

# The Ideal United Kingdom (1 Chronicles 9:35 – 2 Chronicles 9:31)

by Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr.

David Prepares for the Temple, part 10:  
David Transfers Power and Responsibility to Solomon, part 3:  
David's Final Assembly, part 2 – David's Second Speeches and  
Actions (1 Chronicles 28:20–29:9)

## *David's Second Speeches and Actions (28:20-29:9)*

The second set of speeches and actions parallels the first set in many ways (see figure 16). Once again, David spoke to his son and the assembly. Afterwards, he performed actions appropriate to his speeches.

## *David Addresses Solomon (28:20-21)*

Once again, David exhorted Solomon in a way that alluded to God's words to Joshua (see 22:1-16; 28:1-10; see also Josh 1:6-10). Solomon was to be **strong and courageous**, not **afraid or discouraged** (28:11). Solomon was to have the same enthusiasm and commitment to his task as Joshua had centuries before him (compare 19:13; 22:13; 2 Chr 15:7; 32:7).

David explained why Solomon should be strong. In words that recalled Joshua's commission (see Josh 1:9), he said that “**the Lord God, my God, is with you**” (28:20). The presence of God "with" Solomon meant that God would fight with Solomon against opponents. He would grant him success (see 2 Chr 13:12; see also *Introduction: 10 Divine Activity*).

Beyond this, David also assured Solomon that he had made everything ready for him. The **divisions of priests and Levites ... every willing man** who was **skilled**, and **the officials and all the people** were ready to assist Solomon in the construction of the temple (28:21). Solomon enjoyed such widespread support for his temple project that he had no reason to be discouraged.

By noting these words to Solomon, the Chronicler pointed to the reasons for commitment to the temple service in his own day. God was with the post-exilic

community, helping them accomplish the goal. Moreover, just as Solomon enjoyed the full support of the nation, the Chronicler's readers must rally behind the temple project of their day.

*David Addresses Assembly (29:1-5)*

The Chronicler turned next to David's words to **the whole assembly** (29:1). The designation **assembly** raises this event to the level of a number of religious assemblies in Chronicles (see *Introduction: 5) Religious Assemblies*). In this assembly, David's speech focused on the need for financial support for the temple. His words divided into three parts: David's explanation of the need (29:1), his personal example (29:2-5a), and his challenge to the assembly (29:5b).

David introduced his request by explaining why it was necessary to support the temple. Solomon was **young and inexperienced** (29:1). David realized that Solomon himself was not capable of managing the entire responsibility of temple construction. At an earlier point, David explained that Solomon's inabilities caused him to prepare so extensively for the temple (see 22:2-5). A similar motif appears here but with the added request for monetary support from the assembly.

Solomon's inexperience was a factor to be considered **because this palatial structure** [was] **not for man but for the Lord God** (29:1). Again, the perspective is similar to 22:2-5. The Hebrew expression translated **palatial structure** ("temple" NAS, NRS), appears in Chronicles only here and in 29:19 as a designation for the temple. It has the connotations of a royal palace or fortification. In choosing to convey David's speech with this word, the Chronicler highlighted his belief that the temple would be the royal palace of God on earth (see *Introduction: 8) Divine Kingship*).

After explaining the need for support, David described his own commitment to Solomon's temple (29:2-5a). He informed the assembly of two ways he had contributed to Solomon's task: from his official resources (29:2), and from his personal resources (29:3-5a).

David first noted the great quantities he provided **with all** (his) **resources** (29:2). This terminology is not very specific. In the light of 29:3-5a it probably referred to David's use of official state funds for temple construction. As the Chronicler pointed out earlier, David reserved much of his war plunder for use in the temple (see 18:11). This material was probably in view here.

The king elaborated that he gave **gold, silver, bronze, wood, onyx, turquoise, various stones and marble** (29:2). All of these materials were given **in great quantity** (29:2). As he pointed out elsewhere, David provided huge quantities for the construction

and furnishings of the temple as an example for his post-exilic readers to admire and follow (see 22:3-14).

Beyond this, David informed the assembly that he had also given from another resource (29:4-5a). Out of enthusiastic **devotion to the temple** David gave from his **personal treasures** (29:4). These gifts included **three thousand talents of gold** (about 110 tons [100 metric tons]) of high quality **gold of Ophir** (29:4). He also devoted **seven thousand talents of refined silver** (about 260 tons [240 metric tons]) (29:4). The possibility of hyperbole cannot be entirely dismissed, but the needs of the temple were great. (For the Chronicler's use of hyperbole, see comments on 12:14.) Once again the large quantities of David's gifts display his enthusiasm and dedication to the temple's construction.

