to Solomon. He challenges him to acknowledge God and serve him

both with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, because the LORD knows searches ever heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts.

In his words of encouragement to Solomon to be faithful, David tries to motivate him with a warning that God never made. “If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.” So as not to risk losing God’s blessing, David warns Solomon that if he isn’t faithful, God will reject him forever. God already made it clear that he would never do such a thing. If Solomon isn’t faithful, God would discipline him as a father would his son, but He would not take his loyal love away from him. He promised his kingdom would be established forever. Though David gives a warning God never did, the warning is important nonetheless—blessing on Solomon’s reign required that he be faithful.

Because his main concern is that the temple be completed, the rest of his message to Solomon relates to the plans and preparations for building it. David wants Solomon to get to work right away on the project the LORD chose for him to do. David gives Solomon the plans he prepared and other instructions (11-13). He reminds Solomon that these plans are not his own idea, but were those that the Spirit put in his mind (v. 12).

David hands over the materials he had already

collected for the project(14-19). Again, David confirms that the plans he handed over to Solomon were from the LORD– “‘All this,’ David said, ‘I have in writing from the hand of the LORD upon me, and he gave me understanding in all the details of the plan’” (v. 19).

Finally, David challenges Solomon to do the work strongly and courageously and not allow himself to grow afraid or discouraged. David reminds Solomon of two factors that should encourage him to move ahead bravely: The LORD is with him; the people are organized and ready to help to accomplish the project.

For the entire assembly (29:1-22)

David addresses the entire nation, exhorting them to fulfill their part in the building of the temple. The task at hand is so great and critical because it is not for a man, but for the LORD. Because it is for Him, it needs to be worthy of Him.

David, by his example encourages the people to do their part and they respond by giving sacrificially, willingly, and wholeheartedly.

David adds to the amount already given for the temple

110 tons of gold=2 billion 6 million 400 thousand

260 tons of silver=91 million 520 thousand

When he finishes his offering, he invites everyone else to join in with their offerings and

they contribute generously also

190 tons of gold (+185 lbs.)=3 billion 467 million
287 thousand 2 hundred

375 tons of silver=132 million

A lot of brass, iron, and precious stones.

What can we learn from this example?

**WHEN GOD GIVES US A CLEAR VISION OF
WHAT HE WANTS TO DO IN OUR MIDST, DO
WE RESPOND WITH SACRIFICIAL, WILLING,
AND WHOLEHEARTED GIVING?**

**United, wholehearted giving to God produces
united rejoicing and praise to God.**

**David praises God for the offering: God is the
owner and giver of everything and therefore
deserves all the glory for the generous offering
that was given**

“Praise be to you, O LORD, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name. But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.....O LORD our God, as for all this abundance that we have provided for building

you a temple for your Holy Name, it comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you” (29:10-16).

David petitions God that this willingness and devotion of heart to Yahweh continue in His people forever (29:18)

David petitions God that his son serve God with wholehearted devotion (29:19)

David encourages the people to join Him in praising God together (29:20-22)

DO WE REJOICE AND PRAISE GOD TOGETHER AT THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING ABLE TO TAKE PART IN THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE SACRIFICIALLY TO HIM?

Implications:

If you are a visitor this morning, I want to assure you, we are not after your money. Our greatest concern for you is that you know our God. Just like David wanted the nations to know what God is like by building a temple worthy of His name that reflected His greatness and glory, so we would like you to know our great and glorious God. If you have never trusted Christ as your personal Savior, God isn't asking you to give Him anything. Rather, He wants to give you a gift. To try to pay Him for it would be insulting to Him. He wants to give you the gift of eternal life which can only be received by grace through faith or trust in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Now for those of us who have already received the gift of eternal life and are in the family of God:

When God gives us a vision of what He wants to do in our midst, it should produce: A

consuming desire to do what God wants

Generous, sacrificial giving: We should give our very best

Wholehearted giving: Our hearts should be fully devoted to Him

Voluntary giving: Our giving should be willing, not under compulsion

Praise & glory to God as everything comes from Him