

GOD'S HANDWRITING UPON DAVID

NO. 2280

A SERMON
 INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, OCTOBER 30, 1892
 DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
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*“All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me,
 even all the works of this pattern.”*
1 Chronicles 28:19

THE temple was not to be built according to the designs of David, or Solomon, or any other man. It was to be built according to a pattern which God Himself had formed. In the things of God we are not left to follow our own judgments and devices, we are to look to the law and to the testimony for our instructions. To God's Word we must always come for our orders. What God has commanded is binding upon us in His church, what He has not commanded, we may safely leave undone.

You will notice that David here says that he received the designs and the details of the temple from God, who wrote them, not on tables of stone, but on His servant's heart by His own hand. Now, it was very necessary that everything should be arranged and planned for the temple, and that it should be built according to a pattern, for it was to be a type, an eminent type of Christ, and also a type of His church, which is a temple for God's own indwelling.

Now, no man knew what God meant to teach by that temple, and consequently, if the building had been left to human judgment, it would not have been a true type, for who can make a type if he knows not what it is to typify? God alone knew what He intended to teach by this building, so the temple, that it might convey divine teaching, must be arranged according to divine command.

Moreover, the temple was for God's own dwelling. Should not the Most High have a house after His own mind? If He was to be the Tenant, should it not be built to suit Him? And who knows what God requires in a habitation but God Himself? The best that can be built is too poor for Him. Stephen said, "Solomon built him an house. Howbeit, the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." Yet, if even in type it was to be the dwelling place of God, it must be built according to God's own requirements.

Besides, the temple was to be the throne of the great King, and if the very principle on which that throne was built was the will-worship of man's own judgment, there would have been a violation of the great principle of obedience at the fountainhead. I take it that in the church of God, I have no right to decree anything, nor John Wesley, nor John Calvin, nor any greater than they. God is alone supreme.

Christ is the one Head of His church, and we must, in all that we do in the building of His church, consult with Him, or else we act upon lawless principles, and cast off the authority of the church's true King and Head, and come under some other law. This would be, at the very center of our holy service, setting an example of lawlessness and rebellion against God. That must never be, His temple must be built according to a pattern of His own drawing, and His church and all holy work must be carried on according to His direction if we are to expect a blessing.

The point to which I call your attention is this, that God gave the directions to David by impressing them upon his mind, upon his heart, by His own hand. He did not so much draw a plan, and hand it to David and say to him, "Build the temple according to that design," but He made him think carefully and prayerfully over the whole matter. Perhaps in the visions of the night, and often as he turned the subject over in his thoughts by day, God's Spirit came and revealed to David what he needed to know as to how

this house was to be built, "All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern."

I shall tonight, first, call your attention to *the singular instructions given to David*, then, coming home to ourselves, I shall speak upon *the spiritual intuition of the saints in the truth of God*, which is very similar to this instruction given to David, and before I close, I shall have a word or two to say as to *the duty of the transmission of what we have received*. If God has taught us, we are bound to do what David did, commit the same to faithful men, that before we go hence, we may have started others in work for the Lord and not ourselves retire leaving God's work undone.

I. First then, dear friends, I call your attention to THE SINGULAR INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO DAVID.

David received his instructions by the writing of God upon his heart with God's own hand. Note this, *David did not receive them by consultation with others*. David did not send to Hiram, king of Tyre, to ask his judgement, nor did he call in a Bezaleel, or some other skillful man, to give him advice. God Himself taught him. This reminds me of what Paul said, "I consulted not with flesh and blood." "The gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Depend upon it, if you learn anything aright, you will have to learn it of God, and although consultation with others may often be very serviceable upon some points, yet you must not take them into consultation on the question whether you shall believe God's Word or not. That is to have supreme authority, and albeit there are some who are deeply taught in the things of God, who may at times be helpful to you, you must not defer to what they say so as to miss the instructions that the Lord Himself gives you.

No man's voice is to be sovereign to you, but only the voice of God the Holy Spirit, speaking out of this Book, which contains all things that you need for life and godliness. May God the Holy Ghost give you grace to fetch all your instructions from it! David did not consult with others about building the temple, and we are not to obtain our creed by consultation with other men, but go to God Himself, and to pray Him to write it upon our hearts with His own hand.

