

I WANT TO KNOW MY BIBLE

Thanksgiving at Christmas

TEXT: 1 Chronicles 16

Introduction:

I love Christmas! Decorations, parties, music, gift giving, food, family, fellowship.

When I read 1 Chronicles 16:3, I could not help but think of a huge, city-wide Christmas party!

1 Chronicles 16:3 Then he distributed to everyone of Israel, both man and woman, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of *meat*, and a cake of raisins.

Now I'm not saying that is what it was. The cause for celebration was bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.

The Ark of the Covenant was the golden chest which contained

- **the tablets of stone** on which God had inscribed the Ten Commandments,
- **a bowl of manna**, the food God miraculously provided continually during the wilderness wanderings, and
- **Aaron's rod that** wonderously **budded** signifying God's selection of his family to serve as High Priests.

On top of the Ark was the Mercy Seat, with two golden cherubim whose wings overshadowed the center of the Ark.

- The Mercy Seat **represented the Throne of God.**
- The Mercy Seat was **where the blood was sprinkled on The Day of Atonement.**
- The Mercy Seat was **where God met the High Priest once a year.**

Therefore, after winning a great victory over Israel's perpetual enemy, the Philistines, David led a contingent of Levites to the house of Obed-edom to bring it into the tabernacle David had erected near his own palace in the heart of the ancient city of Jerusalem.

And after the ark was in its place, David, in celebration threw a party. That is what is described in

1 Chronicles 16:3 Then he distributed to everyone of Israel, both man and woman, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of *meat*, and a cake of raisins.

And that is my kind of menu! Meat, bread, and cake!

And while we cannot exactly call it a Christmas party, it is closer to that than you think. In fact, what David did could be a good guide for our celebration of Christmas, whether in large parties or in quiet moments at home.

You could call it thanks giving at Christmas.

David thanked God ...

1 Chronicles 16:8-15

⁸ Oh, give thanks to the LORD!

Call upon His name;

Make known His deeds among the peoples!

⁹ Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him;

Talk of all His wondrous works!

¹⁰ Glory in His holy name;

Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD!

¹¹ Seek the LORD and His strength;

Seek His face evermore!

¹² Remember His marvelous works which He has done,

His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth,

¹³ O seed of Israel His servant,

You children of Jacob, His chosen ones!

¹⁴ He *is* the LORD our God;

His judgments *are* in all the earth.

¹⁵ Remember His covenant forever,

The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations,

So, what is David thanking God for? First,

1 Chronicles 16:16 *The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac,*

I. DAVID THANKED GOD BECAUSE OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

A. The Abrahamic Covenant.

Genesis 12:1-3 ¹ Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. ² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

In this covenant God made seven promises:

- 1) I will make of you a great nation
- 2) I will bless you
- 3) and make your name great
- 4) so that you will be a blessing
- 5) I will bless those who bless you
- 6) and him who curses you will I curse
- 7) and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed

That seventh promise is the greatest one of them all!

B. Isaiah saw it coming.

Isaiah 9:6–7

⁶ For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the increase of *His* government and peace
There will be no end, ...

C. Gabriel saw it coming and told Mary.

Luke 1:26–35

²⁶ Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored *one*, the Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women!"

²⁹ But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. ³⁰ Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. ³² 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. ³³ And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴ Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*

D. Joseph saw it coming.

Matthew 1:18–23

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. ²⁰ But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

²² So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³ "*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,*" which is translated, "God with us."

E. The fulfillment of the seventh promise of the Abrahamic Covenant is what we celebrate at Christmas!

Genesis 12:3 I will bless those who bless you,
 And I will curse him who curses you;
 And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

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| in you | Jesus came as a descendant of Abraham. |
| all the families of the earth | For God so loved the world that He sent His one and only Son. |
| shall be blessed | Offered forgiveness and eternal life! |

II. DAVID THANKED THE LORD BECAUSE OF HIS CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE.

1 Chronicles 16:20-22

²⁰ When they went from one nation to another,
 And from *one* kingdom to another people,
²¹ He permitted no man to do them wrong;
 Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes,
²² *Saying, "Do not touch My anointed ones,
 And do My prophets no harm."*

A. God protected His people.

B. God provided for His people.

C. He still does!

Patty Glover felt impressed by the Lord that she should go on one of our international mission trips in the early part of next year. She talked to me about it, and I told her she needed to go right away and apply for her passport. She asked if she could wait a couple of weeks because she did not have the money to get it at the moment. I told her she really could not wait,

because after she got the passport, she had to apply for a visa. I told her if she could not get the money to call me and I would find a way to help.

She didn't call. Here is why.

The next day, she got a call asking her to do a photo shoot – she's a photographer. The person paid her cash in advance.

Patty went to the Post Office to apply and they said, first you have to renew your driver's license which expires this month! So she goes and gets her license renewed – more money! Goes back to the Post Office, and has just enough left to get her passport, to the penny!

God still provides for His people.

III. DAVID THANKED THE LORD BECAUSE HE ALONE IS THE PRAYER ANSWERING GOD.

1 Chronicles 16:25-26

²⁵ For the LORD *is* great and greatly to be praised;
He *is* also to be feared above all gods.

²⁶ For all the gods of the peoples *are* idols,
But the LORD made the heavens.

A. The gods of the people are idols – wood, stone, cast metal, or molded clay.

- They cannot hear you.
- They cannot speak to you.
- They know nothing, so they cannot advise you.
- They cannot protect you.
- They cannot provide for you.
- They cannot help you.

B. But the Lord made the heavens!

- The Lord has proven His power.
- The Lord has proven His wisdom.
- The Lord has proven His love.
- He demonstrated all of this in creation.
- He can and will hear your prayers.

CONCLUSION: I told you when I began this morning that I love Christmas, and I do. I always have. But that does not mean that all has always been well at Christmas time.

I have shared with you before some detail about the life and struggles of our oldest son, which I share with you with his blessing and permission now, because God has given him victory in these things, and he has been walking with the Lord for years now.

But in his teen years, holiday times like Thanksgiving and Christmas were often very difficult and painful times. His pain and bitterness at being adopted was magnified a hundred fold at Christmas. The more he hurt, the more he fled to the false gods of drugs to try to find relief.

- But they could not hear.
- They could not answer.
- They brought more hurt instead of help.

His pain brought great pain to Karen and I also.

So, while I love Christmas, it certainly does not mean that everything has always been good at Christmas.

So, brother, Sister, Dear friend,

If this Christmas is a season of pain and hurt for you, I understand. Karen and I have been there. We were there for more years than we want to count.

But David's thanksgiving at his party that anticipated Christmas is just what we needed, and just what you need now also.

The descendant of Abraham has come as a blessing to all the families of the earth.

His name is Jesus. He is the Messiah, the Christ!

He is the Son of God.

He is the Savior!

And He not only offers forgiveness of our sins and the gift of eternal life, he also is the Good Shepherd who protects us and provides for us. And He is a God who hears our prayers and is able to answer and to help.