

ARCHIVE



MATTHEW HAMBRICK

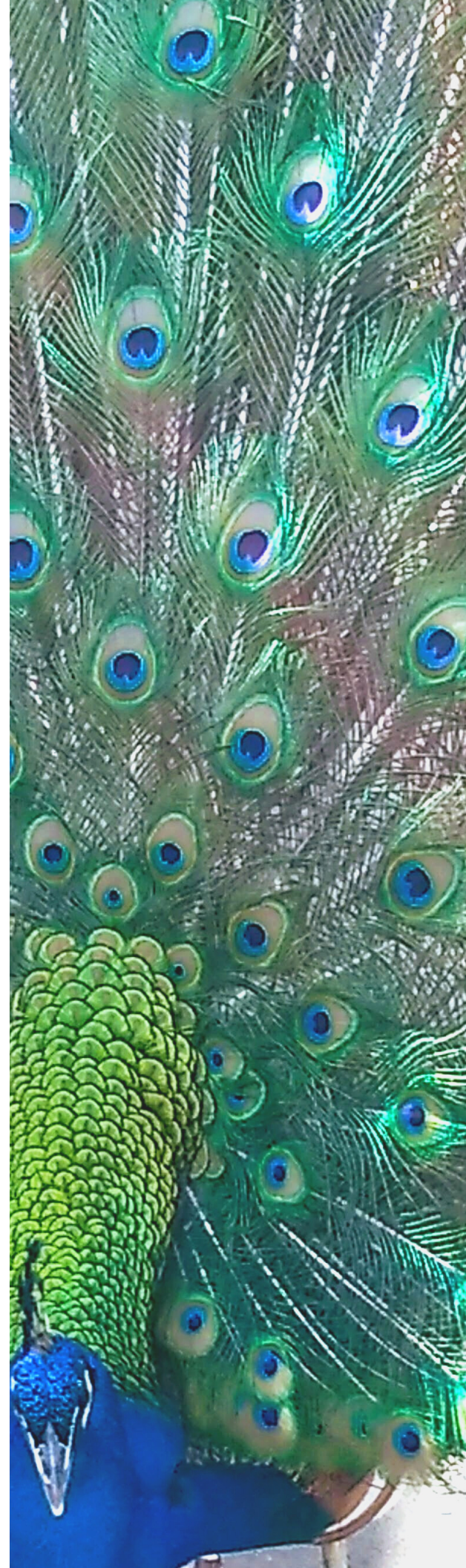
CHAPTERS 1-4

INTRODUCTION

Israel Finkelstein of Tel Aviv University asserts that these first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles serves as an introduction to the history of Israel. It tells the story by telling the reader who lived and who died and who sired whom. He finds that place names are also significant in that they tell us where we should be able to find archeological records of those who are mentioned in the pages of Chronicles. Reading the first sections of 1 Chronicles in light of reading Samuel/Kings should give us the background we need to see the Chronicles genealogies as the history of Israel.