Observe also, that *David did not slavishly follow the former model*. In the wilderness Israel had a tent covered with skins as the meeting place between JEHOVAH and the people. It was a simple structure, easily moved, but now the tabernacle was to be swallowed up in the temple, and albeit that the general shape of the temple reminds you strongly of the tabernacle, yet David had a fresh revelation, and fresh guidance in what he had done.

I like to see a man keep to the old things, but even in doing so he may make a mistake, for there may be old things that can be supplanted by newer and better things. Keep your eye lifted up to God, with whom nothing is old, and nothing is new. Wait at His footstool, submit your heart like a tablet, for Him to write upon it all His instructions, and then do as He hath said.

According to the context, *God gave to David instructions about the details of the work*. I commend the reading of this chapter to you, it may at first seem to have little in it, but the more you study it, the more will it teach you. Among other things, God revealed to David "the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlors thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat." God will teach you, if you will wait upon Him, the details of your work, the details of His Gospel, the detailed explanation of your experience. "In all your ways acknowledge him, and He shall direct thy paths."

As one said to me the other day, and I thought very wisely, "God directs His servants' steps, and also His servants' stops when they are not able to take any steps, but feel bound to stand still." God directs them in not acting as well as in acting. You may go to Him for detailed guidance, and especially in the matter of His service. If you would know what is His mind, yield yourself to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and consult this Book, for it will tell you everything about the porches, and the houses, and the

treasuries, and the upper chambers, and the inner parlors, and the place of the mercy seat, and everything else that you need to know.

Further, *the directions given were extremely minute*. You noticed in our reading, that there was gold by weight for the lamp stands, and for the lamps which stood upon them. Now, no man, unless he had made a candelabrum or lampstand of the kind before, could tell how much gold it would take, the most skillful tradesman here, though himself a dealer in such things, would not readily know exactly the weight of gold required, but if the one who needs the knowledge has never made such things, if he has been a king used to the sword, how can he know how much silver is wanted for a candlestick, how much gold is needed for a seven branched lampstand, and how much for the lamps to stand thereon?

It is a wonderful instance of what inspiration can do, how the Spirit of God could teach His servant David all the little ins and outs of this wonderful making of the vessels for the house of the Lord, even down to the basins, "for the golden basins he gave gold by weight for every basin, and likewise silver by weight for every basin of silver." All was arranged exactly.

If we will follow the Word of God closely, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we shall find that it enters into the details of our private life, into the details of our church life, into the details of our troubles, our wants, and our joys. God will direct you in everything if you are willing to be directed. "Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle," but be willing to be directed by God, and you shall not be without direction even in the smallest matter.

And yet again, *the innermost things were laid bare to David*. Nobody saw the cherubim, I speak broadly, for once in a year the high priest went into the holy place, but then he scarcely saw the cherubim, for with the smoke of the incense which went up around him before the mercy seat, everything in that place must have become dim.

They were almost unseen objects, yet David had seen them in his mind's eye. He had had a representation of them written on his heart by the hand of God, for so we read, "and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubim, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord." There was a pattern of this printed on the understanding and heart of David.

Oh! yes, the Lord will let you see everything that can be seen, there is no stint in His revelation to the man who is willing to see. There are unspeakable words, yet Paul heard them, though he could never repeat them, it was not lawful for him to utter them.

There are secrets of the Lord, but they are "with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." There are things that are within the veil so far as most men are concerned, but to the man who is in Christ, the veil is rent, and the veil which was on his own heart and mind has been taken away by the Spirit of God, and he can see the things of God, and rejoice therein, even as David did.

Now, we are told in the text, and I must come back to the very words of it, "The LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me." *David not only knew the details, but he understood them*. He had a clear insight into what God meant by the instructions given.

Now, dear friends, the hardest thing in the world is to give a man understanding. It is our duty, in our preaching and teaching, to make things very clear to the understanding, but if people have not any understanding, we cannot give it to them, but God can. When the understanding itself is darkened, and ceases to be an understanding, God can so renew it that it shall be all clear and bright, and it shall be able to comprehend the things of God. "The LORD made me understand."

Oh, what a privilege! Not merely, "made me hear," but "made me understand." And how did the Lord do it? "In writing," says David, "by his hand upon me." The writing was written on David's own mind, he had not to go upstairs to fetch it, he had not to say, "I cannot always carry it about with me," but he did always carry it about with him wherever he went, for God had written upon David himself.

