

**VI. 2 SAMUEL 21-24
&
1CHRONICLES 11:20-29**

¹Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of YHWH. YHWH said, "There is bloodguilt on Saul and on his house, because he put the Gibeonites to death."²So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. (Now the Gibeonites were not of the people of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; although the people of Israel had sworn to spare them, Saul had tried to wipe them out in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah.)³David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? How shall I make expiation, that you may bless the heritage of YHWH?"⁴The Gibeonites said to him, "It is not a matter of silver or gold between us and Saul or his house; neither is it for us to put anyone to death in Israel." He said, "What do you say that I should do for you?"⁵They said to the king, "The man who consumed us and planned to destroy us, so that we should have no place in all the territory of Israel – ⁶let seven of his sons be handed over to us, and we will impale them before YHWH at Gibeon on the mountain of YHWH." The king said, "I will hand them over."⁷But the king spared Meribbaal, the son of Saul's son Jonathan, because of the oath of YHWH that was between them, between David and Jonathan son of Saul.⁸The king took the two sons of Rizpah daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, Armoni and Meppibaal; and the five sons of Merab daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel son of Barzillai the Mehola-thite; ⁹he gave them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they impaled them on the mountain before YHWH. The seven of them perished together. They were put to death in the first days of Ziv, at the beginning of barley harvest.

There is a famine in the land. According to the understanding of the time, this must be in accordance with the will of YHWH. David inquires as to why YHWH is inflicting this punishment, and discovers that it is punishment for what Saul did in killing people from Gibeon. We have no record of this, unless it be a reference to Saul's killing of the priests of Nob (see 1 Samuel 22:6-23).

In Joshua chapter nine, the story of the treaty entered into by Joshua with the Gibeonites (who lived in Chephirah, Beeroth (see 4:2) and Kiriath-jearim, as well as Gibeon). According to tribal law Saul's breaking of this treaty required appropriate revenge (blood for blood), but as resident aliens they could not undertake this revenge. They are hoping David will do it for them.

David accedes to the request that he hand over seven of Saul's family. Ever faithful to his covenant with Jonathan, David spares Meribbaal, Jonathan's crippled son.

The seven are sons of Saul and Rizpah (see 3:7-8), and of Saul's daughter Merab (see 18:17-19). On Adriel see 1 Samuel 18:19. Abel-meholah is a few ks east of Jabesh-gilead.

The killing of Saul's family seems to be implied by 2 Samuel 9, and also by the cursing by Shimei (see 2 Samuel 16:7).

The Chronicler

The Chronicler omits this section.

God's gift of rain is seen as divine indication that all is now well. David treats the bones with respect.

The killing of Saul's family and the holding of Meribbaal under a form of house arrest in Jerusalem could be seen as David's attempt to shore up his hold on power. The narrator is attempting to remove blame from David by stating that it was done on YHWH's insistence. We have seen this also in the case in the deaths of Saul himself (see 1Samuel 29:1-11), Abner (see 2Samuel 3:31) and Ishbaal (see 2Samuel 4:9-12).

¹⁰Then Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it on a rock for herself, from the beginning of harvest until rain fell on them from the heavens; she did not allow the birds of the air to come on the bodies by day, or the wild animals by night. ¹¹When David was told what Rizpah daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done, ¹²David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the people of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hung them up, on the day the Philistines killed Saul on Gilboa. ¹³He brought up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan; and they gathered the bones of those who had been impaled. ¹⁴They buried the bones of Saul and of his son Jonathan in the land of Benjamin in a chamber of the tomb of his father Kish; they did all that the king commanded. After that, God heeded supplications on behalf of the land.

The Philistine 'giants'

¹⁵The Philistines went to war again with Israel, and David went down together with his servants. They fought against the Philistines, and David grew weary, ¹⁶and Dodo, son of Joash, one of the votaries of Rapha, captured him. His helmet weighed three hundred bronze shekels, and he was fitted out with new weapons. He intended to kill David, ¹⁷but Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his aid, and attacked the Philistine and killed him. Then David's men swore to him, "You shall not go out with us to battle any more, so that you do not quench the lamp of Israel."