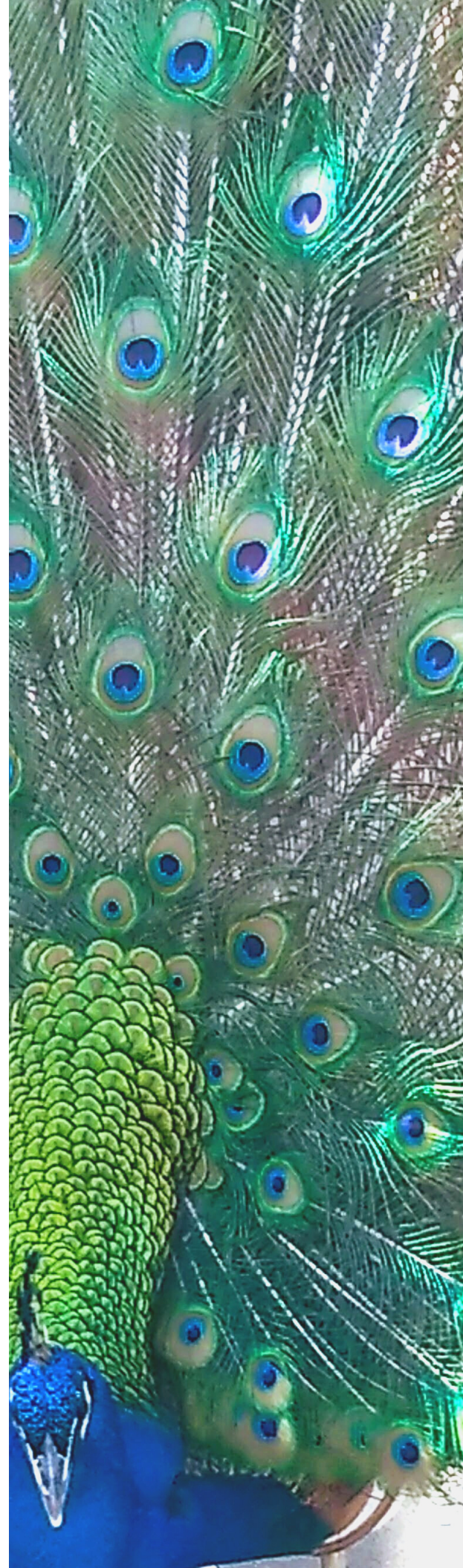
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In chapter 1, which names stand out as being very important in the story of Israel?
- In ancient literature, Nimrod is often the personification of evil in the world - much like the way many see Satan. In what ways do you see evil at work in the world?
- Richard Friedman calls Keturah “the most ignored significant person from the Hebrew Bible.” Who is the most important person from the history of our church that we no longer talk about?
- From chapter 1, we realize that many of the people who are conquered by the Israelites (like the Midianites) are related by ancestry. Do you ever feel like we are unnecessarily harsh with other denominations?
- With Jacob, in chapter 2, we find ourselves in a part of the story that we remember and understand. His twelve sons become the twelve tribes of Israel. Do we know more about some of his sons (and their tribes) than others?
- There is an obvious bias in Chronicles toward two of these sons: Judah and Levi. In what ways do Christians favor some people in the Bible over others?
- It’s important to the author that David comes from Judah. Is it important for you that your theology (preaching, books, etc.) come from the same tradition you come from?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONTINUED

- Chapter 3, by talking about Solomon more than his brothers, shows us that first-born children are not as important in Hebrew society as we might have once thought. Which child are you (first, second, third, middle, baby, etc.)? Did it matter to your parents?
- We hear about Judah's descendants in several different ways and in several different chapters, including chapter 4. Does that tell you anything about what the author of Chronicles thinks about him? Is there a story that you can't help but tell over and over again?





