

What's the Point....of 1 Chronicles? Mark Garner

The books of Chronicles take a second look at the era that is covered in Samuel and Kings. They follow just the history of Judah, with a different emphasis. In 1 Chronicles, we see God's holiness, his faithfulness, his understanding, and his care as he interacts with humans. The book also includes material like genealogies and that may seem at first to be unimportant, yet they too tell us about God's nature as well as about what it means for us to know him and follow him.

God's Holiness & His Faithful Promises (Overview Of 1 Chronicles)

The first book of Chronicles roughly parallels 1 and 2 Samuel, finishing with Solomon becoming king. It assumes that we are fairly familiar with the significant events in Samuel, and it takes a different viewpoint; it emphasizes God's holiness and his faithful promises to us, both then and now. It begins with a series of genealogies that remind us that generation after generation, the Lord has always been and always be our only living God (1 Chronicles 1-9).

As we read the names of Adam, Seth, Noah and Abraham, as well as many little-known names, plus the names of Esau's descendants, this reminds us that God gave each of them life and breath and everything else, and God gave each of them the chance to seek him and know him. The next several chapters follow Judah, Levi, and the other tribes remind us of the promises God made and fulfilled long ago, and of his promises through Jesus that he still fulfills today.

The middle of 1 Chronicles covers the transition from Saul to David, and then David's years as king (1 Chronicles 10-21). As David brings the ark to Jerusalem, in his praise to God we see his desire to be even closer with our Heavenly Father. We also see again God's promises to David about the temple and David's descendants, promises that could be appreciated by someone who walked by faith instead of living for this world's fame and praise.

In the last section we see the preparations for building the temple (1 Chronicles 22-29). David knows that he will not see the temple, yet he is thankful that it will happen, and he makes sure that Solomon will have what he needs to build "a house for God's Name". The temple has meaning only because God's Name will dwell there; his Presence will be near. David's final prayer (29:10-20) helps us see why God calls him "a man after his own heart" in spite of David's serious mistakes.

Overall Thoughts

We see how year after year, our Father in heaven knows all of us, the popular and the ignored, the famous and the obscure, and he gives each of us the chance to seek him and know him. We continue seeing God's faithfulness to his promises; moreover, in Jesus God's promises to Abraham, David, and the others are fulfilled more deeply, and God has now made us his temple.

We also see how David was well aware of his flaws and mistakes, and he realized that everything we have comes from God, simply because of his compassion and care for us. Then and now, God rejoices in pouring out spiritual blessings on those who walk humbly in the light of Jesus.

What's the Point....of 1 Chronicles? Caleb Dillinger

If you've ever attempted chronological daily Bible readings, and you made it through Leviticus, 1 Chronicles is the next big "hump" to get over. Partly because it is mostly a repetition of everything you've read in 2 Samuel and the beginning of 1 Kings, but mainly because the first nine chapters are genealogy. It's name after name after name. Then chapter 10 begins and you think "oh, finally story!" Then you get to verse 11 of chapter 11 and what happens? All the names and deeds of David's mighty men. That continues through chapter 12. Oh, and at the end of the book, you get more! So of the 29 chapters of 1 Chronicles, nearly half of it is names or places or facts that have been chronicled for history (see why it's called 1 Chronicles?).

So why bother reading this book? Why not skip the repetition and move on to the prophets? Well, one might pose the same question about the gospels of Jesus. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in particular, share so many stories in common. But there's a lesson learned from reading the gospels just as there is a lesson learned from reading the Chronicles. Authorship matters. Audience matters. Diversity matters.

1 Chronicles provides some new data, for sure, but it's greatest strength is showing how people remember God's work in history differently as time moves on, or even just from different points of view. Remember, the Bible was written by people - people have style and thoughts, they are not robots. The stories told in 1 Chronicles are given so that the Jewish people, and now the Christian people, are better able to see God at work in the lives of the Israelites and particularly where sin crept through the cracks.

We get more detailed looks at certain events. For instance, in 2 Samuel 6, the ark of the covenant is recovered and returned. In 2 Sam. 6:5 it notes that David celebrated with songs. That one little line becomes a full-fledged chapter in 1 Chronicles 16! We get this song that David and Asaph, the worship leader appointed by David, wrote and sang. There is overall a greater emphasis placed on worship in 1 Chronicles, as the last several chapters focus on David's organization of the Levites, Priests, and musicians. This organizational depth likewise applies to the Gatekeepers, officials, and military. Remember: there's a reason this is called "Chronicles".

You may still be inclined to skip all the names of people and places. And you know what? That would be ok. Truly! This book doesn't affect your salvation nor your spiritual strength or sincerity. BUT...if you've got the maturity and patience to read and take your time through all the details, you'll see how the great Creator God is involved even in the details. God doesn't just care about who is good and who is bad and who needs punished and who needs rewarded. God is involved in even the minute aspects of life. That's the point of 1 Chronicles. Through it all, God is watching and participating. In good and bad, God is there. To the action movie fans, you'll like 2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings better. But to all the nerds, the detail oriented planners, this book is more suited for your interests. The Bible is for all people, through all time. 1 Chronicles is a reminder of that. That's the point of reading this historical book of the Bible.