



Bible Readers Club

Covenant Presbyterian Church

Week

19

1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles

Dear Friends,

Week

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In 1 and 2 Chronicles we find a retelling of the story of God's people in a more positive light. This is because the goal of this writer is to encourage and unify God's people some time after their exile in Babylon as they are returning to the land of Judah, reestablishing their religious life and rebuilding their temple during what is called the Period of Restoration (see the books of Ezra and Nehemiah which take place during this time). So Chronicles emphasizes the importance of the Temple and the southern kingdom where God's Temple stood. It offers a constant call to devotion to the Lord God and proper worship of Him by "all Israel." It also aims to rally people around the God-established legitimacy and significance of the Davidic dynasty, and so a more positive version of David and Solomon is presented. The writer would have assumed that their complete stories from the books of Samuel and Kings would be known to the people, so by emphasizing their more heroic and praiseworthy accomplishments this author is not so much trying to rewrite history as he is hoping to encourage his people with the ideals represented by David and Solomon at their best in a time when they are without a king and are tempted toward apathy in the present and discouragement about their future.

Originally one book at the end of the Hebrew Bible, Chronicles was divided into two books and placed after 2 Kings and before Ezra in the

Greek translation of the Old Testament called the Septuagint. There are three clearly marked sections of Chronicles:

1. The Genealogies (1 Chr. 1-9) trace Israel's history all the way back to Adam and so roots them in God's original creation. This section also demonstrates Chronicles' preoccupation with the kingdom of Judah and the Levites who oversee and provide for Israel's worship activities (Note the additional space given to certain tribes).
2. The story of the United Monarchy under David and Solomon (1 Chr. 10 – 2 Chr. 9) where a large amount of the writing deals with the preparation, building and dedication of the Lord's Temple in Jerusalem.
3. The story of the southern kingdom of Judah (and not Israel to the north) during the Divided Monarchy with a consistent warning throughout that military and political success as well as material prosperity hinge on the people's faithful obedience to Yahweh God while their lack of faith and subsequent disobedience bring failure and defeat. The story ends not with the downfall of the kingdoms but goes further to the edict of the Persian King Cyrus which effectively ended Israel's Babylonian Exile and begins their Period of Restoration.

With my prayers for your encouragement and edification as you continue reading God's Word, that God's Word concerning His people Israel will be God's Word to you!,

- Pastor Jay