And it was *written there by the hand of God*. Now, I am coming to my chief point. "The LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me." God writes His law in the Bible, but we do not understand it, God writes it on our heart, and then we do understand it. There it lies in the letter, and we

may be dull of understanding and not comprehend it, but if it comes here in the spirit of it, our heart is no longer dull, but being quickened of God, it receives the things of the Spirit of God. The carnal mind cannot know spiritual things, but God gives us a spiritual mind, and then we begin to understand spiritual things. "The LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me."

We learn much from the gifts of God's hand, but not so much as from the hand itself. Sometimes God lays His hand upon His child very heavily. You can forget His gifts, but you cannot forget the pressure of that hand. At times He will press His hand upon us till He seems to crush us to the very heart, till we stagger and anguish breaks our spirit.

There is no writing like that which God writes with a steel pen right into the soul, and sometimes He makes very heavy down-strokes, and very sharp, cutting up-strokes, when He writes upon the fleshy tablets of the heart His mind and will, as He wrote upon the heart of David all the details about the building of the temple at Jerusalem.

II. That brings me then, to my second point, which is this, THE SPIRITUAL TUITION OF THE SAINTS IN THE TRUTH OF GOD.

I remark first, that *God still writes upon the heart of men*. He prefers fleshy tablets and His own Spirit to any paper and ink. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." God makes a new heart to write upon, and when He has made a new heart, then He takes His pen, and writes there the law of His house.

Have *you* ever had God's Word written on your hearts? I know that some of you have, but I am afraid that some of you have not, because I know how easy it is to hear a sermon, and to read the Bible, and say, "Oh, that is wonderful!" and then go out into the world and act contrary to what you heard from the preacher, or found written in the Word of God.

Now, let me show you in a little in detail *how God writes the great truths of His Word on our hearts*. We come to this blessed Book, and we find that man is fallen, that man is ruined by sin. Did you ever feel that it was so with you? You remember a time when you knew that you were fallen, when you could see your heart to be corrupt, and felt yourself to be lost, ruined, and undone. Ah! then the Lord made you understand in writing by His hand upon you.

This Book tells us that without Christ we can do nothing, we are dead, we are without strength. Did you never find it so? Why, when you began to seek the Lord, some of you, you found that your boasted strength had all evaporated! You could not feel aright, nor think aright, nor act alright, and though you tried hard, yet you were like Samson when his hair was shorn, you were too feeble to accomplish any good thing.

Then you learned a doctrine in this way. I may have preached it to your ears, but God laid it on your heart. You knew that it was so, for the Lord had taught it to you by His Spirit, and nobody can ever beat it out of you now.

Then there came a time when you read in the Scriptures that Christ is the Savior of His people, and that whosoever looks to Him shall live. You believed that to be true as you heard it preached, and read it in the Book, and you did look, you looked to Christ, you gazed upon Him as He hung upon the accursed tree for you. Now, tell me, did you not, when you looked, find immediate and glorious salvation? Did not the burden roll from your shoulders? Did not the disease depart from your heart? Can you not say tonight—

*"Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away"?*

And then the doctrine of the atoning sacrifice, the doctrine that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin, that also you were made to understand in writing by the hand of the Lord upon you, and no power on earth or in hell can take that doctrine from you. Since then, you have learned other

doctrines, possibly the five points of Calvinism, or the fifty points of any other system, but you never learned them from merely reading them in the Scriptures, you never really knew them till the pen of God began to move up and down upon your inward nature, and your heart received the impression the Lord intended to convey to it.

It may be that there are more truths to be written on your heart, but we shall not know them all until we get home to our Father's house. Meanwhile, let us keep on reading more of God's Word, and making more of its truths our own, but depend upon it, this is the main thing, to get by real personal experience, what we perceive to be written by the revelation of God. "The LORD made me understand in writing by His hand upon me." May the Lord make it to be so with every minister of Christ here, and every Sunday school teacher, and every Christian worker of every kind! May we know what is written in the Book by what is written on our heart!

