

The Message of the Old Testament A Book-by-Book Study

Chronicles

Background and Introduction

We don't know who wrote 1 Chronicles. Writers tend to the author as "the _____." Many think that Ezra is the most likely candidate for having written the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles as well as Ezra and Nehemiah, sometime in the fifth century B.C. (Dever, *The Message of the Old Testament*, 341)

Few Old Testament books are as easy to _____-estimate as is 1-2 Chronicles. Many readers dismiss it as a needless repetition or mere supplement to Samuel and Kings. Others are nonplussed by its extensive opening genealogies, by its length or by its supposedly simplistic view of Israelite history. Even theologians are prone to dismiss the book too lightly."

"Rather than being a repetitious, unimaginative work, this history provides an excellent conclusion to the _____ by drawing together its major themes and presenting them in an effective, creative and historically accurate manner. The book has a canonical awareness that makes it important for grasping the whole message of Old Testament theology." (Paul House, *Old Testament Theology*, 523)

Paul House draws attention to the fact that the "Chronicler writes a history that begins with _____ and ends in the Persian period. To achieve this task, he uses several sources. The author claims to have had access to genealogies of various clans and kings (1 Chr 4:33; 5:17), documents such as letters from foreign rulers (2 Chr 32:17-20), songs of praise and lament (2 Chr 29:30; 35:25), eleven different prophetic writings (1 Chr 29:29; 2 Chr 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 26:22; 32:32; 33:19; 36:22) and other historical works such as 'the book of the kings of Israel and Judah' (2 Chr 27:7; 35:27). Besides these resources, it is clear that the Chronicler quotes from a variety of biblical books, including Genesis, Numbers, Joshua, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah and Psalms. From these materials the author gains historical and theological insight that gives the work credibility and canonical continuity. (House, 523-524)

The _____ into which Chronicles speaks is the same as we saw in Ezra Nehemiah last week. People have returned to the land and the work of restoration and rebuilding is hard. There are challenges on all sides—challenges in the form of enemies who do not the work going forward, challenges in the form of coping with the sorrow that this work does not compare with what things used to be, and challenges from the people reverting already to sin again. The Chronicler seeks to _____ the people.

These kinds of questions were doubtless on the minds and hearts of the rebuilders:

Why have the Jews suffered so greatly, and how much longer will the pain last?

When and how will God bless their willingness to return to the promised land?

What constitutes the remnant?

What sort of worship pleases God?

Does Israel have a political future?

What has become of the Davidic promise?

"Such questions are answered in Chronicles by a historian who understands who rules history. This author claims that Israel's future is determined by a God who elects, chastens, and restores." (House, 524)

Outline

- I. Choosing Israel (1 Chr 1 - 9:34)
- II. Davidic Covenant (1 Chr 9:35-29:30)
- III. Solomon and the Temple (2 Chr 1-9)
- IV. Chastening and Restoring the People (2 Chr 10-36)

The Message

1. God chooses Israel from Creation

1 Chronicles 1:1 – 9:34

The Chronicler provides two _____ at the beginning of the book.

The first begins with Adam and culminates with _____ (1:1-54)

1:1-10 ---

The second traces the descendants of Israel beginning with _____ and moving through the other twelve tribes up to the point of the return from exile.

As an example 3:1-4 ---

In the post exilic period it was no doubt easy for the Jews to wonder if they had any significance in the family of nations. After all, they were a subjected people, wholly subservient to the powerful Persian Empire. The Chronicler addresses this issue by stressing that God has been working toward and through the Israelites from the _____ of the human race. (House, 525)

Highlights of the Genealogies

- ▶ Starts with Adam not Abraham or Jacob.
- ▶ Jacob's family begins with Judah not Reuben.
- ▶ David is clearly the most important figure in Judah's family
- ▶ Aaron's and Levi's families are highlighted as the only ones to be priests and assist in temple functions, respectively (6:48-49)

The Lord is the creator, sustainer, covenant maker, judge, giver of land and restorer of the chosen people.

2. God chooses David

☛ The failure of Saul

1 Chronicles 10:1-6

1 Chronicles 10:13-14

So Saul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with the LORD in that he did not keep the command of the LORD, and also consulted a medium, seeking guidance. He did not seek guidance from the LORD. Therefore the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.