¹⁸After this a battle took place with the Philistines, at Gezer. It was on this occasion that Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Saph, one of the votaries of Rapha.

¹⁹Then there was another battle with the Philistines at Gob; and Elhanan, a Jearite from Bethlehem, killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.

²⁰There was another battle at Gath, where there was a man of great size, who had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; he too was devoted to Rapha. ²¹When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of David's brother Shimei, killed him.

²²These four were devotees of Rapha-in-Gath; they fell by the hands of David and his servants.

In verses 15-22 we find four incidents relating to David's battles with the Philistines.

The first anecdote concerns Abishai, Joab's brother (see 10:10; 16:9-12) . 'Rapha' (the Healer) was one of the gods of the underworld.

The phrase 'David grew weary'(verse 15) prepares us for the end. David's men tell him not to go into battle again 'so that you do not quench the lamp of Israel'(verse 17).

It seems that the story of Elhanan's killing of Goliath (verse 19) was later attached to David (see 1Samuel 17).

The Chronicler (1Chronicles 20:4-8)

The Chronicler omits the first incident (verses 15-17), but repeats verses 18-22. In place of 'Goliath'(verse 19) he has 'the brother of Goliath'(an attempt to harmonise with the story of David in 1Samuel 17)..

The Deuteronomists place a psalm on the lips of David, celebrating the protection YHWH has given him throughout his life and the victories which YHWH has chosen to achieve through him. The psalm (with slight variations) is found in the Psalter as Psalm 18.

The first song (verses 2-20) is a song of deliverance.

David has been in situations from which there was no escape and where he was facing what appeared as certain death. However he cried to YHWH who came to his aid and saved him from death. He wants God to do the same again.

The psalm draws on the imagery of earthquake, volcanic eruption, violent storms with thunder and lightning to speak of the power of God's intervention to rescue his king, David, and as expressions of God's anger against the king's enemies.

The story of David is the story of YHWH's special providence for his people. It is no accident that 2Samuel is included among the prophetic scrolls of the Hebrew Bible.

The Chronicler

The Chronicler omits this psalm

¹David spoke to YHWH the words of this song on the day when YHWH delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. ²He said:

YHWH is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, ³my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my saviour; you save me from violence. ⁴ I call upon YHWH, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.

⁵For the waves of death encompassed me, the torrents of perdition assailed me; ⁶the cords of Sheol entangled me, the snares of death confronted me. ⁷In my distress I called upon YHWH; to my God I called. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry came to his ears.

⁸Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations of the heavens trembled and quaked, because he was angry. ⁹Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him. ¹⁰He bowed the heavens, and came down; thick darkness was under his feet. ¹¹He rode on a cherub, and flew; he was seen upon the wings of the wind. ¹²He made darkness around him a canopy, thick clouds, a gathering of water. ¹³Out of the brightness before him coals of fire flamed forth. ¹⁴YHWH thundered from heaven; the Most High uttered his voice. ¹⁵He sent out arrows, and scattered them – lightning, and routed them. ¹⁶Then the channels of the sea were seen, the foundations of the world were laid bare at the rebuke of YHWH, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

¹⁷He reached from on high, he took me, he drew me out of mighty waters. ¹⁸He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me; for they were too mighty for me. ¹⁹They came upon me in the day of my calamity, but YHWH was my stay. ²⁰He brought me out into a broad place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

²¹YHWH rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me. ²²For I have kept the ways of YHWH, and have not wickedly departed from my God. ²³For all his ordinances were before me, and from his statutes I did not turn aside. ²⁴I was blameless before him, and I kept myself from guilt. ²⁵Therefore YHWH has recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in his sight. ²⁶With the loyal you show yourself loyal; with the blameless you show yourself blameless; ²⁷with the pure you show yourself pure, and with the crooked you show yourself perverse. ²⁸You deliver a humble people, but your eyes are upon the haughty to bring them down.