CHAPTERS 5-9

INTRODUCTION

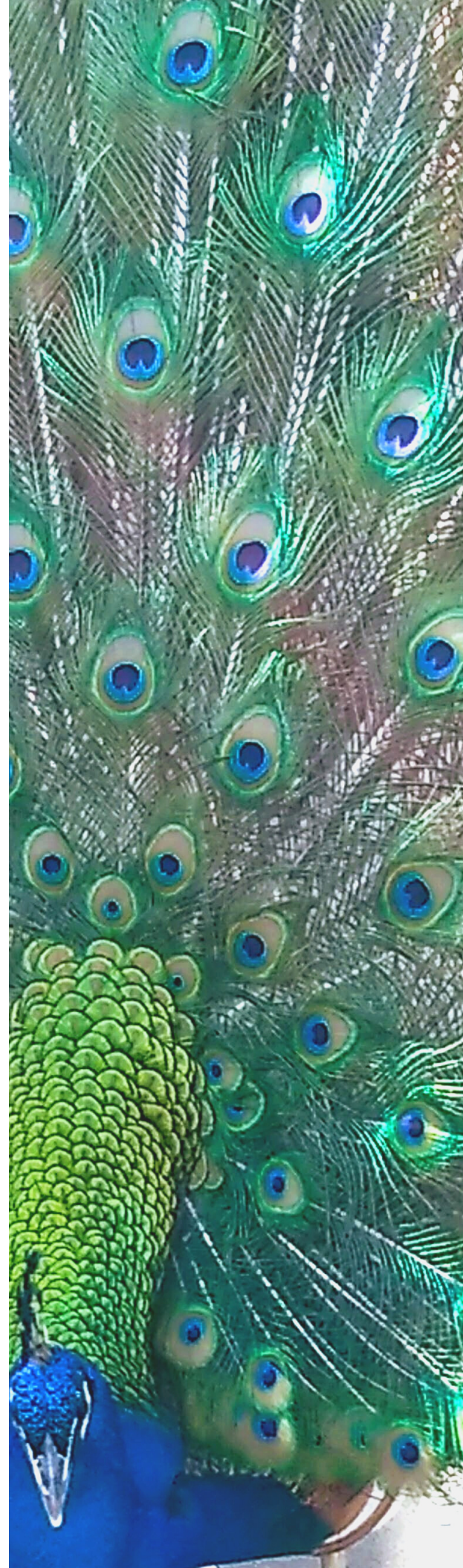
Last week we talked about the Judah bias that is to be found in Chronicles. Be on the lookout for examples, like 5:2, in which the greatness of Judah is proclaimed.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Chronicles 5, while it continues its genealogy, it slanders Reuben for sins committed against the family. Are there times that you find it difficult to let go of hurts from your life?
- 1 Chronicles 5:2 states that it was the “Judah tribe that became the most powerful and produced a leader” (CEV). If we compare the authors of Samuel/Kings to that of Chronicles, which do you think would be more ready to follow Jesus?
- Last week we talked about how place names are important for those first readers of Chronicles. Are there cities that when just the name is mentioned brings forth vivid memories to your mind?
- In chapter 6, we learn about the genealogy of Levi, the tribe of priests. Do you think meeting someone’s family helps you to know that person better? Why or why not?
- Chapter 6 also describes the worship performed by the Levites. Are you the kind of person who likes to read the instructions or do you just dive in? How do you think these things might relate to one another?
- Chapter 7 gives the first telling of the genealogy of Benjamin. Are you surprised by its length? Who is missing in this first telling? By placing Benjamin last in the genealogies, in chapters 7 and 8, it is as if Saul is an afterthought in the mind of the author. Who does the Church treat as an afterthought? Do we let certain characters in the Bible be unimportant?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONTINUED

