



# World Christian Fellowship

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## Thanksgiving leads to Evangelism

### 1 Chronicles 16.

This history, **1 and 2 Chronicles** one book originally - was written about 450 years before Christ and about 500 years after David's reign.

This book gives the history of God's unfolding redemption from Adam to the Babylonian captivity. So, it goes from the creation all the way down to Israel being taken into captivity in Babylon.

While it is the history that we already know because it's recorded in **1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings**, it is a book that is unique. 50% percent of what is in 1 and 2 Chronicles is not in those other books!

But this history is a second telling of the history. After the history of the Pentateuch, after the history of the books of Kings and Samuels, the history is told again from Adam to the Babylonian captivity for a very specific group of people.

Written in about 450, it was written for the Jews who came back from the captivity, written for them. They had returned from Babylon, and they were facing the reality that their nation was nothing like it used to be. It was a far cry from its great history under David, its great history under Solomon.

When they came back, they had virtually a city in ruins. They had no protection, no wall. Nehemiah then helped them construct the wall.

They had no temple. Zerubbabel helped them reconstruct a temple that was very plain and very common, nothing like the glorious Solomonic temple that it attempted to replace.

Even after they had reconstituted themselves in the land, they were small, they were weak, they were uninfluential, they were vulnerable, they were plain people. They were struggling with whether they would ever ascend to the glory days that once was their history in the time of David and the time of Solomon.

When they came back, they even had a Persian governor and not at all a Jewish king. They thought about those days, 450 and 500 years earlier, when Solomon reigned and before him, his father David. They knew that all of this was a result of judgment, and they wondered if there would ever be any hope for them to become anything great again.

This history was written to encourage them, to encourage them that God had been faithful in the past and that God by nature is faithful and that God cannot alter Himself nor His purpose nor His plan nor can He be unfaithful to His Word, as we have just sung.

No matter how bleak it looked, this is to remind them of God's faithfulness in the past, because it is God's faithfulness in the past that is the foundation and the basis for our trust in His faithfulness in the future.

Very likely, Ezra penned this sweeping history to remind people of what God had done in the past and to restore their faith that God would fulfil His promise regarding

- the land,
- the people,
- the priests,
- worship,
- salvation, and
- God would bring the great anticipated Davidic king, the Messiah, in the future.

The highlight of this history is in chapter 16, where the exiles are reminded of a great day in Israel's history, a great day.

During the time of Saul, who was a very evil king, the presence of God was symbolically away from Jerusalem.

The Ark of the Covenant, which represented the presence of God, was away from Jerusalem. It was sort of a symbol of God's displeasure with Israel.

When David became king (as it's recorded earlier in 1 Chronicles), one of the very first things that David wanted to do was get the Ark of the Covenant and bring it back to Jerusalem. So, David, who was now king, built a house for himself, and he prepared a tent, a tabernacle, for the ark of God.

They went to get the ark of God.

The first time in chapter 13, they carried it wrongly, and a man touched it and died on the spot, a man named Uzza, because he had violated God's standards for the holy transportation of that which symbolized His presence.

This wooden chest containing the stone tablets engraved with the law of God was the symbol of God's presence with his people. Symbolically, it constituted the throne of God.

**1 Chronicles 13:6**, *And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, to Kirjath Jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God the Lord, who dwells between the cherubim, where His name is proclaimed.*

This ark had been carried before them during their time in the wilderness and had gone before them when they crossed the Jordan to enter the Promised Land. It was because God was with them, "enthroned between the cherubim" that they had been able to possess the land he had promised them.

David's first attempt to bring the ark up to Jerusalem had proved to be a disaster. It had been loaded onto a bullock cart and when the cart was driven across rough ground Uzzah, one of the men guiding the cart, had put out his hand to steady it and had been struck dead by God. As a result, David was afraid of the Lord God.

**1 Chronicles 13:12**, *David was afraid of God that day, saying, "How can I bring the ark of God to me?"*

David had made no further attempt to move the ark.

But over the intervening months God had blessed the household of Obed-Edom with whom the ark had been left on that awful day.

So, David at last decided to have another go at bringing the ark into his capital city. On this second occasion it was all done in a very different manner. In accordance with God's command the ark was now carried by the Levites.

**1 Chronicles 15:2**, *Then David said, “No one may carry the ark of God but the Levites, for the Lord has chosen them to carry the ark of God and to minister before Him forever.”*

David assembled priestly singers to accompany the ark. And so, with much singing and celebration, the ark of the Lord was at last brought into Jerusalem.

