

THE POWER OF GOD: SUPERNATURAL CONTAINMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCE

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From 2 Chronicles 5-7. THE POWER OF GOD: SUPERNATURAL CONTAINMENT OF CIRCUMSTANCE

7:1-3.

#1. That moment in time was *a created moment*. That historical moment in time was to serve God and Israel as a precedent for critical understanding, ever after.

#2. This manifestation of the power of God at the temple drove a wedge of distinction between the Word of God | and | human wisdom or between information | and | revealed meaning.

#3. Those distinctions still hold in the present. The temple did not, could not contain the Almighty; He contained the temple. "Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from Heaven and consumed the burnt offerings and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house" v.1.

#4. The extraordinary event was a dramatic self-presentation of the Lord, wherein the power of God was both (1) focused and (2) constrained.

#5. The people learned that they were living (1) very close to dangerous, incomparable power and (2) that the power of God is the containment for all human circumstance.

#6. This factor changes all rational rules for thought, speech and behavior. Men must adhere to the revealed premise reaffirmed that day at the temple: In this world, men can contain nothing. Anything else is an illusion.

#7. One cannot be confronted in such a way by God and then consciously elevate information above revealed meaning. Yet that is precisely what Israel did repetitively in human circumstance. This is the preferred posture of world thought. But a world of circumstance, contained by the power of God, is hardly relative to human wisdom and or to data collection.

#8. Any, every, all human circumstance is relative to God. "All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the Lord upon the house, bowed down...faces to the ground...worshipped and gave praise...saying, 'Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting" v.3.

From 2 Chronicles 5-7, PART 2

SIN FUNCTIONS AS A BRAKE ON RELATION TO GOD 6:12-39.

#1. When that brake is used, circumstance can be dramatically changed; quickly and without apparent explanation or causation. History can be consciously warped by the power of God. Individuals and collectives are subject to this supernatural factor.

#2. Neither human wisdom nor information collection is competent to make the necessary connection between God and circumstance. Naturalism fails. So one looks for "answers" in the wrong ways.

#3. Exemplary of this is: "If Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You..." v.24. And "When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You..." v.26.

#4. Disobedience puts a brake on our relation to the causal personality who dwells in the invisible dimension. Circumstances, situations, events and states of being have to be reconsidered in the light of spiritual reality. Causation starts outside the natural, experiential system.

#5. What happened at the temple, centuries ago, is the ground for personal contemplation of the connective between God, human behavior, the Word of God and circumstance. Circumstances are not inherently causal. The Bible corrects misconceptions prompted by reliance upon the wisdom of man within his circumstance.

#6. Repentance releases the brake v.24-38. Repentance is founded upon an understanding of revealed truth about God and time, history and circumstance.

From 2 Chronicles 5-7, PART 3

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE TEMPLE STRUCTURE 5:1-14.

#1. *MEANING IS BEYOND THE STONES*. There is no inherent meaning in anything. Meaning is prescribed by the Almighty upon all created things. Nothing in the created realm does or can generate its own meaning. Men project their own presumed meaning upon things, conditions and circumstances. But that is artificial. Then comes the temple.

#2. "Thus all the work that Solomon performed for the house of the Lord was finished" v.1. Year upon year the king supervised; the stone cutters cut; lumberman felled the trees; artisans applied their genius; the haulers hauled. A material structure was built. No meaning in that.

#3. "All the men of Israel assembled themselves to the king at the feast, that is in the seventh month" v.3. The edifice was furnished v.1, 5-10. No meaning in that.

#4. "The priests came forth" v.11; "Levitical singers" and "trumpeters" v.12, 13 assembled; but there was no real meaning in that.

#5. And suddenly, "then the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God" v.14. From beyond the stones came revealed and therefore absolute meaning. That house belonged to the Lord. He accepted its presentation.

#6. The temple was *a persistent reminder* of the index, link, bridge, relation between the reality of God and time. The temple was cosmological. It evidenced the triadic relation that linked the two worlds. The Almighty supplied the meaning: the temple was the meeting point between Heaven and earth.

Meaning is always beyond the stones; beyond time, situation, circumstance and beyond men.

From 2 Chronicles 5-7, PART 4

ON THE THRESHOLD OF REVEALED MEANING.

#1. These chapters constitute a remarkable announcement from the Lord to the world of that time, or any other time. The announcement is this: The temple represents a threshold between eternity and time; between the mind of God and the human mind; a threshold of language, understanding and power.

#2. From this supernatural frontier, wisdom of a higher order can come to men in every kind of human circumstance. The foreigners and pagans of the day would recognize the causal nature of this threshold. "Blessed be the Lord your God who delighted in you, setting you on His throne as king for the Lord your God; because your God loved Israel establishing them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness" 9:8. The temple, this supernatural threshold was an incalculable blessing to the world.

#3. But the believers of Israel were most blessed. "He said, 'O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no god like You in Heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart;" 6:14.

#4. The leaders and people of Israel should have gloried and boasted in this divine concession always, but they would not.

#5. The church was the anti-type of the temple (1 Corinthians 3:16). The church of today is chartered to be this supernatural threshold.

But the people in the churches and their leaders can and in some instances have repositioned the church away from its identity at the threshold and submerged her as part of local culture and the rules of human sociology.

From 2 Chronicles 5-7, PART 5

THE DEEPEST UNITY 7:11-22.

#1. Solomon slept after all the flurry of action expended in the dedication of the temple v.11, 12. "Then the Lord appeared to Solomon at night and said to him".

#2. The Almighty then announced Himself to Solomon in such terms as to confirm that He is *the deepest unity* connecting all things:

- Meteorology v.13,
- entomology v.13,
- epidemiology v.13,
- human behavior v.17,
- human circumstance v.20,
- human history v.22

--are all related together by the deepest unity there is; which is the power of God.

#3. The king was personally warned against forsaking the presence of God and the Word of God. "But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot you..." v.19, 20.

#4. Men have no control over the things that surround them. It is God who is at the heart of it all. There are no laws of history, no laws of nature, macro, micro, quantum fields that supply the deepest unity. Rather, Scripture reveals that the *unseen deepest unity* of all things is the God of the Bible.

#5. Run afoul of the deepest unity and chaos, from the human point of view, materializes. We feel it as chaos, disintegration, collapse; but it is quite orchestrated. "Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house? And they will say, 'Because they forsook the Lord...they adopted other gods and worshipped them and served them...therefore...adversity'" v.21, 22.

#6. This revealed cosmology is the only one there is. The deepest unity is a person not a mystic "force". Of all people, those of the church should believe in, respect, proclaim and defend the integrity of the revelation.