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What's the Point....of 2 Chronicles?

Mark Garner

The book of 2 Chronicles begins when Solomon has become king, and after the kingdom splits, it focuses on Judah (the history of the rest of the kingdom is covered in Kings). In 2 Chronicles, we see how God looks for those who seek him with their hearts. It contains some sad times for Judah, yet we see God's faithfulness as well as how readily he gives grace to those who return to him.

Overview Of 2 Chronicles & Overall Themes

The first part of the book tells us about Solomon's relationship with God and the building of the temple (2 Chronicles 1-9). We see Solomon's humble request for wisdom in overseeing the kingdom, the ways God blesses him, the king's faithfulness in building the temple, and the encouraging thoughts in Solomon's prayer of dedication.

After this promising beginning, Solomon's sad spiritual decline in his later years also leads to even sadder times (2 Chronicles 10-13). Solomon's numerous wives, his idolatry, and his harshness (see 1 Kings 11) lead to the kingdom splitting. Solomon's son Rehoboam makes some poor choices, as does Rehoboam's son Abijah. Yet when they have their good moments, God pours out his grace on these otherwise faithless kings (see 12:12-14, 13:18).

God continues to search for hearts who seek him (2 Chronicles 14-28). King Asa's reign starts well, and he removes the idols from Judah. Later, though, he begins making some bad decisions, and he responds poorly to a prophet. Next is Jehoshaphat, who is rather naive yet faithful, followed by three idolatrous monarchs. Then comes Joash, who repairs the temple, yet after years of faithfulness he then turns away from God. Most of the Judeans also continue to drift.

God continues giving the Judeans more chances to return to him (2 Chronicles 29-35). Hezekiah and Josiah are among the best of Judah's kings; and though their reforms in themselves could not change anyone's hearts, they brought everyone another chance to seek God. Hezekiah's reforms start as soon as he becomes king, and when the nation observes the Passover we see God's graciousness and the joy it gives him whenever we give him just a mustard seed of faith.

When Judah is threatened by the Assyrians, Hezekiah humbly prays and consults the prophet Isaiah, and God delivers Jerusalem. Sadly, Hezekiah's successor Manasseh is an idolatrous and murderous king, yet after his thorough contrition God pours out his grace on him, reminding us that God's ways and thoughts are far higher than human ways and thoughts.

Later Josiah, institutes thorough reforms, shows his reverence for God, and encourages the Judeans to worship God. Yet his reforms too could only bring comfort to the faithful and give another chance for the faithless. After Josiah, Judah's end came after a series of four idolatrous and ineffective kings. So God allows the Babylonians to conquer Judah and Jerusalem, and they take captive many Judeans to Babylon (2 Chronicles 36).

Even then God gives them hope for the future, and the last few verses will be repeated in Ezra, when God takes a remnant back to Judah. For God is always there when we turn our hearts to him.

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What's the Point....of 2 Chronicles? Caleb Dillinger

2 Chronicles continues the story of 1 Chronicles - Solomon's reign and the reigns of future kings, all the way through the fall of Judah and the capture of Jerusalem. 2 Chronicles ends with the mention of the 70 years of exile and the proclamation of King Cyrus that allows the Israelites to return from exile.

While 1 Chronicles gave you names, names, and more names, 2 Chronicles gives you numbers, numbers, and more numbers. How rich was Solomon? How glorious was the temple? How epic was the worship setting of the ark of the covenant? How accomplished were various kings of Israel? The numerical details in 2 Chronicles are borderline absurd. Why bother with the numbers?

These are important questions to ask. Without asking these questions, you may read through 2 Chronicles with bleary eyes and a numb mind. To do that would do this book of the Bible a disservice. There's a point to all the minutia. What's the point of 2 Chronicles?

The point is that no matter how much gold Israel had, no matter the accomplishments of their human kings, no matter their fame or political alliances, they were impoverished spiritually and that takes its toll. The richest king of Israel, Solomon dies. Immediately the country splits in two. You read of his son, Rehoboam, his armies and defenses and family. Then you're informed that he also abandons God's teachings and Egypt (a former ally) plunders Jerusalem. Turning away from God leads to pain and ruin.

You'll read about bad kings. And you'll read about some good kings and good actions! And what do you know...when kings of Israel focus on and lead religious reforms to become holier, the nation prospers! A clear message is being sent as you read 2 Chronicles: following God leads to good things; disobeying God leads to bad things. While history isn't so simple, the Bible interprets history for us. It's not just that Israel got unlucky or made a bad deal. Israel disobeyed God. Why would God keep blessing them?

And yet, despite all the disobedience, the Lord would not abandon Israel completely. Particularly, the Lord would not abandon David's descendants. 2 Chronicles 21:7 - "Yet the LORD was not willing to destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and since he had promised to give a lamp to him and to his sons forever."

So what was the solution? If David could not be holy forever, and his descendants could not be holy and faithful forever, what was the Lord to do? The Lord would send his own Son, Jesus, through the lineage of King David. Israel would be saved, but not Israel alone! The entire world would be saved through Jesus. The Lord is persistent, the Lord is a planner, and you can see all of this when you read 2 Chronicles. That's the point of reading this Old Testament history book.