²⁹Indeed, you are my lamp, YHWH, YHWH lightens my darkness. ³⁰By you I can crush a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall. ³¹This God – his way is perfect; the promise of YHWH proves true; he is a shield for all who take refuge in him. ³²For who is God, but YHWH? And who is a rock, except our God?

Verses 21-28 form an interlude between the poems of verses 2-20 and verses 29-51. One can discern the hand of the Deuteronomists who were responsible for combining the psalms, each of which has archaic elements in it.

David has carried out his part of the covenant, and YHWH has been faithful to his.

Verses 29-51 sing of a warrior who has conquered distant lands. Earlier, David was called 'the lamp of Israel' (2Samuel 21:17). David knows that it is YHWH who is his lamp (verses 29-32).

For verse 32 see Isaiah 45:5.

It is God who gave David his military victories (verses 33-46).

³³The God who has girded me with strength has opened wide my path. ³⁴He made my feet like the feet of deer, and set me secure on the heights. ³⁵He trains my hands for war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. ³⁶You have given me the shield of your salvation, and your help has made me great. ³⁷You have made me stride freely, and my feet do not slip; ³⁸I pursued my enemies and destroyed them, and did not turn back until they were consumed. ³⁹I consumed them; I struck them down, so that they did not rise; they fell under my feet. ⁴⁰For you girded me with strength for the battle; you made my assailants sink under me. ⁴¹You made my enemies turn their backs to me, those who hated me, and I destroyed them. ⁴²They looked, but there was no one to save them; they cried to YHWH, but he did not answer them. ⁴³I beat them fine like the dust of the earth, I crushed them and stamped them down like the mire of the streets. ⁴⁴You delivered me from strife with the peoples; you kept me as the head of the nations; people whom I had not known served me. ⁴⁵Foreigners came cringing to me; as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me. ⁴⁶Foreigners lost heart, and came fettered by their collars.

Hymn of exultant praise of YHWH (verses 47-51).

⁴⁷YHWH lives! Blessed be my rock, and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation, ⁴⁸the God who gave me vengeance and brought down peoples under me,

⁴⁹who brought me out from my enemies; you exalted me above my adversaries, you delivered me from the violent.

⁵⁰For this I will extol you, YHWH, among the nations, and sing praises to your name. ⁵¹He is a tower of salvation for his king, and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David and his descendants forever.

¹Now these are the last words of David:

The oracle of David, son of Jesse, the oracle of the man whom God exalted, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the singer of Israel's psalms:

²The spirit of YHWH speaks through me, his word is upon my tongue.

³The God of Israel has spoken, the Rock of Israel has said to me:

One who rules over people justly, ruling in the fear of God, ⁴is like the light of morning, like the sun rising on a cloudless morning, gleaming from the rain on the grassy land.

⁵Is not my house like this with God? For he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. Will he not cause to prosper all my help and my desire?

⁶But the godless are all like thorns that are thrown away; for they cannot be picked up with the hand; ⁷to touch them one uses an iron bar or the shaft of a spear. And they are entirely consumed in fire on the spot.

These final words about David speak of his special intimacy with God, and of his role as ruler and prophet (compare Acts 2:29-30).

'Anointed' (verse 1) translates the Hebrew מָשִׁיחַ (māšīaḥ, 'messiah').

The 'singer of Israel's psalms' (see 1Samuel 16:14-23; 2Samuel 1:17-27; 3:33-34; 1Chronicles 15-16).

Ruling 'in the fear of God' means ruling in obedience to God's commands.

We hear again of the 'everlasting covenant' (verse 5) given to him and his house by YHWH.

The Chronicler

The Chronicler omits this section.

David's warriors (23:8-39)

This is the only time we hear of Jeshbaal (verse 8) or Eleazar (verses 9-10). Pas-dammim is the Ephes-dammim of 1Samuel 17:1.