**1 Chronicles 15:28**, *Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps.*

David himself accompanied the ark, celebrating its arrival at Jerusalem with dancing and with singing as an expression of his great joy (and relief) at this occasion. Such was his behaviour that it disgusted his wife, Michal, the daughter of Saul, who thought that this was no way for a king to behave. And maybe there are some of us with a typically British sense of reserve who would have a great deal of sympathy for Michal – perhaps David had got a little carried away on this occasion.

But finally, it arrived, chapter 16.

They were saying that we want God in our midst. We want His presence, we want His care, we want His power.

They brought in the ark of God and placed it inside the tent, which David had pitched for it, and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God.

When David had finished offering the burnt offering and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord.

He distributed to everyone of Israel, both man and woman, to everyone a loaf of bread and a portion of meat and a raisin cake.

He appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the Lord, even to celebrate and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel.

Asaph, the chief musician. Second to him, Zechariah, then Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom and Jeiel, with musical instruments, harps, lyres.

Asaph played loud-sounding cymbals, and Benaiah and Jahaziel, the priests, blew trumpets continually before the Ark of the Covenant of God.

This is one big celebration. They had a wonderful meal and they had loud praise with a full orchestra. The people were

offering sacrifices, burnt offerings - sin offerings, those would be - and even peace offerings.

On that day David first assigned Asaph and his relatives to give thanks to the Lord.

The passage we are looking at occupies a central place in this whole story. This song, recorded here in 1 Chronicles 16, is a psalm of David which he composed for the musicians of Israel.

What we need to do is to look at what is written here.

We need to read it in the context in which it has been placed, to listen to what is being said and to hear what God is saying to us through it for our encouragement and our learning.

It is against this background that we are to read this psalm of praise that occupies **1 Chronicles 16:8-36**.

Starting in verse 8 and running down to verse 36, you have this Psalm that they all sang that was led by Asaph, the chief musician and all the rest participating in it. Here is true worship.

It is a psalm which was prompted by a particular event. You will find sections of this song recorded also in the Book of Psalms:

**V 8-22 in Psalm 105:1-15,**

**V 23-33 in Psalm 96,**

**V 34-36 in Psalm 106:1, 47-48.**

**1 Chronicles 16:7-36,** *On that day David first delivered this psalm into the hand of Asaph and his brethren, to thank the Lord: <sup>8</sup>Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! <sup>9</sup>Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! <sup>10</sup>Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord! <sup>11</sup>Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face evermore! <sup>12</sup>Remember His marvellous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth, <sup>13</sup>O seed of Israel His servant, You children of Jacob, His chosen ones! <sup>14</sup>He is the Lord our God; His judgments are in all the earth. <sup>15</sup>Remember His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, <sup>16</sup>The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac, <sup>17</sup>And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel for an everlasting covenant, <sup>18</sup>Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan As the allotment of your inheritance," <sup>19</sup>When you were few in number, Indeed very few, and strangers in it. <sup>20</sup>When they went from one nation to another, And from one kingdom to another people, <sup>21</sup>He permitted no man to do them wrong; Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes, <sup>22</sup>Saying, "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm." <sup>23</sup>Sing to the Lord, all the earth; Proclaim the good*

*news of His salvation from day to day. <sup>24</sup>Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. <sup>25</sup>For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods. <sup>26</sup>For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the Lord made the heavens. <sup>27</sup>Honour and majesty are before Him; Strength and gladness are in His place. <sup>28</sup>Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, Give to the Lord glory and strength. <sup>29</sup>Give to the Lord the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! <sup>30</sup>Tremble before Him, all the earth. The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved. <sup>31</sup>Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; And let them say among the nations, "The Lord reigns." <sup>32</sup>Let the sea roar, and all its fullness; Let the field rejoice, and all that is in it. <sup>33</sup>Then the trees of the woods shall rejoice before the Lord, For He is coming to judge the earth. <sup>34</sup>Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. <sup>35</sup>And say, "Save us, O God of our salvation; Gather us together, and deliver us from the Gentiles, To give thanks to Your holy name, To triumph in Your praise." <sup>36</sup>Blessed be the Lord God of Israel From everlasting to everlasting! And all the people said, "Amen!" and praised the Lord.*

Now, the thanks come in three stanzas, and I just want to go through this with you, three stanzas.

Each one begins with commands to give thanks and then follows up with reasons to obey the commands.

Commands, followed by reasons to obey the commands.

**Number one:**

**From verse 8-22.**

Between verses 8 and 12, there are ten imperative verbs.

Essentially, there are ten commands here.

**V 8-12**, *Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! <sup>9</sup>Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! <sup>10</sup>Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord! <sup>11</sup>Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face evermore! <sup>12</sup>Remember His marvellous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth,*

Just that opening set of commands, those ten imperatives, let us know what the essence of praise.