Now I believe that *the Lord does this with regard to our great Pattern*, "even all the works of this pattern." We have one great Pattern whom we are all to imitate. You know who it is to whom we sing very often—

***"Be Thou my Pattern; make me bear
More of Thy gracious image here!"***

May the Lord Himself write upon us according to that glorious Pattern! Who but the Holy Spirit can work in us the humility of Christ, the courage of Christ, the self-denial of Christ, and full obedience to the Father's will such as He rendered? Who can give us all this but the Christ to whom we sing—

***"Cold mountains, and the midnight air
Witness'd the fervor of Thy prayer;
The desert Thy temptation knew,
Thy conflict and Thy victory, too"?***

Let none of us think that we cannot be like Christ. Let nobody say, "The Pattern is too difficult for us to copy." No, no, my brother, let us weep our eyes out that we fall so short of it, but let us strive after it according to His striving, who worketh in us mightily, and never be content till we are indeed like Him. What did the psalmist say? "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." We shall never be satisfied till then, therefore let us sit in the light of Christ till He is photographed upon us, and we go forth as living portraits of the divine Pattern.

I want for a minute or so, to show you how the Lord can reveal to you, His servants who love and fear Him, everything you need to know about the great work of salvation. In the Word of God we have a model of salvation, and you who want to teach others had better conform all your teaching to this model. The Lord can teach you and will teach you all things that you need to know about His church and the temple of His salvation.

Read the eleventh verse of this chapter again, "David gave to Solomon his son *the pattern of the porch*." O you young men, who are going to be ministers, mind that you get a good clear view of the pattern of the porch! Tell the sinner to come to Christ just as he is, do not begin setting up some fine porch of feelings or preparations. Set up the pattern of the porch, the wicket gate, with the light shining through it, and these words written over it, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Preach a full Christ to empty sinners, and tell them that all the fitness He requires of them is that they should feel their need of Him, and tell them that He gives them even that, they are not to look within themselves for it. If they do not feel their need, they must come to Him to get the feeling of their need, for from the very beginning it is all of grace, and all of Christ. So, my brethren, get a clear view of "the pattern of the porch."

"*And of the houses thereof*," the places where the priests and Levites dwelt. Get a clear view of the houses that Christ gives His people to dwell in, how they dwell in Him, how they abide in Him, and go no more out for ever. I cannot enlarge on this, but you can think it out for yourselves, and explain it to

your hearers and scholars. Think of those mansions of present joy and future bliss which they shall have who come in by the true and living way, even by Christ Jesus, who is the only way of entrance into the temple of salvation.

“And of the treasures thereof.” When you preach Christ, pray to have written upon your heart, as well as in this Book, something about the treasures of God's house. Oh, the infinite riches of the covenant of grace! Oh, the all-sufficiency of Christ Jesus, our Lord! Oh, the fullness of power that is to be found in the Holy Ghost! Oh, the heaps of blessedness which are stored away for believers in the person of their divine Lord and Master! Get in your own heart a good clear view of the treasures of the temple of salvation, and then go and preach about them to others.

And what next? *“And of the upper chambers thereof.”* Have you ever been in those upper chambers where you get a view of the glory yet to be revealed? Then you have been near to heaven, and near to your God. Perhaps you have not attained to that height yet. If not, may the Lord write on your heart the plan of the upper chambers!

“And of the inner parlors thereof.” I thought as I read this over, and tried to look deeply into it, that I knew a little about the inner parlors thereof. Oh, there are sweet fellowships, there are communings which nobody knows but the man who has dwelt where Jesus is, and who continues to abide in Him! He shall ask what he will, and it shall be given him, and he shall continually joy in God through Jesus Christ. Get a good view of the inner parlors thereof. May the pattern of them be written on your own heart, and then go and tell others about them.

And here is one thing more, *“And of the place of the mercy seat.”* You often sing—

*“There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness o’er our heads!
A place, than all beside more sweet,
It is the blood-stain’d mercy seat.”*

May you have written on your heart the pattern “of the place of the mercy seat!” It was inside the veil, you know, above the ark of the covenant, and under the wings of the cherubim, the place where God met with Moses and Aaron, and shone forth in the light of the Shekinah, making glad their willing eyes. God grant that you may know by daily experience the power of prayer at the place of the mercy seat! Then go and tell poor sinners about it, and tell poor saints about it too, according as the Spirit of God has written it with His own hand upon your heart.

III. But now the time has almost gone, so I must briefly finish with my third point, that is, THE DUTY OF THE TRANSMISSION TO OTHERS OF ANYTHING THAT GOD WRITES ON YOUR HEARTS.

Tell others what God has told you. Our Lord said to His disciples, “What ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.” He says the same to us. “To whom shall I go?” say you. Well, take David as your example.