The Chronicler

The Chronicler repeats these verses in 1Chronicles 11:10-14. He names these two warriors Jashobeam and Eleazar.

This is the first time we have heard of Shammah (verse 11; see 23:33).

The Chronicler

The Chronicler omits reference to Shammah.

Verses 13-17 refer back to the scene described in 2Samuel 5:17-21.

The Chronicler

The Chronicler repeats these verses in 1Chronicles 11:15-19.

⁸These are the names of the David's warriors: Jeshbaal the Hachmonite was chief of the Three; he wielded his spear against eight hundred whom he killed at one time. ⁹Next to him among the three warriors was Eleazar son of Dodo the Ahohite. He was with David when the Philistines defied them at Pas-dammim. When the Philistines gathered there for battle, the Israelites withdrew, ¹⁰but he stood his ground. He struck down the Philistines until his arm grew weary, though his hand clung to the sword. YHWH brought about a great victory that day. Then the people came back to him – but only to strip the dead.

¹¹Next to him was Shammah son of Agee, the Hararite. The Philistines gathered together at Lehi, where there was a plot of ground full of lentils; and the army fled from the Philistines. ¹²But he took his stand in the middle of the plot, defended it, and killed the Philistines; and YHWH brought about a great victory.

¹³Three of the Thirty marched down at harvest time and joined David at the cave of Adullam, while a band of Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim. ¹⁴David was then in the stronghold; and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem. ¹⁵David said longingly, "O that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!" ¹⁶So the three warriors infiltrated the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and brought it to David. But he would not drink of it; he poured it out to YHWH, ¹⁷for he said, "YHWH forbid that I should do this. Can I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk of their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it. The three warriors did these things.

¹⁸Abishai son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, was chief of the Thirty. With his spear he fought against three hundred men and killed them, and won a name beside the Three. ¹⁹He was the most renowned of the Thirty, and became their commander; but he did not attain to the Three.

²⁰Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a valiant warrior from Kabzeel, a doer of great deeds; he struck down two sons of Ariel of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen. ²¹And he killed an Egyptian, a giant of a man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but Benaiah went against him with a staff, snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. ²²Such were the things Benaiah son of Jehoiada did, and won a name beside the three warriors. ²³He was renowned among the Thirty, but he did not attain to the Three. And David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

²⁴Among the Thirty were Asahel brother of Joab; Elhanan son of Dodo of Bethlehem; ²⁵Shammah of Harod; Elikah of Harod; ²⁶Helez the Paltite; Ira son of Ikkesh of Tekoa; ²⁷Abiezer of Anathoth; Sibbecai the Hushathite; ²⁸Zalmon the Ahohite; Maharai of Netophah; ²⁹Heleb son of Baanah of Netophah; Ittai son of Ribai of Gibeah of the Benjaminites; ³⁰Benaiah of Pirathon; Hiddai from the wadis of Gaash; ³¹Abial the Arbathite; Azmaveth of Bahurim; ³²Eliabha of Shaalbon; Jashen the Gisonite; Jonathan ³³son of Shammah the Hararite; Ahiam son of Sachar the Hararite; ³⁴Eliphelet son of Ahasbai of Maacah; Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite; ³⁵Hezro of Carmel; Paarai the Archite; ³⁶Igal son of Nathan, commander of the army of Hagarites; ³⁷Zelek the Ammonite; Naharai of Beeroth, the armour-bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah; ³⁸Ira the Ithrite; Gareb the Ithrite; ³⁹Uriah the Hittite—thirty-seven in all.

We were first introduced to Abishai (verses 18-19) in 1Samuel 26:6.

The Chronicler

The Chronicler repeats these verses in 1Chronicles 11:20-21.

On Benaiah (verses 20-23) see 2Samuel 8:18; 20:23.

The Chronicler

The Chronicler repeats these verses in 1Chronicles 11:22-25.

