

A SONG OF REVIVAL
1 Chronicles 16:7-36

Intro: Last week we saw in 1 Chron. 13 and 15 how God moved upon the heart of David and upon the hearts of the people of Israel to bring a revival into the land of Israel. It had to do with bringing the ark of the covenant back to the city of Jerusalem. This amounted to bringing God back to the very center of the lives of His people since it was over the ark of the covenant that God was pleased to dwell. In the ark was the stone upon which the Law had been written--so it meant a revival of the Word of God, and a revival of emphasis on obedience to the Word of God. It also meant a revival of prayer, of calling upon the Lord, which the people had not done during the days of Saul. Cf. 1 Chron. 13:3.

The first attempt to bring the ark back failed--with the death of Uzzah! However, when David declared that the Levites should bring it back, according to the Word of the Lord to Moses, then it was a glorious success.

This pleased the Lord to such an extent that David and the people were beside themselves with joy. David was ecstatic! He danced before the Lord, he was so happy!

And this is what led to the writing of this Psalm which we want to consider this morning.

Actually what we have here in 1 Chron. 16:7-36 is found in 7 different Psalms in the book of the Psalms:

- 1) Vv. 8-22 is also in Psalm 105:1-15.
- 2) Vv. 23-33 is Psalm 96--the entire Psalm, vv. 1-13.
- 3) V. 34 is found in at least 4 Psalms: Psa. 106:1; 107:1 (cf. also vv. 8, 15, 21, 31); 118:1, 29; 136:1, 26 (and see the end of every verse in this Psalm). Also, Ezra 3:11.
- 4) Vv. 35, 36 is in Psa. 106:47, 48.

If there is one verse which was to characterize the people of God in Israel, it seems to have been v. 34. You will find it referred to other places also in the OT. Look for it! The people of God were continually to rely upon the goodness of God, and the mercy of God. Cf. how the children of Israel faced their three enemies in 2 Chron. 20:21 under Jehoshaphat.

But let us look at the details of this Psalm. What was David doing, and what did he want the people of God to do? And remember that he was speaking as he was carried along by the Spirit of God, according to 2 Pet. 1:21--thus the Lord is to be praised even for this, not David!

There are at least seven characteristics of this Psalm. Let us notice them in the time that we have.

I. It was DISTINCTIVE SINGING.

David wrote it. It was not taken from the ungodly. The world knows nothing about praising the Lord. How tragic it is that today the music of the world has found its way into the church! Imagine, the music of the rock culture is now in the church. I even heard a "Christian jazz band" advertised this past week over the air. What can this mean but that we will soon have the world's dancing in our evangelical churches!

Let me say unequivocally that if it is "jazz," it is not Christian. If it is "rock," it is not Christian. Music that is Christian is distinctive, not of the world. May the Lord enable us to stand for that which is truly of Him, not for that which sounds just like the music that you hear in the world.

In a day when Christian parents are seeking to protect their children from ungodly music, how tragic that the very same music should be brought into Christian radio and Christian churches under the guise that it is Christian! If people who have recently been saved have been used to this type of music in the world, it is time that they learned that the music of the church is something entirely different!

II. It was GOD-CENTERED SINGING.

David is not mentioned. Neither are the Levites. The only people who are named are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but not for what they did for the Lord, but for what the Lord did for them!

But notice the emphasis on the Lord.

A. God is referred to as "Lord" no less than 16 times. Cf. vv. 8, 10, 11, 14, 23, 25, 26, 28 (2x), 29 (2x), 31, 33, 34, 36 (2x).

He is referred to as God 3x: in vv. 14, 35, 36.

But there is really not a verse in the whole Psalm in which God is not referred to in some way!

As "Lord" He is Jehovah, the unchanging One, the living, ever-living, One, the covenant-keeping God!

As "Lord" and as "God" He is absolutely sovereign!

But notice the other references that are made to the Lord God:

B. His Name in vv. 8, 10.

- C. His works in vv. 8, 9, 12 (2x), 14, 23, 24.
- D. His holiness in vv. 10, 35.
- E. His power in vv. 11, 21, 22; as Creator in v. 26; 31.
- F. His Word in vv. 12, 15-19, 22.
- G. His glory in vv. 24, 27, 29.
- H. His greatness in v. 25.
- I. His sovereignty in v. 31 and in every place where He is called "Lord," or "God," or "Lord God."
- J. His goodness in v. 34.
- K. His mercy in v. 34.

Thus, this is a Psalm of worship and of praise to God, and to God alone! When there is a revival among the people of God, God is given His rightful, supreme place. People quit talking about even the best of men, and talk only of the Lord!

But notice another characteristic of this Psalm:

III. A PSALM OF EXHORTATION.

There are at least 26 exhortations in 29 verses which are addressed to the people of God.

Here is a call for obedience, to give God the glory and praise and worship which rightfully belongs only to Him. See, e.g., v. 29.

But, in addition to these, we have some special exhortations in vv. 31-33, addressed to:

- 1) The heavens.
- 2) The earth.
- 3) The nations.
- 4) The sea.
- 5) The fields.
- 6) The trees.

What a day it will be when all of the universe resounds with the glory of God! And be assured that that day is coming!

When there is revival we are not content to praise the Lord ourselves, but we want everyone else and everything else to praise the Lord. As the Book of Psalms ends in Psa. 150:6, "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord."

Fourth,

IV. It is A PSALM OF SCRIPTURE.

This is Scripture, but David made use of Scripture which had been written before. Cf. vv. 12b, 15-19, 20-22.

Whenever there is a revival among the people of God, the Word of the Lord becomes prominent again. People begin to pay attention to what God has said, the words which are given to us in Scripture.

Notice also:..

V. It is A PSALM OF REMEMBRANCE.

Cf. v. 15 which is the emphasis in vv. 13-22.

When the people of God are cold and formal in their hearts, they tend to forget what God has done for them, or what He has done for His people in the past. But when there is a revival, they remember those things again--and are strengthened by them.

VI. It is A PSALM OF HOPE.

Not only do the people of God get concerned about the present and remember the past in a time of revival, but they look ahead again--to the coming of the Lord. Cf. vv. 30-33, 36.

They anticipate the good things that will take place when the Lord returns. They are weaned away from time, and begin to live for eternity.

Finally (although this in no way exhausts this Psalm),

VII. It is A PSALM OF SUPPLICATION.

There are no requests until we get to v. 35--and then there are three:

- A. For salvation.
- B. For restoration to the Lord in unity.
- C. For deliverance.

And for what purpose? So life can be made easy? NO! But that they might devote themselves to worship. Note what David said:

. . . that we may give thanks to thy holy name,
and glory in thy praise.

In a time of revival you do not have any trouble getting people, the Lord's people, to praise the Lord. Note what is said in v. 36b.

Concl: Are the marks of revival to be seen among us? Are they evident in your life? If so, rejoice, and praise the Lord! If not, pray that they may be.

Praise the Saviour, ye who know Him!
Who can tell how much we owe Him?
Gladly let us render to Him
All we are and have.

Jesus is the name that charms us;
He for conflict fits and arms us;
Nothing moves and nothing harms us
While we trust in Him.

Trust in Him, ye saints, forever;
He is faithful, changing never;
Neither force nor guile can sever
Those He loves from Him.

Keep us, Lord, O keep us cleaving
To thyself and still believing,
Till the hour of our receiving
Promised joys with Thee.

Then we shall be where we would be,
Then we shall be what we should be;
Things that are not now, nor could be,
Soon shall be our own.

-- Thomas Kelly, in IVCF's first
Hymnal, #39.