It is to extol God.

It is to honour God.

It is to thank God.

It is to praise God.

This is worship.

This is what should happen on a thanksgiving occasion. This is a great thanksgiving event. The Ark was back. Enemies had been subdued. David was the new king. All seemed well. And this is their praise.

**The reasons:**

The first one is election.

**V 13-22**, *O seed of Israel His servant, You children of Jacob, His chosen ones! <sup>14</sup>He is the Lord our God; His judgments are in all the earth. <sup>15</sup>Remember His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, <sup>16</sup>The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac, <sup>17</sup>And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel for an everlasting covenant, <sup>18</sup>Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan As the allotment of your inheritance," <sup>19</sup>When you were few in number, Indeed very few, and strangers in it. <sup>20</sup>When they went from one nation to another, And from one kingdom to another people, <sup>21</sup>He permitted no man to do them wrong; Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes, <sup>22</sup>Saying, "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm*

They thanked God for choosing them to be His people.

Giving them covenant promises that are everlasting.

They thank Him for protection.

Even though they were chosen, even though when only a few, Abraham, Isaac, and the patriarchs. They wandered about from nation to nation and from one kingdom to another people.

God did not permit anyone to oppress them.

God reproved kings for their sakes.

*“Do not touch my anointed ones and do my prophets no harm.”*

The record of Genesis, starting with Pharaoh, is the record of how God protected His people, took them out of Egypt, brought them back. That’s where praise starts!

It starts with a recognition of our election and protection.

God has chosen us.

God will keep us to the fulfilment of His promises.

### **Number two:**

**V 23-24**, *Sing to the Lord, all the earth; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. <sup>24</sup>Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples.*

Begins with commands. Sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Proclaim good tidings of His salvation on a daily basis.

Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples. We are commanded here not only like

in the early part to focus on God, give thanks to Him, and sing to Him.

But even back in **V 8**, *“Make known His deeds among the peoples.”*

So true worship is a combination of thanking God, praising God, and telling of His greatness to all people.

We are commanded then to sing to the Lord and to proclaim His salvation from day to day, telling of His glory among the nations and may all the people know through us His wonderful deeds.

**The reason:**

**V 25-27**, *For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods. <sup>26</sup>For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the Lord made the heavens. <sup>27</sup>Honour and majesty are before Him; Strength and gladness are in His place.*

All the nations surrounding Israel had all their deities and they were all nothing. “But the Lord made the heavens” - the Lord made the heavens. “Splendour and majesty are before Him. Strength and joy are in His place.”

The background to this is all the false gods and false idols. The people are told by the inspired psalmist that they are to worship and praise the only true God, the Creator, the one who alone is God.

All glory to Him and to no one else because of who He is, because of His splendour and His majesty, His strength, and His joy.

**Number Three:**

**V 28-29**, *Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, Give to the Lord glory and strength. <sup>29</sup>Give to the Lord the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!*

Come into His presence, arrayed in holiness, not on the outside but on the inside.

**The reason:**

**V 30-34**, *Tremble before Him, all the earth. The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved. <sup>31</sup>Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; And let them say among the nations, "The Lord reigns." <sup>32</sup>Let the sea roar, and all its fullness; Let the field rejoice, and all that is in it. <sup>33</sup>Then the trees of the woods shall rejoice before the Lord, For He is coming to judge the earth. <sup>34</sup>Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.*

The thing begins to reach a crescendo where he calls all creation to join in the praise.

If they knew that, how much more do we know that?  
Some of them were giving true worship.  
For some it was merely an external thing.

But for us who are not the people of God by birth, physical birth, but rather the people of God by spiritual birth, we know whereof we speak. We are the true worshipers who worship in spirit and in truth.

Three stanzas. Each one commands us to worship, gives us reasons.

After we have reached the climax out of praise comes a request!

**V 35**, *And say, "Save us, O God of our salvation; Gather us together, and deliver us from the Gentiles, To give thanks to Your holy name, To triumph in Your praise."*

This is a great model for worship.

All that praise, all that thanksgiving, and then a humble request.

That's why the Lord when He taught His disciples to pray.

**Matthew 6:9-13**, *In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. <sup>10</sup>Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>Give us this day*

*our daily bread. <sup>12</sup>And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. <sup>13</sup>And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

Sometimes we forget that the testimony of the people of God. Of all people on the planet, the most grateful should be ourselves.

### **How can we not be?**

- Whatever you might think about what's going on in the world, economically, politically, materially.
- Whatever you might think about your circumstances relative to somebody else's circumstances,
- Whatever you might think are the issues in your life that steal your joy, you better get over it because you, of all people on the planet, have the most to be thankful for.