First, *David told Solomon all about it.* “Ah!” you say, “My boy is no Solomon.” That is all the more reason why you should teach him. Perhaps David might have been excused from teaching Solomon, as he was already so wise, but the fact that he did instruct him teaches us that the wisest child needs to be taught the things of God.

If your boy is not a Solomon, you will need to teach him twice over, or many times if need be. Teach him nineteen times over, and if necessary, teach him twenty times over. If anybody asks, “Why do you teach him twenty times?” say that it is because you found that nineteen times did not bring him salvation, and you meant to keep on till he was saved. Tell Solomon about it. Say to him, “My son, come here and listen to what your father has tasted and handled of the good Word of the Lord. Hear what your father has experienced of divine grace.”

Well, perhaps you say, "Yes, I will talk to my boys about the Savior, shall I speak to anyone else?" Next, dear friend, *talk about Christ to chosen companions*. I count it a high privilege if I can get a little personal conversation with a choice young man, one who has great ability, and one whom we have reason to believe God has called to do a great work for Him. David knew that God had chosen Solomon to build the temple, and therefore he was very particular to give him the details that he had received from the Lord.

Perhaps a Christian woman here says, "You would not have me talk to a young minister, would you?" Well, my dear sister, you know what we read about Priscilla and her husband Aquila. They were not very great people, they were simply tent makers, but they talked to Apollos in such a way that he was for the rest of his life indebted to that humble man and woman.

Some of those whom God has used, and will yet use still more, will tell you that they owe a great deal to humble people who have talked to them about Christ. The godly women who sat spinning and darning stockings in the sunshine at Bedford, talked with one another about the things of God, and John Bunyan stopped and listened to what they said, and he profited all the rest of his days by their holy talk. If you have the opportunity, and come across any choice young minds, be sure to tell them what God has told you about His great plan of salvation.

Then lastly, *David gathered all the people together and told them about the temple*. In the next chapter we read, "Furthermore David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the LORD God." They soon began to give the gold, and the silver, and the brass, and the wood, and the precious stones for the temple.

See that you tell to all you can what God has told you. I am afraid that some here have not yet found out their life work. We get into the habit of wanting so much "talent" in preachers. May "talent" be thrown into the bottomless pit! It has done more harm to the church of God than it ever did good. If plain Christian men would begin to talk about Christ wherever they have opportunity, it would usher in a golden age.

Perhaps there has come in here a troubled sinner wanting to find a Savior. Try to speak to him. "Oh!" you say, "he might be offended." So he might, but that would not kill you. Tell him about Jesus Christ, and if he gets to heaven through what you tell him, he will forgive you for not having given him a handsome card with your name on it to introduce yourself. If you get a soul to heaven, the rudeness of an impromptu address will never occur to that soul. God help us to be up and doing, telling out what He has written in our hearts and unto His name shall be the praise!

Perhaps you have never had anything written on your heart my dear hearer. Then lay your heart before the Lord tonight with this simple prayer, "Lord, write on it!" And if He writes on it that one word "Jesus," it will be all that you can want. God bless you every one, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

1 CHRONICLES 28

Verse 1. *And David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem.*

David, in his old age and soon to die, summoned a great representative assembly of the notables of his kingdom.

2. *Then David the king stood up upon his feet,—*

He was ill, and obliged to keep to his bed, but he left his couch for this solemn occasion. He did not even remain seated, although extremely weak, he stood up upon his feet.

2. *And said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people:*

Those who read carefully will notice the sweetness of David's style now that he is about to die. It was after the great sin of his life, and after he and his subjects had suffered because of his numbering the people, that he calls the men before him "my brethren." He had sometimes spoken of them as his servants, but now he adopts a very humble style, and putting himself on a level with them, he says to them, "Hear me, my brethren, and my people."

2-3. *As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building: but God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood.*

Admire the frankness of David in telling the people what God had said to him. There is no other biography in the world like the Bible, for it tells the faults and follies of those whose history it records. David was a man after God's own heart, yet as he had been used as a sword for the defense of God's people, and the destruction of their enemies, he could not be permitted to build the temple. He frankly tells the people all that God had said, it would not reflect any honor upon himself, but it was true, and therefore he kept nothing back. One falls in love with David for the frankness of his utterance. When a king and an aged man, and just about to die, he tells the people all this story.