- David came before even his ancestor Judah. What do you think the author of Chronicles is trying to do by making this choice? What would it mean if you were writing your family genealogy and put your immediate family first?
- Chapter 9 is an account of the return from exile. Why would the Levites be mentioned as returning home first? Based on what you read in the genealogies, who would you expect to return last?
- If there had been a world war and all human knowledge had been lost, what would you begin writing as an instruction manual to rebuild civilization?





CHAPTERS 10-12

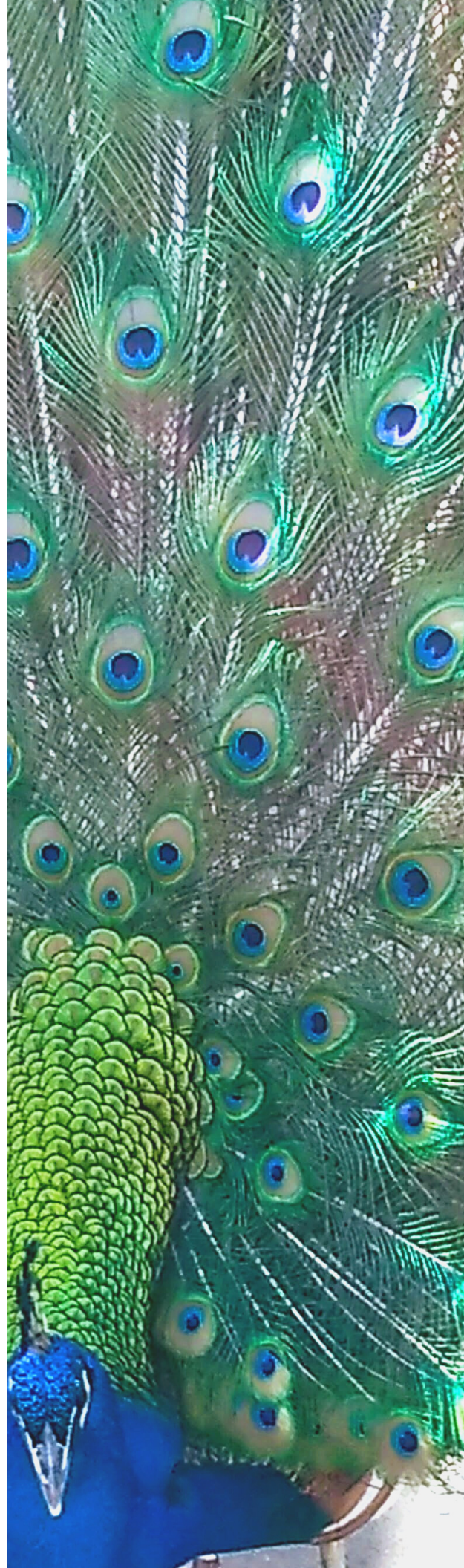
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- The depiction of Saul's death in chapter 10 is pretty ugly. Does this play into the theory that the writer is against the Benjamin tribe?
- If this was the story of one of your relatives, how would you feel? Would you want it written differently?
- What do you think it means that the men from Jabesh Gilead would risk their lives to retrieve Saul's body?
- This chapter ends with a pronouncing that, "The Lord had Saul killed and gave his kingdom to David, the son of Jesse." Did the Lord kill Saul or did the Philistines? In chapter 11, David becomes king and is anointed by the leaders of Israel to show their allegiance. How does this version differ from the one in Samuel in which David is anointed by Samuel instead?
- Is it important to you that every story in the Bible be told in the same exact way? Do the stories need to be consistent in their telling?
- Why would David pour out the water? Have you ever felt uncomfortable accepting a gift?
- Chapter 12 shows Benjaminite warriors joining with David. How do you think Benjaminites would feel about this story when they heard it? Does this work like a testimonial?
- Why does it matter to the story that all the soldiers joined David voluntarily?