The only people named in verses 24-38 who appear elsewhere are Asahel (verse 24; see 2Samuel 2:18-32; 3:27,30), Elhanan (verse 24, see 21:19), Sibbeca (verse 27; see 21:18), Uriah (verse 39; see 2Samuel 11), and perhaps Eliam (verse 34), if he is the father of Bathsheba (see 2Samuel 11:3).

The Chronicler

The Chronicler repeats these verses in 1Chronicles 11:26-41. He adds the following, all from east of the Jordan:

⁴¹Zabad son of Ahlai,
⁴²Adina son of Shiza the Reubenite, a leader of the Reubenites, and thirty with him, ⁴³Hanan son of Maacah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite, ⁴⁴Uzziah the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel sons of Hotham the Aroerite, ⁴⁵Jediael son of Shimri, and his brother Joha the Tizite, ⁴⁶Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai and Joshaviah sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite, ⁴⁷Eliel, and Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.'

Census was taken for purposes of taxation and military service (see Numbers 1:2-3). Military duty involved being consecrated to YHWH, God of hosts, and complex rituals were involved. Failure to comply invited divine retribution (see Exodus 30:12). Another possibility is that Israel is a gift from God and should not be brought within the realm of human organisation and control. To do so is a failure in trust.

The census starts at the extreme southeast corner of the kingdom, at Aroer, east of the Dead Sea (see Deuteronomy 4:48; Joshua 12:2). They progress through Transjordan to Dan, the northern extreme of the kingdom. They then headed south through the western plains to Beer-sheba in the extreme south.

As to the numbers, if 'thousand' ('elep) refers to a military unit, the numbers could be nearer to 40,000 in Israel and 5,000 in Judah.

The Chronicler

Verses 1-9 are repeated by the Chronicler in 1Chronicles 21:1-6. He attributes the incitement, not to YHWH (verse 1) but to 'Satan'.

Satan stood up against Israel, and incited David to count the people of Israel.

– 1Chronicles 21:1

The equivalent of verse 9 in Chronicles reads:

⁵Joab gave the total count of the people to David. In all Israel there were one million one hundred thousand men who drew the sword, and in Judah four hundred seventy thousand who drew the sword. ⁶But he did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, for the king's command was abhorrent to Joab.

¹The anger of YHWH was kindled against Israel again, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go, count the people of Israel and Judah." ²So the king said to Joab and the commanders of the army, who were with him, "Go through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beer-sheba, and take a census of the people, so that I may know how many there are." ³But Joab said to the king, "May YHWH your God increase the number of the people a hundredfold, while the eyes of my lord the king can still see it! But why does my lord the king want to do this?" ⁴But the king's word prevailed against Joab and the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the army went out from the presence of the king to take a census of the people of Israel. ⁵They crossed the Jordan, and began from Aroer and from the city that is in the middle of the valley of the Gadites near Jazer. ⁶Then they went via Gilead, and the region beneath Herman to Dan. From Dan they skirted Sidon, ⁷and went via the fortress of Tyre and all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites; and came to the Negeb of Judah at Beer-sheba.

⁸So when they had gone through all the land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. ⁹Joab reported to the king the number of those who had been recorded: in Israel there were eight hundred thousand men able to draw the sword, and in Judah five hundred thousand.

¹⁰But afterward, David was stricken to the heart because he had numbered the people. David said to YHWH, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, YHWH, I pray you, take away the guilt of your servant; for I have done very foolishly." ¹¹When David rose in the morning, the word of YHWH came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, ¹²"Go and say to David: Thus says YHWH: Three things I offer you; choose one of them, and I will do it to you."
¹³So Gad came to David and told him; he asked him, "Shall three years of famine come upon your land? Or shall you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer I shall return to the one who sent me."
¹⁴Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress; let me fall into the hand of YHWH, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into human hands."
¹⁵So YHWH sent a pestilence on Israel from that morning until the appointed time; and seventy thousand of the people died, from Dan to Beer-sheba. ¹⁶But when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, YHWH relented concerning the evil, and said to the angel who was bringing destruction among the people, "It is enough; now stay your hand." The angel of YHWH was then by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. ¹⁷When David saw the angel who was destroying the people, he said to YHWH, "I, the shepherd, I alone have sinned; but these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father's house."

