

Union Chapel M.B. Church

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“1 & 2 Chronicles”

(Study Material from Through The Bible: A Complete Old & New Testament Bible Study)

Kings were written during the Exile, as the Jews looked back and asked, “Why?” But Chronicles are written after the people of Judah are permitted to return to Jerusalem and to their land. The author writes from the standpoint of a restored community (but no longer an autonomous nation – they have no king), and asks the question: “What now? Is God still interested in us? Are His promises still valid?”

Chronicles serve as a message of hope for the restored community – hope in God’s promise of salvation for the remnant of Israel through the coming Messiah, hope of God’s continued concern for His people.

The events of Chronicles parallel those recorded in 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings, but with some striking differences which verify that God’s promises are still in effect.

I. The Temple

- a. Receives greater emphasis.
- b. The account of the reigns of David and Solomon are devoted largely to David’s *preparation* for, and Solomon’s *building* of, the Temple, and to David’s instructions for the Temple service of the Levites.
- c. The Temple is the central symbol of Israel’s relationship with the Lord (2 Chron 36:22-23).
- d. The constant focus on the Temple shows continuity with the past. God is not finished with His people; the Temple will be rebuilt.

II. The Law and The Prophets

- a. The law and the prophets are more crucial to Israel’s continued relationship with God than the presences or absence of a king.
- b. The primary feature of the reigns of David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah is their insistence on obedience to God’s covenant. All these faithful kings honor the words of the prophets, while the unfaithful kings disregarded it to their own peril.
- c. 1 and 2 Chronicles highlight the ministries of more prophets than do 1 and 2 Samuel or 1 and 2 Kings.
- d. 2 Chron 20:20: It is not the king who ensures a continuing relationship with God, but Israel’s obedience to the law and the prophets. Even though they no longer have a king; they still can experience God’s blessing and success by faithful obedience to God’s law and the word of His prophets.

III. Messiah

- a. The chronicler sustains Israel's hope for the promised Messiah by repeated references to God's promise to David by his idealized depictions of David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah.
- b. Neither David's sin nor Solomon's is recorded in 1 and 2 Chronicles.
- c. By recording only the good in their reigns, the author offers them as prime examples of the messianic ideal, foreshadowing the coming "David" foretold by the prophets.
- d. The remembrance of these kings, who promoted covenant faithfulness, nurtures hope in the face of much discouragement in the restored community.

IV. "All Israel"

- a. Frequent references to "*all Israel*" (1 Chron 9:1; 11:1-4; 12:38-40; 18:14; 21:1-5; 28:1-8; 29:21-26; 2 Chron 1:1-3; 7:8-10; 9:30; 10:1-3, 16; 28:23; 29:24; 30:1-13, 23-27; 34:6-9, 33).
- b. The chronicler views the restored community as the remnant of *all Israel*, both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, and makes frequent note of movements of godly people from the Northern Kingdom, Israel, to the Southern Kingdom, Judah (2 Chron 11:14; 15:9; 30; 31:6; 34:9).
- c. The Kingdom of Judah absorbs many from the Northern Kingdom throughout the years, and the chronicler views it as the remnant of *all Israel* from the time of Samaria's fall.

V. Genealogy

- a. The genealogy at the beginning of Chronicles is significant (1 Chron 1-9). In response to the question of the restored community, "Is God still interested in us?" the author answers, "He always has been."
- b. The chronicler traces Israel's family line back to Adam, showing that God's love for them did not begin with David's reign or the conquest of Canaan, but with creation. And God's promise of salvation goes all the way back to Gen 3:15 (*protoevangelium – first gospel*).

VI. What can we apply from the Chronicler?

- a. When God makes a promise, He keeps it! (1 Chron 17:14).
- b. God's punishment is not intended to hurt people but to bring them back to Him, 2 Chron 11:14-17 (Levites left Israel); 2 Chron 36:11-17 (reason for captivity).
- c. God will restore and bless his people if they turn from their sinful ways and seek Him with complete devotion. God desires for Israel to become a people of worship and obedience as they live in anticipation of the coming ideal Davidic ruler (2 Chron 7:14; 16:9).

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