

CbC to Nov 15

November 9 Su Reading A313 — 1 Chron. 9 — Priests and Levites

Audio: [1 Chron. 9 \(ESV\)](#)

What's in a Name? — I ran into a question in today's reading, where it mentioned "*Perez the son of Judah*" (v. 4), "*the Shilonites*" (v. 5), and "*the sons of Zerah*" (v. 6). Who were the Shilonites? I had to do some digging to remember that Judah had five sons, three of whom survived: "*Shelah, Perez, and Zerah*" (Gen. 46:12). The sons of Shelah were called "*Shilonites*" in today's reading but "*Shelanites*" in Numbers 26:20. The problem comes from the fact that written Hebrew did not show vowels until about 800 years after Christ; only consonants were written. That was no problem for common words, but for many unique names, the vowel sounds were sometimes forgotten. The consonants SH-L-N-T were the same in both lists, but different vowels were inserted. Another interesting name that struck me in today's chapter was this: "*Mattithiah, one of the Levites, the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, was entrusted with making the flat cakes*" (v. 31). Why were we told the name of a baker? I think it was to emphasize the value of behind-the-scenes people who serve God in a mostly unrecognized way. It also "takes a village" of Christians today to maintain a thriving church. Are you one of the Mattithiahs in your church? If so, you have a vital part in serving the Lord in practical ways. You are to be praised for being faithful whether you are noticed or not.

November 10 M Reading A314 — 1 Chron. 10 — The Death of Saul

Audio: [1 Chron. 10 \(ESV\)](#)

Died in Shame — This is the second account we have read about King Saul's death (cf. 1 Samuel 31). The battle was fought just southwest of the Sea of Galilee, only 22 miles (35 km) SE of Nazareth. The first of three sections of our reading for today describes the *death* of Saul and his three sons (vv. 1-7). No numbers are given regarding the size of either army, but Israel was obviously overwhelmed by the Philistines. Saul not only died, but also his son, Jonathan, David's best friend. The second section shows the *disgrace* of Saul, as his head was displayed in the Philistine temple of Dagon (vv. 8-12). There was apparently no demonstration of God's power like there was when the ark of the covenant was displayed there earlier (cf. 1 Sam. 5). The final section of our reading judges the *disobedience* of Saul: "*He did not keep the command of the LORD*" (v. 13). God insists on obedience, in Saul's time and today. Jesus said, "*If you love me, you will keep my commandments*" (John 14:15). Saul's slide began with disobedience.

November 11 Tu Reading A315 — Psalm 102 — Prayer When Afflicted

Audio: [Psalm 102 \(ESV\)](#)

Maintaining Hope — This psalm expresses how we also may feel at times. First, there is a feeling of distance: "*Hear my prayer, O LORD ... Do not hide your face from me*" (vv. 1-2). We don't always feel close to God. Perhaps He allows that in order to make us aware of our need to seek His face. Next, the psalmist reflected on how he felt about his quickly passing, unsatisfying life: "*... my days pass away like smoke ... My heart is struck down like grass and has withered ... I lie awake; I am like a lonely sparrow on the housetop*" (vv. 3-7). He not only felt distant but also somewhat abandoned. He had not given up hope, however. He was confident in God's future help, saying, "*But you, O LORD, are enthroned forever ... You will arise and have pity on Zion ... Nations will fear the name of the LORD ... he regards the prayer of the destitute*" (vv. 12-17). My favorite part of this psalm is the care expressed for people yet unborn: "*Let this be recorded for a generation to come, so that a people yet to be created may praise the LORD ... that they may declare in Zion the name of the LORD*" (vv. 18, 21). Even though we may feel confused or disappointed at this time of our lives, we can maintain the confidence that God is eternal and good, and that He controls a good future, not only for us, but also for those to come, like our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Very Steadfast Love — This great psalm of David was so familiar to me as I read it that I am sure I must have memorized it at one time in the past. It is a call to “*Bless the LORD*” (Yahweh), an invitation used seven times in the first verses and last stanza. To “*bless*” is to speak well of. We are challenged to “*forget not all his benefits*” (v. 2). We bless God by telling Him and others what we remember about His past expressions of loving blessings to us. One thing we are to remember is His “*steadfast love*,” the translation of a single Hebrew word that is very important in the OT, used over 150 times. It is mentioned three times in this psalm about God, each time providing a slightly different description of it. In the key verse (v. 8), He is said to be “*abounding in steadfast love*,” which is closely connected with His being “*merciful and gracious*.” We don’t deserve His steadfast love. Verse 11 speaks of His steadfast love as being “*so great*” that it is “*as high as the heavens are above the earth*.” That is a boundless love. In contrast to the brief life of mankind, “*the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting...*” (v. 17). Since it is part of the character of the eternal God, it never ends. Looking backward, it was demonstrated to Moses and the people God gave him to lead (v. 7), and looking forward, it will be shown to our “*children’s children*” (v. 17).