All of this is just temporary!

- ✓ You have been chosen,
- ✓ You have been elected,
- ✓ You are being protected until the Lord will hear and answer that prayer,

- ✓ God will deliver you,
- ✓ God will bring you that final salvation,
- ✓ Forever in His presence,
- ✓ You will give thanks to His holy name and
- ✓ You will glory in Him.

**V 36**, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel From everlasting to everlasting! And all the people said, "Amen!" and praised the Lord.*

That's real praise. That's real worship, the way it should be. The exiles who were reading this history needed to do that.

- Forget your circumstances,
- Forget the fact that it doesn't look the way you would like it to look now,
- Forget the fact that once it was all glorious with David and Solomon.

God will not change, and His promises will not change. All His promises will come to pass!

## **Conclusion:**

After the celebration was over, everybody went home. David returned to bless his household. David went to his house and his friend Nathan, the prophet, was there.

This is what took place between Nathan and David.

**1 Chronicles 17:1-2**, *Now it came to pass, when David was dwelling in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord is under tent curtains." <sup>2</sup>Then Nathan said to David, "Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you."*

What David was implying is, "I can't live in a house of cedar and God in a tent. I have got to build God a house."

Now remember, David is coming out of the euphoria of praise. He is feeling these profound realities about God.

Then he realizes that God's in a tent and he is in a house of cedar, a palace. Nathan thinks it's a great idea. "Do all that is in your heart for God is with you."

Then it came about the same night that the Word of God came to Nathan. God woke him up in the middle of the night.

**1 Chronicles 17:3-14**, *But it happened that night that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, <sup>4</sup>"Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: "You shall not build Me a house to dwell in. <sup>5</sup>For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought up Israel, even to this day, but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another. <sup>6</sup>Wherever I have*

*moved about with all Israel, have I ever spoken a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?' " '7Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel. 8And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a name like the name of the great men who are on the earth. 9Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, 10since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel. Also I will subdue all your enemies. Furthermore I tell you that the Lord will build you a house. 11And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled, when you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. 12He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. 13I will be his Father, and he shall be My son; and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him who was before you. 14And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever." ' ' "*

**What son do you think He is talking about?**

Not Solomon, his kingdom didn't last very long at all, fragmented, and split it into the divided kingdom.

When God (**2 Samuel 7**) gives the same record, when God promises a future king out of David's line who will establish His kingdom forever, that eternal kingdom that could never be built on earth to satisfy him.

### **Who is that King?**

**Luke 1:26-33**, *Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,<sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.<sup>28</sup> And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"<sup>29</sup> But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.<sup>30</sup> Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.<sup>31</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.<sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.<sup>33</sup> And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."*

**Christ is the one promised in 1 Chronicles 17.**

## **Will God fulfil His promises to Israel?**

Yes, in the glorious kingdom of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ earned the right to that kingdom through His death. By His death provided our salvation.

Often, we are caused to ask, "What on earth is God doing?"

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews recognises that Jesus is Lord of all but, at the same time, he acknowledges that this is not evident in the current state of the world.

**Hebrews 2:8-9**, *You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.*

Can you see it yet?

Have you seen it yet?

This must have centre place in our perspective, as the coming of the ark to Jerusalem occupied centre place in the perspective of the Chronicler.

Jesus is Lord, by virtue of his death and resurrection. He is enthroned over all the earth.

One day that will be manifest to all when God comes again in judgment, comes to set all things right. On that day the whole of creation will dance and rejoice at his coming.

This leads into two obvious points of **application**:

**a) Call for Celebration.**

What God has done for us in Christ calls for great celebration and praise. For jubilant thanksgiving and for songs of joy.

It calls for celebration marked by a depth of wonder!

**V 29-30**, *Give to the Lord the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! <sup>30</sup>Tremble before Him, all the earth. The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved.*

We ought to be filled with amazement and praise that the creator God, the God of all the universe, has remembered his covenant and has come to save us through His Son, Jesus the Christ.

We are invited, even commanded, to join the celebration as we recognise that Jesus Christ is Lord – Lord of all the earth.

**b) Call for Proclamation**

What God has done for us calls for proclamation.

We must let the whole world know what God has done.

*Make known among the nations what he has done (V8)*

*Sing to the LORD, all the earth; proclaim his salvation day after day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous deeds among all peoples. [V 23-24]*

We need to call upon all the earth to recognise what God has done in Jesus Christ, calling them to join in the celebration now!

Doing so to anticipate the day when God will come to set all things right. Then the whole of creation will sing and dance in his presence.