Verses 10-14 appear to be a later addition to the narrative – one further attempt to put David in a better light.

David acknowledges his pride and his guilt (verse 10). He leaves the punishment to God, saying that he would prefer to fall into God's hands than into the hands of his enemies (verse 14).

He prays that God will punish him and his house, not the people (verse 17).

'Gad' (verse 11) is mentioned also in 1Samuel 22:5 (see also 1Chronicles 29:29).

The Chronicler

Verses 10-17 are repeated by the Chronicler in 1Chronicles 21:7-17.

The equivalent of verse 17 in Chronicles reads:

¹⁶Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces. ¹⁷And David said to God, "Was it not I who gave the command to count the people? It is I who have sinned and done very wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, YHWH my God, be against me and against my father's house; but do not let your people be plagued!"

– 1Chronicles 21:16-17

It is here that the purpose of the previous scene becomes clear. It is the occasion of God revealing to David the site which he wants to be consecrated as a sanctuary. It is this site which will later be occupied by the temple.

The Chronicler

Verses 18-25 are repeated by the Chronicler in 1Chronicles 21:18-27. He adds:

²⁸At that time, when David saw that YHWH had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he made his sacrifices there. ²⁹For the tabernacle of YHWH, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon; ³⁰but David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of YHWH.

– 1Chronicles 21:28-30

¹⁸That day Gad came to David and said to him, “Go up and erect an altar to YHWH on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” ¹⁹Following Gad’s instructions, David went up, as YHWH had commanded.

²⁰When Araunah looked down, he saw the king and his servants coming toward him; and Araunah went out and prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground.

²¹Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?”

David said, “To buy the threshing floor from you in order to build an altar to YHWH, so that the plague may be averted from the people.”

²²Then Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take and offer up what seems good to him; here are the oxen for the burnt offering, and the threshing sledges and the yokes of the oxen for the wood. ²³All this, O king, Araunah gives to the king.”

And Araunah said to the king, “May YHWH your God respond favourably to you.” ²⁴But the king said to Araunah, “No, but I will buy them from you for a price; I will not offer burnt offerings to YHWH my God that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

²⁵David built there an altar to YHWH, and offered burnt offerings and communion offerings. So YHWH answered his supplication for the land, and the plague was averted from Israel.

David makes arrangement for the building of a temple

1Chronicles 22:1-10

¹Then David said, “Here shall be the house of YHWH God and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel.”

²David gave orders to gather together the aliens who were residing in the land of Israel, and he set stonecutters to prepare dressed stones for building the house of God. ³David also provided great stores of iron for nails for the doors of the gates and for clamps, as well as bronze in quantities beyond weighing, ⁴and cedar logs without number—for the Sidonians and Tyrians brought great quantities of cedar to David. ⁵For David said, “My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for YHWH must be exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorified throughout all lands; I will therefore make preparation for it.” So David provided materials in great quantity before his death.

⁶Then he called for his son Solomon and charged him to build a house for YHWH, the God of Israel. ⁷David said to Solomon, “My son, I had planned to build a house to the name of YHWH my God. ⁸But the word of YHWH came to me, saying, ‘You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood in my sight on the earth. ⁹See, a son shall be born to you; he shall be a man of peace. I will give him peace from all his enemies on every side; for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days. ¹⁰He shall build a house for my name. He shall be a son to me, and I will be a father to him, and I will establish his royal throne in Israel forever.’

In the previous scene, taken from 2Samuel, the Chronicler presented David as responsible for setting up an altar on the site of the threshing floor on the top of the hill, north of the walled city. The Chronicler’s primary purpose in adding chapters 22-29 is to link the temple and the temple cult more closely to David.