4. *Howbeit the LORD God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler; and of the house of Judah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he liked me to make me king over all Israel:*

He delights to dwell upon the election of God. It was not by the right of primogeniture that he was chosen king, it was by the will and good pleasure of God. Judah was one of the younger tribes, and yet it was made the royal tribe. In Judah, the house of Jesse was of no great importance, yet God chose it as the royal family, and in the household of Jesse, David was the youngest, yet the Lord "liked" him, and chose him to be king over all Israel.

5. *And of all my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel.*

David seems to harp upon this sweet string of the divine choice. I wonder that so many good people are afraid of this blessed doctrine. They fight shy of it, they seem to run away at the very sound of the word "election." Yet is it the very joy of saints. God hath chosen them, and ordained them to be His servants.

6-8. *And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chose him to be my son, and I will be his father. Moreover I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day. Now therefore in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the LORD, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God: that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.*

Thus he talked with the great number of the nobility and chief men of his kingdom who were gathered round him.

9. *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father,—*

God is very dear to us, but perhaps under no aspect is He more tenderly near us than as the God of our father, "My son, know thou the God of thy father."

9. *And serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*

What a covenant this was under which Solomon stood! Alas! he was not as true to God as he should have been, and though we hope he was not cast away forever, yet under his rule Israel began to decay, and he pierced himself through with many sorrows in his latter days.

10. *Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.*

It is fine to hear this old man, in his weakness, stirring up the young man. We generally expect to see the youths full of zeal and the old men somewhat slow, but grace can turn the tables against nature. Here the old man, feeble as to his body, is vigorous as to his spirit.

11. *Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlors thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat,—*

He had it all ready in his mind, and before he died, he passed over the plans of that wonderful piece of architecture to his son Solomon.

12-13. *And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.*

Everything was laid down, cataloged, and arranged so that Solomon had only to follow the plans given to him by his father and all would be right. Think of the love of David to his God. Though he might not build the temple, he would draw the plans for it, and though he might not live to see it completed, yet he would, in his own mind, arrange all the courses of the priests and the Levites, and every detail, even to the placing of the vessels of service in the courts of the Lord's house.

14-15. *He gave of gold by weight for things of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service; silver also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service: even the weight for the candlesticks of gold—*

Or the candelabra.

15. *And for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof: and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, both for the candlestick, and also for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick.*

They were not for the burning of candles, but for oil lamps. There was a lamp stand, with seven lamps upon the stand, and there were ten of these in the temple. There was only one in the tabernacle, but there were ten in the temple. David arranged everything. Those seven-branched golden candlesticks stood like pastors of the church, and the little silver candlesticks were carried about like evangelists, who go from place to place that the whole house of God may be served with light. Everything was by weight. God knows what He would have in His house, and He measures out to each one according to his need.

16-17. *And by weight he gave gold for the tables of shewbread, for every table; and likewise silver for the tables of silver: also pure gold for the fleshhooks, and the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basins he gave gold by weight for every bason; and likewise silver by weight for every bason of silver:*

I like to think of David planning all these little things, first receiving instruction from God, then waiting upon God for further direction, and thinking not only about the great golden candelabra, but about the silver candlesticks, and the flesh hooks, and the bowls, and the cups, and the basins. They who love God love everything that has to do with Him, they have a holy concern even for the smaller matters pertaining to the house of the Lord.

18-20. *And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD. All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern. And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it:*

Do not talk about it, do not sit down and dream over the plans, and think how admirable they are, and then roll them up, but "Be strong and of good courage, and do it."

20. *Fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee;*

What a pretty touch that is! "The LORD God, *even my God*, will be with thee."

20. *He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.*

Therefore be of good courage, you that are working for God, for He will not fail you, nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord.

21. *And, behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites, even they shall be with thee for all the service of the house of God: and there shall be with thee for all manner of workmanship every willing skillful man, for any manner of service:*

God always finds men for His work. We sometimes see a lot of cowards run away and we say to ourselves, "What will happen now?" Why, God will find better men than they are! And when there seems to be a paucity of really valiant men in Israel, God has them in training, and that awkward squad out there will yet become a band of brave men for the service of the house of God.

21. *Also the princes and all the people will be wholly at thy commandment.*

Thus the grand old man finished up his life by starting another to carry on the work which he was obliged to leave.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—328, 455, 488

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