

**Week 5 // Capital Campaign – 2 Chronicles 6:14-40 //**

Materials Needed: 1 print out of 'Natural Wonders' handout, scissors, 4 popsicle sticks (or similar item), glue

Opening Activity

- Prior to community group, print a copy of the 'Natural Wonders' handout. Cut the 4 pictures out and glue them onto the top of a popsicle stick (or similar item).
- During this activity time, pass the pictures around and allow different kids to hold them and look at them. Ask them these questions: 1) What do you like about the pictures? 2) What's amazing about them?
- Then, explain how even though these natural wonders are amazing, God is the one that handcrafted each of them in His great power. The beauty and grandeur of these cliffs, mountains, and waterfalls and the countless stars in the sky are only a glimpse of God's grandeur and greatness!

Tonight, we're going to jump back into the Old Testament and see even more examples of God's greatness and how an understanding of it can help us pray big prayers to a great God! Let's begin:

Read 2 Chronicles 6:14, 18-21, 29-31

O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart, who have kept with your servant David my father what you declared to him.

But will God indeed dwell with man on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this house that I have built! Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his plea, O Lord my God, listening to the cry and to the prayer that your servant prays before you, that your eyes may be open day and night toward this house, the place where you have promised to set your name, that you may listen to the prayer that your servant offers toward this place. And listen to the pleas of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. And listen from heaven your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.

... whatever prayer, whatever plea is made by any man or by all your people Israel, each knowing his own affliction and his own sorrow and stretching out his hands toward this house, then hear from heaven your dwelling place and forgive and render to each whose heart you know, according to all his ways, for you, you only, know the hearts of the children of mankind, that they may fear you and walk in your ways all the days that they live in the land that you gave to our fathers.

Discussion

This passage appears toward the end of a much longer story than we see here. It's the conclusion of a story that begins when King David desires to build a permanent house for the Lord, God's temple. King David proceeds to gather the supplies (offerings to God from the Israelites) and organize and prepare the plans for the temple. But due to the many wars and bloodshed that David was involved in, God did not see him fit to build His temple. God needed a man of peace and rest to build His temple. Therefore, God gave David a son, Solomon, whom He would anoint as king, and God would charge him to build the temple instead. (Yet King David and King Solomon only prepare the way for the true king and the true temple that later come through God's Son, Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit.)

The passage we see above takes place after Solomon has built the temple and is preparing to dedicate it to the Lord. As he begins, he makes it known that God is the only god and declares that He is truly a great God! He says that even this temple that he has built is so much less than God and can in no way contain Him.



Question One: How great do you think God is? Allow the kids to answer for themselves. If they're not sure how to begin, read 1 Chronicles 29:10-13 to them to get their minds rolling.

Question Two: God is great and glorious, and the universe cannot even contain Him. Why would He ask Solomon (a mere man) to build Him a temple – a place that could in no way contain Him either? *There are 3 reasons: 1) God wanted to use that place to dwell among His people because He dearly loved them. 2) Building a temple to God was an act of worship for Solomon and his people and it gave them the opportunity to give of their time, riches and talents to build it. 3) The final product, a glorious temple, would be able to reflect a glimpse of God's glory to the Israelites and all other people who would encounter it.*

As we learned last week, God had Moses build the tent of meeting, or the Tabernacle, to be the portable dwelling place (kind of like a sacred tent) for the presence of God so that He could dwell within their midst (Exodus 25: 8). And just like the Tabernacle, God would not exclusively live in that place (2 Chronicles 6:21), but it became the specific place where men would go to meet God.

Question Three: The Israelites had access to God because God dwelled in the temple. High priests could go in and pray and make sacrifices to the Lord on the people's behalf. And people that lived far from it would pray facing Jerusalem. If this temple no longer exists today (it was burnt down and later destroyed when God sent the Israelites into exile in Babylon), how is it that we still have access to God? *Through our relationship with Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells inside our hearts for those who believe.*

Once we decide to believe in Jesus and give him our lives, our bodies become God's temple (1 Corinthians 6:19) and the Holy Spirit enters and dwells there to whisper the truths of God to us. How wonderful is this! The Israelites had access to God from a temple, but as followers, we have access to God through His spirit that dwells in our hearts!

Beginning in verse 19, while Solomon is declaring the greatness of God, he also pleads with God to hear the prayers of his people and to forgive them. How amazing that such a great and powerful God desires to hear our prayers! And he doesn't just desire to hear from us, but he also knows us deeply and knows the desires of our hearts (2 Chronicles 6:30).

Question Four: What kinds of things would you pray for if you understood that God already knew what's on your heart and how He longs to hear you share those things with Him? Allow the kids to answer on their own.

We see Solomon do this very thing in this verse (not all points are included in the passage above for brevity). He prays that God would stand up for the righteous and make things right (verses 22 -23), that He would restore His people when they fail and provide for their needs, that they would be known as the ones who fight for the weak, that God would grant them victory, and that God would forgive their sins. This is a prayer of missionality. A prayer that Solomon prays on behalf of his people.

Question Five: When we look at this passage in its entirety, we see that all 26 verses (not all included above) are the words of Solomon's prayer to God. That's one long prayer! And he uses the first few verses just to declare God's greatness! What does this teach us about the way in which we should pray to God? *Our prayers need to be God-centered. We need to proclaim God's greatness and glorify Him through our prayers. It's good to ask God for things that will bring Him honor and glory and to avoid asking for things just because we want them.*

Wrapping Up



Praying like Solomon begins with an understanding of God's greatness. Let's conclude our time by re-reading 2 Chronicles 6:14, 18 and declaring God's greatness together. Then, let's close our time by sharing ways that we can pray on behalf of the people around us who don't know Jesus. Pray that God would show us His glory as we pray, and that He would use us as He pleases to bring glory to Himself.