Meditating on God’s Wonders — Just like Psalm 103, this psalm begins and ends with “*Bless the LORD, O my soul!*” (vv. 1, 30). It is a psalm that expresses God’s greatness, beginning with, “*O LORD my God, you are very great!*” (v. 1). Much of His greatness relates to water: how He separated the oceans from the earth (v. 9), how water gushes from springs and mountain streams (vv. 10, 13), and how it encourages the growth of grass and plants for food (vv. 14-15). His many works end up providing for man and beast. I like the way it ends with the theme of joy. First, it is *God’s* joy: “*may the LORD rejoice in his works*” (v. 31). Creation was done perfectly, and God deserves to look upon it with pleasure. We ought to rejoice when we see it, too. At the time I wrote this, I had just returned from seeing wonderful sights in Corinth, now a part of Greece. As we rounded a curve in our tour bus, I noticed a prominent, rounded hill in the distance and remarked to my daughter how interesting it was that similar hills were a fairly common sight in this part of the world. We saw something similar the day before as we approached the city of Athens. It turned out that both of those impressive hills were the famous Acropolis of Corinth and Acropolis of Athens. On top of the Athens Acropolis were the ruins of many temples for the worship of false gods. It came to me that, in spite of the wonders of human ingenuity and strength, those buildings were standing on the much more magnificent mountain that God had made. No one worships those gods anymore, but we continue to worship the true God, the creator of those hills. The psalm ends with *man’s* joy: “*May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD*” (v. 34). When we see the wonderful things God has made, we should stop to meditate on the greatness of our wonderful Lord.

Source of Strength — This and the next chapter of 1 Chronicles summarize the rise to power of King David. The beginning of chapter 11 (v. 3) and the end of chapter 12 (v. 38) mention that David was formally made king of Israel. Today’s chapter focuses on the mighty men of David’s army, starting with the exclusive category of “*the three*” mighty men, with Jashobeam holding its chief position (v. 11). The second one, Eleazar, is mentioned (v. 12), but the third, Shammah (cf. 2 Sam. 23:11) is omitted in this list. These three, and other men mentioned in today’s chapter, were mighty indeed. The chief of the three, Jashobeam, killed 300 enemy soldiers at one time (v. 11), and Abishai also killed 300 attacking Philistine warriors when he was abandoned by his fellow soldiers (v. 20).

The end of the chapter lists “*the thirty*,” plus another 17 mighty men. One of them was Uriah the Hittite (v. 41), the husband of Bathsheba. Behind all these mighty men was the strength of God, as it was explicitly stated about Israel’s new king: “*And David became greater and greater, for the LORD of hosts was with him*” (v. 9). The same is true for us. In the Psalms, we are encouraged by God’s concern for us: “*The LORD is the strength of his people*” (Ps. 28:8). In the NT, we are instructed to “*be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might*” (Eph. 6:10). All our strength comes from Him.

November 15 Sa Reading A319 — 1 Chron. 12 — Growing Army

Audio: [1 Chron. 12 \(ESV\)](#)

Serving Willingly and Joyfully — This is a summary chapter of how David’s army grew (v. 22) and how they came together to celebrate Israel’s new king (v. 38). More details about this growing military strength are given in 1 & 2 Samuel. The ability of these soldiers described here is amazing. Many of them could sling stones with either hand (v. 2). Some “*were swift as gazelles*” (v. 8). Others could be victorious against a thousand enemy soldiers (v. 14). One section lists the number of these Israelite warriors at 339,600, plus those not numbered from the tribe of Issachar. They were united and “*there was joy in Israel*” (v. 40). David was not raising these men to join him; they were coming willingly under God’s motivation and direction. Joyful unity is still a mark of God’s work in our day as well. If it is not characteristic in your church, you should pray with others that He will unite you to willingly and joyfully follow and serve Him.
