



The Historical Books

Session 6 – 1 & 2 Chronicles

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So What do you Think?

- Read the Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles
 - David directs Asaph to sing a hymn of thanksgiving when the ark is transferred to Jerusalem. It must have been popular because it is also in Psalms – which one?
 - What is your impression of David in 1 Chronicles 19-20?
 - How does 1 Chronicles 22-28 portray David as devoted to the Lord?
 - How is King Manasseh portrayed in 2 Chronicles 21:1-18? What about 2 Chronicles 33:1-20?

So What do you Think?

- Read the Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles
 - What part of 2 Chronicles 36:14-23 make it fit with Jesus' talk with Nicodemus in John 3:14-21?
 - What difference do you see between the end of 1 Chronicles and the end of 2 Chronicles?

1 & 2 Chronicles

- Make-overs are popular these days – people, houses all sorts of things get them
- The four books of 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings could probably use a make-over
- The books of Chronicles provide a sort of make-over
- They provide a second look at the relationship between God and the Jewish people

1 & 2 Chronicles

- They basically retell the story but rather than focusing on history they focus on the ideals
- We should note that the people do a much better job of living up to the standards of the covenant
- The first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles are a restatement of the lineage from Adam to David
- It is done to stress the continuity of God's relationship – continuity is important

1 & 2 Chronicles

- Starting with chapter 10 things slow down
- Reading from that point David looks like the ideal king and spiritual leader
- The darkest parts of David's life, his sins, his failures in his own family and so on are all removed from the text
- Chronicles adds information about David's intense interest in the Jerusalem Temple and his advice to Solomon on how to build that temple (1 Chronicles 22-29)

1 & 2 Chronicles

- This revision of the rule of David makes him to be a king who did his very best to make God the focus of his kingdom
- This was the ideal that was intended
 - It was absent in Samuel and Kings
 - It is realized and described in Chronicles
- 1 Chronicles (chapter 10 forward) is all about how David goes about his faithful work for God
- He is a true model of leadership

1 & 2 Chronicles

- 2 Chronicles describes how David's religious program was carried forward by his successors
- King Jehoshaphat is a model monarch to say the least (2 Chronicles 19-20)
- The entire material has a positive and uplifting tone – accomplished by omitting the awful decline of the northern kingdom that was described in 1 & 2 Kings

1 & 2 Chronicles

- Chronicles shows us a different people of Israel
- They are working hard to keep their focus entirely on God
- Kings like David and his successors rise and reign as the spiritual leaders they were always supposed to be
- The kingdom does of course still struggles with sin

1 & 2 Chronicles

- Despite the positive tone of the two books even Chronicles cannot erase the real fact that both the northern and southern kingdom eventually collapsed
- Yet the book of 2nd Chronicles ends on a positive note
- There is a royal edict from Persia announcing the plans to rebuild the house of the Lord
- David's superb example of leadership and building continues and inspires

1 & 2 Chronicles

- 1 Chronicles has 29 chapters
 - 1 – 9 Human history leads to Jerusalem
 - 10 – 16 David and the ark
 - 17 – 29 David's plans for the temple
- 2 Chronicles has 36 chapters
 - 1 – 9 Solomon fulfills David's plans
 - 10 – 20 Kings in David's likeness
 - 21 – 29 Human failure but divine grace

1 & 2 Chronicles

- When does it take place
 - David c. 1000 BC
 - Kingdom of Persia c. 650 BC
- In biblical time the books span the time from Adam through David to the Persian Empire
- When were the books written?
 - The genealogy traces David for 10 generations after the last king of Judah (1 Chronicles 3:17-24)
 - This suggests that it was written about the middle of the fourth century BC

1 & 2 Chronicles

- Interesting points
 - **Asa** – King that shows signs of being a worthy descendant of David. The Chronicler said of him that he did, “What was good and right in the sight of the Lord his God” (2 Chronicles 14:2). Asa removed idols from the kingdom and listened to the prophet. His faith weakened in later years and he looked for security in other nations.

1 & 2 Chronicles

- Interesting points
 - **Jehoshaphat** – Like his father Asa he began with lots of promise. He was 35 years old and reigned for 25 years. Similar to Solomon's great prayer at the temple, Jehoshaphat stands in the house of God and asked for the protection of the kingdom (2 Chronicles 20) and the prayer is granted. In later years his faith began to weaken just like his father's did.

1 & 2 Chronicles

- Interesting points
 - **Manasseh** – In Kings he is singled out as the guy especially responsible for the collapse of the kingdom. In 2 Chronicles 33:12-13 we read of a change of heart that he had. While in exile he turns to God in prayer. The actual text of the prayer was at one time in some copies of the bible. It was a book after 2 Chronicles called “The Prayer of Manasseh.” Because it was not included in all manuscripts of the Vulgate the fathers of the Council of Trent omitted it from the list of canonical books.

1 & 2 Chronicles

- Interesting points
 - **Early and Often** – 2 Chronicles 36:15 says God persistently tried to reach people through the words of the prophets. God kept the conversation going even when no one listened. But even with its positive theme Chronicles does acknowledge the fact that the collapse of the kingdoms came about because the people refused to listen to God.

1 & 2 Chronicles

- Interesting points
 - **Paralipomenon** – This is a Greek term that means “omitted.” It is the title of 1 & 2 Chronicles in the Greek Bible. The title reflects the fact that these books add further details to the material we find in the other historical books of the Bible.

1 & 2 Chronicles

- So, why do we have this omitted material
- Why were the books of Chronicles written
- Basically what is the point?

Lessons from 1 & 2 Chronicles

- A life lived for God is a life that has true meaning
- The potential to do great things for God is always present within each one of us
- Prayer is for us and can change us for the better

For Next Week

- Read the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah
 - Ezra begins with the royal proclamation to rebuild the temple. What do you think this meant to King Cyrus of Persia and to the people of Israel?
 - When the foundation of the temple is constructed, the elders who saw the first temple wept, why?
 - What argument do opponents raise to stop the building program (Ezra 4)
 - What does Darius I do and why? (Ezra 6)
 - What does Ezra ask God for? (Ezra 9:5-15)

For Next Week

- Read the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah
 - How much stronger are the walls of Jerusalem versus those in the time of David? (Nehemiah 1-7)
 - What themes of Nehemiah 8:2-10 make it a companion for Jesus' visit to Nazareth in Luke 4:14-21
 - What does Ezra ask God in Nehemiah 9:6-37?
 - Is there more to be done at the end of Nehemiah or has it all been finished?