CHAPTERS 13-15

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Chapter 13 shows the decision-making process for going to get the Ark. Why would it be important for David to get the Ark back? Is there anything missing in modern Christianity that existed in the Church in Acts?
- What could happen in the Church today (not just Trinity) that would make you shout for joy and dance like these Israelites?
- Uzzah died because he tried to save the Ark from falling. In what ways do we make a mess by trying to help?
- Chapter 14 tells the story of Hiram of Tyre and we know it already from Samuel/Kings. Does this version give us more or less information? Does this help us understand the story in Samuel/Kings differently?
- David is displayed as a protector of Israel and the worship of God. Does God need a defender? Why or why not? Where do we fit into that?
- Chronicles says that David did everything God commanded. How does this compare to the Samuel/Kings version of David? If someone close to you were writing a history of your life, which version would they write? Would it sound like Chronicles or Samuel/Kings?
- In chapter 15, it looks like David is serving a function much like being a priest and king. What might be some of the downfalls of this?
- David and the Levites appear to have made a pact or have an understanding between them. How might this appear to the other ten tribes? How does it feel when you see someone favored over you?
- We get a little throw-away line about Michal being overwhelmed by contempt for David and his victories. How does it feel when people we do not like are successful?





CHAPTERS 16-18

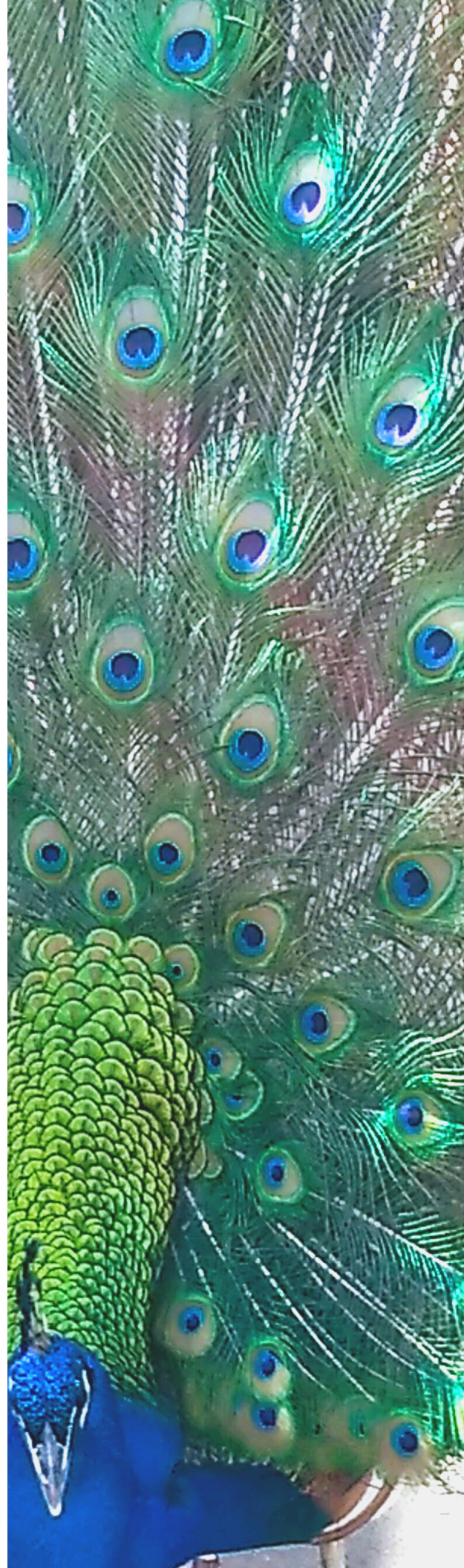
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Chapter 16 shows us that, before there was a Temple, the worship and the ark would move around. How does having a church building get in the way of the kinds of ministry that Jesus and other faithful (and itinerant) disciples did?
- The Levites lead the worship of God by praying the story of God's faithfulness. What are your favorite songs/hymns? What stories do they tell?
- After worship, David left to bless his family. How does being involved in worship change your ways of acting? Does it help you to bless others?
- Chapter 17 says that God doesn't want a house. In what ways do we force God to be still? In other words, how do we stand in the way of what God might do? How would the Church be different if there were no buildings?
- David prays prayers of gratitude to God. What are you most grateful for in your life? If God was standing before you, how would you express your thankfulness?
- How do you know that you are blessed? If a non-believer asked you why you serve God, what would you say?
- Chapter 18 shows that many nations pay 'tribute' to David's reign. What kinds of things do you like to support (charities, groups, people, etc.)? When David wins, he praises God. When was the last time that you were so overcome with happiness that you just had to praise God?
- Have you ever won a huge prize? What was it? How did you win it? Do you think you felt similar to what David felt like after his victories?
- Chronicles makes a lot out of David's fairness. Is this different in any way from the way that you think about David's story?

CHAPTERS 19-21

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Is there a word or phrase that stands out in chapter 19?
What is it that makes it stand out to you?
- David's men were mistreated because of a misunderstanding. Have you ever gotten into an argument because you misunderstood another person's intentions? What happened?
- David responded to the mistreatment with extreme action. Have you ever retaliated when someone acted poorly with you?
- What do you think the theme of chapter 20 is? Why?
- Not much was left of the Ammonites after all that happened. Have you ever had to cut someone out of your life? How did that feel?
- If you feel comfortable, share what led to that set of circumstances. How is the story of the giant, Goliath's brother, found here in chapter 20 different from the story of Goliath? Do you think these stories are similar?
- What is the most important verse of chapter 21 to you? Why?
- Why do you think the writer of Chronicles would say that Satan inspired the census? Is there anything wrong with keeping track and counting? Why would God be against it? Compare to 2 Samuel 24.
- God gave David the choice of punishments; which would you have chosen? Have you ever used a similar tactic with your children?
- From the reading, today, have you found any new truth for living in Christ Jesus?





CHAPTERS 22-29

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- [Read 22:1-2, 5] Why would David want to cut Solomon out of the preparations for the Temple? How is this different from Samuel/Kings?
- [Read 23:1, 28-32] Notice how there are none of the treacheries that are present in the other version of this story (1 Kings 1).
- Do you have stories that you tell a little bit nicer than they actually happened?
- Why is it important to have people appointed to be in charge of community worship of God (priests, rabbis, pastors, etc.)?
- [Read 28] What stands out to you about David's last words? Are they different from Samuel/Kings?
- If we take his words seriously, what meaning can we take for ourselves?
- [Read 29] What reason does David give for making Solomon the new king?
- A question for anyone who has done hiring of any kind: what general qualities do you look for when choosing a person to hire?
- Knowing the story of Solomon, would you hire him to be king?
- Compare 29:21-25 to 1 Kings 11:1-6. What is different about Solomon in both stories?
- How does the section in which David prays for and with the people compare to a worship service? What is similar and what is different?
- If you were writing a genealogy/story like Chronicles, who would you want to include? Who would you leave out?