☛ David takes Jerusalem

1 Chronicles 11:4-9

☛ David gains support of the mighty men

1 Chronicles 12:38-40

☛ David initiates a return of the ark to Jerusalem

1 Chronicles 13:5-8

☛ David's kingship acknowledged by other kings

1 Chronicles 14:1-2

☛ David's fame spreads

1 Chronicles 14:8

1 Chronicles 14:16, 17

☛ David resumes effort to get the ark to Jerusalem

1 Chronicles 15:1-3

☛ David resumes effort to get the ark to Jerusalem

1 Chronicles 16:1-2

▣ David's Song of Thanks
1 Chronicles 16:8-13

1 Chronicles 16:31-36

▣ David's Desire
1 Chronicles 17:1-5

▣ David's Covenant from God
1 Chronicles 17:7-15

Paul House comments, "Without question the Chronicler views the Davidic covenant as the ___ not only to Israel's past but to their future as well. There is no way to overestimate the significance of this episode."
(528)

▣ David's Concern with Fitting Worship
The Location of the Temple was determined---the threshing floor of Onan the Jebusite.

▣ Preparations for the Temple were made—

David commanded to gather together the resident aliens who were in the land of Israel, and he set stonemasons to prepare dressed stones for building the house of God. David also provided great quantities of iron for nails for the doors of the gates and for clamps, as well as bronze in quantities beyond weighing, and cedar timbers without number, for the Sidonians and Tyrians brought great quantities of cedar to David. For David said, "Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, of fame and glory throughout all lands. I will therefore make preparation for it." So David provided materials in great quantity before his death. (22:2-5)

▣ David's Concern with Fitting Worship

- ▶ Charged _____ to build the Temple
- ▶ Organized the Levites
- ▶ Organized the Priests
- ▶ Organized the Musicians
- ▶ Designated Gatekeepers, Treasurers, etc.

▣ David's final address (28)
God chose ___ to be king
God chose Solomon to _____ me and to build the Temple
Solomon, serve God with a _____ because if you seek him, he will be found by you.

3. Solomon and the Temple

▣ Solomon's Greatness
2 Chr 1:1 ---

▣ Solomon's Wisdom
2 Chr 1:1 1-12—

▣ Solomon's Wealth
2 Chr 1:14-15 ---

▣ Solomon Finished the Temple
2 Chr 5:1 ---

The Ark was brought to the Temple

The song was raised to the Lord, singing, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever," and at that time the house of the Lord was _____ with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God. (2 Chr 5:13-14)

“Much of the Temple’s permanent theological importance is stated in Solomon’s dedicatory prayer and the Lord’s response to that prayer. Solomon confesses that God is unique among the other so-called gods in the giving of mercy, the keeping of covenant fidelity and the showing of love (6:14-17). He understands that Yahweh must choose to dwell in the temple, since God cannot be _____ in any amount of space (6:18-21). Most of all, the king admits that the people will sin, so he asks the Lord to forgive as the nation returns to the worship that the temple represents (6:22-39). He bases his prayer on the Davidic covenant and God’s choice of this resting place for divine glory and earnest worship (6:40-42). Solomon counts on the fact that the Lord is powerful, transcendent, immanent, forgiving, all-seeing, and willing to answer prayer. God’s character is the basis upon which the long-term significance of the temple must rest.” (House, 530)

The LORD’s response to Solomon’s prayer

7:12-22 ---

4. Chastening and Restoring the People

The tranquility that has been felt heretofore is suddenly _____ in the final section of the book. Israel divides into two. The divided nation plunges ever deeper into rebellion and the grave consequences of which Solomon was so concerned in his prayer of dedication.

Godly leaders are interspersed with ungodly leaders through the remainder of the book. But for the most part, there is neglect of the prophetic _____ of God and defiance against the _____ of God with the result that Babylon destroys Jerusalem and the nation is exiled for seventy years.

House notes that “Unlike the book of Kings, Chronicles ends with the exile in Israel’s _____. Cyrus allows the Jews to return to their homeland after 539 B.C. So Chronicles concludes where Ezra-Nehemiah begins, but the Chronicler has explained how the nation came to be exiled. Having begun with Adam, the first man, the author concludes with a new beginning for the people of God. . . . The covenant has not been revoked. It has just moved through its most drastic means of effecting redemption and creating a remnant. The same God who forgave individuals who had been chastened will also pardon the whole nation if the people will _____ themselves and pray, seek the Lord and turn from their sins.” (House, 534)

Conclusion

Chronicles’ constant citing of earlier texts gives the canon the status of authoritative _____.

Sensitivity toward worship is pervasive in Chronicles. Worship is _____ to maintaining relationship with Yahweh.

David and Solomon are at the center of hope for the future. It rests in the covenant made with David. David’s son was far from perfect and though he built a house for God, He points forward to the _____ Son of David who is building a house even today, a house not made with hands or stones but a house made by the Spirit of living stones in whom God dwells.