The material in chapter 22 is found only here.

For David’s desire to build a house for YHWH see 2Samuel 7:2, and for God’s response that this would be left to his son, see 2Samuel 7:12-13.

David advises Solomon to take care to obey God's will as expressed in the Torah (verses 11-13).

¹¹Now, my son, YHWH be with you, so that you may succeed in building the house of YHWH your God, as he has spoken concerning you. ¹²Only, may YHWH grant you discretion and understanding, so that when he gives you charge over Israel you may keep the law of YHWH your God. ¹³Then you will prosper if you are careful to observe the statutes and the ordinances that YHWH commanded Moses for Israel. Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid or dismayed.

David provides Solomon with what he needs to build the temple (verses 14-16).

¹⁴With great pains I have provided for the house of YHWH one hundred thousand talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it; timber and stone too I have provided. To these you must add more. ¹⁵You have an abundance of workers: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of artisans without number, skilled in working ¹⁶gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Now begin the work, and YHWH be with you."

David's instruction to the officials to help Solomon build the temple (verses 17-19).

¹⁷David also commanded all the leaders of Israel to help his son Solomon, saying, ¹⁸"Is not YHWH your God with you? Has he not given you peace on every side? For he has delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand; and the land is subdued before YHWH and his people.

¹⁹Now set your mind and heart to seek YHWH your God. Go and build the sanctuary of YHWH God so that the ark of the covenant of YHWH and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of YHWH."

Chapter 23 verse 1 implies a period when David and Solomon shared rule (compare 1Kings 1:43).

^{23:1}When David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel.

More lists

1. Classification of the Levites (1Chronicles 23:1-32)

With his interest in the cult, the Chronicler has David organise the Levites into groups. The organisation fits the situation of the Chronicler. The Levites are subordinate to the priests.

2. Classification of the priests (1Chronicles 24:1-19)

David is assisted by Zadok and Ahimelech (verse 3).

3. Classification of other Levites (1Chronicles 24:20-31)

4. Classification of the musicians (1Chronicles 25:1-31)

The classification begins:

David and the officers of the army also set apart for the service the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with lyres, harps, and cymbals.

– 1Chronicles 25:1

Twelve psalms in the Psalter refer to Asaph (see Psalms 50 and 73-83). One psalm refers to Heman (see Psalm 88), and two psalms refer to Jeduthun (see Psalms 39 and 62). It is likely that the temple singers in exile were responsible for the section of the Isaiah scroll from chapters 40-55.

5. Classification of the gatekeepers (1Chronicles 26:1-19)

6. Classification of the treasury officials (1Chronicles 26:20-28)

7. David's organisation of the civil service (1Chronicles 26:29-32)

8. David's organisation of the military (1Chronicles 27:1-15)

There is an obvious relationship between this list and that of David's warriors in 2Samuel 23:8-39 = 1Chronicles 11:11-47. In this passage we find the term 'chief priest' [רֹאשׁ הַכֹּהֲנִים, *hakohēn rō'š*]. See also Ezra 7:5; 2Chronicles 19:11; 24:11; 26:20; 31:10; also the term 'great priest' [הַגָּדוֹל הַכֹּהֵן, *hakohēn hagādōl*] in Nehemiah 3:1, 20; 13:28; 2Chronicles 34:9.

9. Tribal chiefs (1Chronicles 27:16-22)

10. The incomplete census (1Chronicles 27:23-24)

The Chronicler refers here to 'the account of the Annals of King David' (27:24).

11. Administrators of crown property (1Chronicles 27:25-31)

12. David's personal counsellors (1Chronicles 27:32-34)

David's final instructions

¹David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of the thousands, the commanders of the hundreds, the stewards of all the property and cattle of the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty warriors, and all the warriors.

