

HONOURING GOD

How do you sum up all you have learnt about God, in a lifetime? What do you tell the next generation about God, in the final days of your life? As King David addressed his people, he exalted and honoured “Yahweh – the LORD – our father, the God of Israel”. For all David had achieved as king, God rules over all and is sovereign. As he faced death, he declared that God – alone – is eternal and is worthy of praise.

READ: 1 CHRONICLES 29:10-13 (below)

¹⁰ Then David blessed Yahweh before all the assembly. David said: “Blessed are you Yahweh our father, the God of Israel, from eternity even to eternity. ¹¹ To you, Yahweh, is the greatness, the might, the splendour, the eminence, and the majesty - indeed, everything in the heavens and on the earth. The sovereignty is yours, Yahweh, who art exalted above everything as head. ¹² Riches and wealth come from you, and you rule over everything; in your hand is power and might, and it is in your hand to make everything great and strong. ¹³ And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name.¹

¹⁰ Then David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly; David said: “Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of our ancestor Israel, forever and ever. ¹¹ Yours, O LORD, 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, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. ¹² Riches 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. ¹³ And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name. (NRSV)

In the first study of this series, we looked at two Greek words that are translated as ‘honour’ in the NT:

- *tîmê* – where honouring God is related to the inestimable value and worth of God, and
- *doxa* – which is the glory or splendour of God.
- Locate and circle the words that are used to convey the worth of God and the glory of God.
- What other characteristics and attributes of God – and names of God - are listed in these verses?

1 Chronicles 29 records a number of significant events in the life of Israel. Firstly, King David made lavish offerings to God for the building of the temple and called on all the people to do the same. In 1 Chron 17, David had wanted to build a temple for God, but the prophet Nathan told him that one of David’s offspring (Solomon) would fulfil this task. (1 Chron 17:11-12) Secondly, we read of the anointing of Solomon as king and Zadok as priest. Thirdly, 1 Chron 29 records the death of David, after 40 years as king. As David made this speech, he knew the nation of Israel was at a major juncture and transition point. He admitted “My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great.” (1 Chron 29:1) The people had to rely on God alone for their future and their security.

“The noun “eminence,” is common in the Psalms, though with the meaning “permanence.” Yahweh is viewed as ruling in Ps 22:29; 59:14 [13]; 66:7; 89:10 [9].”²

“This magnificent prayer demonstrates beyond contradiction that **Chronicles’ priority is with the heart of worship rather than its form. Its interest is centred not on David or the temple, but on God himself and his kingdom.** Since the prayer majors on both praise and petition, it is difficult to categorize, except that rather like Psalm 145 it is a psalm of the kingdom of God.”³

- What does it mean that God is ‘sovereign’ and that he rules over everything? Does (or should) that affect the way we relate to God?

The name ‘Yahweh’/ LORD/ “I am who I am” had connotations that linked with the covenant relationship that Israel had with God. From generation to generation, God had kept his promises. God had told Moses: “Say therefore to the Israelites, ‘I am the LORD, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. You shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has freed you from the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD.’” (Ex 6:6-8)

- In 1 Chron 29:10, why did David remind the people of Israel of this special relationship between God and their ancestor known as Israel (Jacob)? Why did the people need to be reminded that God was faithful and kept his promises?

¹ Hubbard, D. A., Barker, G. W., Watts, J. D. W., & Martin, R. P. (1998). Editorial Preface. In *1 Chronicles* (Vol. 14). Dallas: Word, Incorporated. p281.

² Hubbard, D. A., Barker, G. W., Watts, J. D. W., & Martin, R. P. (1998). Editorial Preface. In *1 Chronicles* (Vol. 14). Dallas: Word, Incorporated. p284.

³ Selman, M. J. (1994). *1 Chronicles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Vol. 10). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. p268.

For many of us, some of the words of 1 Chron 29:11 may be familiar, as one phrase is included in the commonly cited version of the Lord's Prayer as *"For thine is the kingdom and the power and glory forever and ever. Amen"*. The interesting thing is that, while the Lord's Prayer appears twice in the gospels (in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4), this phrase is not in the Luke version and did not appear in early manuscripts of the Matthew passage. Jewish prayers of the time often had doxological endings. It is thought that this phrase was added for congregational worship, as a doxology and, as a result, it became commonly used by the Christian church through the centuries.

*"A Doxology is an expression of praise to God, especially a short hymn sung as part of a Christian worship service. The word doxology comes from the Greek doxa, ("glory, splendour, grandeur") and logos, ("word" or "speaking"). Most doxologies are short hymns of praise to God in various Christian worship services, often added to the end of canticles, psalms, and hymns."*⁴

Below are two doxologies that have been used in the Christian church: the Common Doxology (1674) and part of the 'greater' doxology (*'Gloria in Excelsis Deo'*), which is found in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

*Glory be to God on high and in earth peace, goodwill towards men,
We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee,
we give thanks to thee, for thy great glory
O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.*

- Why is it important for leaders to call the congregation, to declare the glory of God? What role have doxologies had in public worship in the past? What role do they have in public worship, now?

READ: 1 CHRONICLES 19:14-20

"In David's prayer is reflected a faith that looks to and gives thanks to God for every good, and expresses itself in praise of God, in generous support of his temple (both monetary and otherwise), and in obedience to his law flowing from a joyful and undivided heart. ... The fact that Israel sees its own situation as in some sense transitory or in jeopardy does not detract from, but rather contributes to, this faith and confession. ... The note of praise and thanksgiving always remains dominant, even in the midst of an existence that suggests a vocabulary like "pilgrims" and "sojourners."⁵

- David had just made a major contribution of precious metals, wood and precious stones for the building of the temple. What was he meaning, when he said: "O LORD 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." (1 Chron 29:16) and "in the uprightness of my heart, I have freely offered all these things." (1 Chron 29:17) What are the implications for the way we see our own 'giving'? Why is it important that leaders demonstrate generosity and articulate that God abundantly provides?

David was about to 'pass the baton' and royal mantle, to his son, Solomon, and:

"two words, "integrity" and "honest intent" (29:17). ... are more than theological jargon for David, given the crucible of his own experience. As shepherd, poet and singer, loyal friend, warrior, king, repentant adulterer and murderer, and broken-hearted parent, David has learned the way of "integrity" ... and honesty through "trouble" ... Finally, David is sensitive to the need of a role model for the people, an individual who can foster honesty and integrity within the Israelite community by virtue of personal example. Hence, David petitions for his son Solomon, that he might exhibit "wholehearted devotion" through obedience to the law of God (29:19).⁶

- God is not fooled, if and when we worship him half-heartedly or when we are saying the words, but have conflicting or contradictory priorities, in that our hearts and minds are in a totally different place. Why does our worship need to come from a place of 'integrity' and 'honest intent'?
- In 1 Chron 29:20, "David said to the whole assembly, "Bless the LORD your God." And all the assembly blessed the LORD, the God of their ancestors, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD and the king" These people not only 'bowed their heads' but they also lay down flat on their faces before God. What is the significance of this physical act of worship, particularly in light of God being sovereign and reigning over all?

PRAY THIS 'DOXOLOGY': *To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy - to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen. (Jude 24-25)*

⁴ <https://www.quora.com/When-was-the-last-sentence-added-to-the-Lords-Prayer>

⁵ Hubbard, D. A., Barker, G. W., Watts, J. D. W., & Martin, R. P. (1998). *Editorial Preface*. In *1 Chronicles* (Vol. 14). Dallas: Word, Incorporated. p286.

⁶ Hill, A. E. (2003). *1 & 2 Chronicles* (p. 350). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. p350.