After describing his official and personal contributions, David challenged the assembly (29:5b). He invited them to follow his example, but the manner in which he offered this challenge is instructive. He asked who would **consecrate themselves to the Lord** (29:5b). On several occasions, the Chronicler used the term **consecrate** to connote ritual cleansings in preparation for worship. Rituals of consecration appear frequently in Chronicles as examples of proper worship which the post-exilic readers were to imitate in their day (see *Introduction: 6) Royal Observance of Worship*). In this context, however, giving to the temple was an expression of consecration.

David realized that his request for the assembly's support was to be voluntary. So he asked, "**Who is willing ...**" (29:5b). As the Chronicler himself emphasized in 29:9, these gifts were freely given. Just as David gave beyond mere duty, the assembly was asked to give beyond what was required.

David's challenge to his assembly also challenged the Chronicler's post-exilic readers. They were not to be satisfied with minimal devotion to financial support for the temple in their day. As David invited his assembly, they were to consecrate themselves to God by giving freely and generously (see *Introduction: 9) Temple Contributions*).

#### *Actions Following Second Speeches (29:6-9)*

The Chronicler continued his account of David's final assembly by summarizing the assembly's reaction to David's speech. In a word, the leaders of Israel followed David's example and gave freely to Solomon's temple project. The record of these actions divides into two parts: the giving (29:6-8) and the response (29:9).

The Chronicler noted several important facts about these gifts. First, they came from **the leaders of families, the officers of the tribes ... the commanders of thousands**

... **hundreds** and the **officials** (29:6). These groups of people appear elsewhere in descriptions of assemblies. Here they represent the leadership of the entire nation.

Second, the leaders **gave willingly** (29:6); these gifts were not coerced (see 29:5b). The leaders of Israel responded beyond the requirements of duty.

Third, the quantities of gifts were enormous (29:7-8): **five thousand talents** (about 190 tons [170 metric tons]) and **ten thousand darics** (about 185 pounds [about 84 kilograms]) **of gold** (29:7), **ten thousand talents of silver** (about 375 tons [345 metric tons]), **eighteen thousand talents of bronze** (about 675 tons [610 metric tons]), and a **hundred thousand talents of iron** (about 3,750 tons [3,450 metric tons]). These amounts are very large (with the exception of **ten thousand darics**) (29:7) and may represent hyperboles. (For the Chronicler's use of hyperbole see comments on 12:14.) In all events, the leaders gave tremendous quantities to the temple project.

Fourth, the variety of gifts included **precious stones** in addition to the metals mentioned above (29:8). The Chronicler noted specifically that these stones were put in the charge of **Jehiel** whom he mentioned earlier in connection with temple treasuries (see 26:21).

Much has been made of the term **darics** in 29:7. This description is anachronistic because darics were not minted until the reign of Darius I after whom the currency was named (c.515 B.C.) Depending on when the Chronicler composed his history (*see Introduction: Authorship and Date*), the term **darics** was either the Chronicler's own attempt to update the currency to his day (compare 2 Chr 3:3) or it was a later copyist's attempt to update to his day (*see Introduction: Translation and Transmission*).

In all events, the Chronicler's chief concern becomes evident in the manner in which the assembly closed (29:9). Great joy came to the assembly. **The people rejoiced and David the king also rejoiced** (29:9). Throughout the reign of David, the Chronicler highlighted the joy that resulted from the nation joining in harmony around her king and temple (*see Introduction: 27) Disappointment and Celebration*). In this case, the joy was in response to the fact that the leaders were **willing** and gave **freely** (29:9). Moreover, Israel's leaders gave **wholeheartedly**, out of inward devotion to the Lord (29:9 *see Introduction: 16) Motivations*).

The exemplary nature of this passage is evident. On the one hand, it presented a model of enthusiasm for the temple. At several stages, the post-exilic returnees were hesitant to give to the support of the temple (see Hag 1:3-6; Mal 3:8-12). The Chronicler offered this record to his readers to inspire them toward willing and wholehearted devotion to the temple in their day. On the other hand, this passage conveys an ideal of cooperation among various classes of people. David's appeal for popular support fit well with the Chronicler's ideal that wise kings sought the consent of their people. (For a

summary of the Chronicler's view of popular consent see comments on 1 Chr 13:2,4.) If the people and the leadership of the post-exilic community would imitate the actions of this assembly, the joy of this assembly could be theirs as well.