²Then King David rose to his feet and said: "Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had planned to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of YHWH, for the footstool of our God; and I made preparations for building. ³But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for my name, for you are a warrior and have shed blood.' ⁴Yet YHWH God of Israel chose me from all my ancestral house to be king over Israel forever; for he chose Judah as leader, and in the house of Judah my father's house, and among my father's sons he took delight in making me king over all Israel. ⁵And of all my sons, for YHWH has given me many, he has chosen my son Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of YHWH over Israel.

On David's desire to build a temple see 2Samuel 7:2-3 (= 1Chronicles 17:1-2).

Note the stress of 'the kingdom of YHWH' (verse 5; see 1Chronicles 17:14; 2Chronicles 29:11-12).

Note the stress on the king in a relationship of sonship to God (verse 6).

See 1Kings 2:2-4 where Solomon is commanded to obey the law of Moses to ensure that the throne remains secure.

⁶He said to me, 'It is your son Solomon who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be a son to me, and I will be a father to him. ⁷I will establish his kingdom forever if he continues resolute in keeping my commandments and my ordinances, as he is today.' ⁸Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of YHWH, and in the hearing of our God, observe and search out all the commandments of YHWH your God; that you may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever. ⁹"And you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve him with single mind and willing heart; for YHWH searches every mind, and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will abandon you forever. ¹⁰Take heed now, for YHWH has chosen you to build a house as the sanctuary; be strong, and act."

David's prayer of thanksgiving

David hands to Solomon the plans for the temple (1Chronicles 28:11-21)

This includes David's final charge to Solomon (see 22:11ff and 28:9-10):

²⁰David said further to his son Solomon, "Be strong and of good courage, and act. Do not be afraid or dismayed; for YHWH God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of YHWH is finished.

David's contributions for the temple construction (1Chronicles 29:1-9)

David's prayer of thanksgiving (1Chronicles 29:10-20)

¹⁰Then David blessed YHWH in the presence of all the assembly; David said: "Blessed are you, YHWH, the God of our ancestor Israel, forever and ever. ¹¹Yours, YHWH, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, YHWH, and you are exalted as head above all.

Note the stress on '*Yours is the kingdom*' (verse 11; see 1Chronicles 17:14; 2Chronicles 28:5).

¹²Riches and honour come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. ¹³And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name.

¹⁴"But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to make this freewill offering? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. ¹⁵For we are aliens and transients before you, as were all our ancestors; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.

¹⁶YHWH our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own.

¹⁷I know, my God, that you search the heart, and take pleasure in uprightness; in the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things, and now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering freely and joyously to you. ¹⁸YHWH, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our ancestors, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts toward you.

¹⁹Grant to my son Solomon that with single mind he may keep your commandments, your decrees, and your statutes, performing all of them, and that he may build the temple for which I have made provision."

²⁰Then David said to the whole assembly, "Bless YHWH your God." And all the assembly blessed YHWH, the God of their ancestors, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before YHWH and the king.

Solomon ascends the throne (1Chronicles 29:21-25)

For the enthronement of Solomon see 1Kings 1:46 and 2:12.

²¹On the next day they offered sacrifices and burnt offerings to YHWH, a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their libations, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel; ²²and they ate and drank before YHWH on that day with great joy. They made David's son Solomon king a second time; they anointed him as YHWH's prince, and Zadok as priest.

²³Then Solomon sat on the throne of YHWH, succeeding his father David as king; he prospered, and all Israel obeyed him. ²⁴All the leaders and the mighty warriors, and also all the sons of King David, pledged their allegiance to King Solomon. ²⁵YHWH highly exalted Solomon in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

Summary of David's reign (1Chronicles 29:26-30)

²⁶Thus David son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. ²⁷The period that he reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ²⁸He died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour; and his son Solomon succeeded him. ²⁹Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the records of the seer Samuel, and in the records of the prophet Nathan, and in the records of the seer Gad, ³⁰with accounts of all his rule and his might and of the events that befell him and Israel and all the kingdoms of the earth.

Note the Chronicler's reference in verse 29 to what appear to some of his sources.

