

## **THE BIG READ (49)**

### **Jesus in Chronicles**

#### **A. Introduction**

1. Every book of the Bible has one dominating theme – Jesus is the Christ.

“Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, ‘This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’”  
(Luke 24:45-47)

Jesus is the Christ who will suffer and die.

Jesus is the Christ who will rise from the dead on the third day.

Jesus is the Christ who will forgive the sins of all who repent.

Jesus is the Christ who will be preached to the nations.

2. The Old Testament that Jesus read contained the same 39 books as our English Bibles but was arranged in a different order.

It had three sections – the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.

“Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” (Luke 24:44)

The final section of the Old Testament is the Writings.

Whereas the Prophets looked back to what happened to Israel and why it happened in order to call the nation to repent and return to God, the Writings looked forward to the hope that was coming to those who repent, through a King like David, and showed those who did, how to live faithfully in all of life’s circumstances as they waited for His arrival.

This means that the books found in the Writings were collected together after the Babylonian exile was over to give the remnant hope and guidance as they waited.

3. The final book in the Writings is Chronicles.

Ezra-Nehemiah is a book about the Jews who did return from exile to Jerusalem between 538 and 445BC.

Chronicles is a book written for the people who did return.

#### **B. Getting Started with Chronicles**

1. Chronicles is a single book.

Like Samuel, Kings, and Ezra-Nehemiah, 1 and 2 Chronicles was originally one book.

The Hebrew name for the book is ‘the events of the days’.

It was Jerome who referred to this book as containing the chronicles of the whole of sacred history.

2. Chronicles is a neglected book.

Why?

Because of the genealogies – you have to read 936 names before you get to the narrative.

Because of the Septuagint – it refers to Chronicles as ‘the books of the things left out’ which has caused Chronicles only to be seen as a supplement to Samuel and Kings.

But Chronicles like the rest of Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that we are thoroughly equipped for every good work.

### 3. Chronicles is the final book.

Chronicles is the last book of the Hebrew Old Testament.

It is part of the Writings which shows that it has a different purpose to Samuel and especially Kings.

Whereas Kings was written for the people of God in exile in Babylon to explain to them how they ended up there. Chronicles was written for the people of God after the exile.

It even comes after Ezra-Nehemiah (which is about events that took place after Chronicles ends) in the Writings, highlighting that it has a specific objective in mind.

### 4. Chronicles is a hope-filled book.

If the Writings kept to chronology, it would have ended with Ezra-Nehemiah, and a note of disappointment as even a great leader like Nehemiah couldn’t change the hearts of the people and deal with their ongoing problem of sin.

But by ending with Chronicles, the Writings end with a note of hope encouraging the people look forward to the King like David who could.

“This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: “The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Anyone of his people among you – may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.” (2 Chronicles 36:23)

Hope in God was what the people who had returned from exile needed, because they were still waiting for this King to come.

They were asking each other – Will God keep that promise He made to David?

Chronicles was written to keep alive the hope that God will keep this promise.

And the way Chronicles does that is by retelling the story of human history from Adam through to the return from exile – a kind of Bible overview.

But as Bible overviews go, the one in Chronicles has a distinct focus on two houses:

The house of David that God built – David’s throne.

The house of God that David and his descendants built and maintained – Jerusalem’s temple.

We see how these two themes come together and keep the peoples’ hope in place by looking at the story of Chronicles.

## **C. The Story of Chronicles (or rather The Story of Jesus in Chronicles)**

### 1. Chronicles divides into two sections.

1 Chronicles 1–2 Chronicles 9: The King they want

2 Chronicles 10–36: The kings they got



always be there. As for you, if you walk before me as David your father did, and do all I command, and observe my decrees and laws, I will establish your royal throne, as I covenanted with David your father when I said, 'You shall never fail to have a man to rule over Israel.' But if you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them, and will reject this temple which I have consecrated for my Name. I will make it a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. And though this temple is now so imposing, all who pass by will be appalled and say, 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?' People will answer, 'Because they have forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshipping and serving them – that is why he brought all this disaster on them.'" (2 Chronicles 7:12-22)

The kings the Chronicler tells us about in this section were from the tribe of Judah, in the line of David, but when it came to worshipping God and following His law they were mixed.

Even the good kings they had were flawed.

This meant that God's promise of this ideal King, like David and Solomon were presented, was still to be kept.

So in response what should the people do?

"The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Anyone of his people among you – may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up." (2 Chronicles 36:23)

Keep waiting in hope for the King to come.

#### **D. Jesus in Chronicles**

1. The way in which the Chronicler shows us Jesus in his book is in the two houses that are his focus:

The house of David (God's King) and the house of God (God's Temple).

2. Jesus is God's King.

He is the King the people were waiting in hope for who perfectly worships God and follows His law.

"Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on his throne as king to rule for the LORD your God. Because of the love of your God for Israel and his desire to uphold them for ever, he has made you king over them, to maintain justice and righteousness." (2 Chronicles 9:8)

Matthew begins with a genealogy that continues and completes the one in Chronicles showing that it ends with Jesus.

3. Jesus is God's Temple.

The temple was the place where people could approach God by means of a sacrifice.

The temple was the place where God was present among the people.

Matthew follows his genealogy by telling us the two names that will be given to Jesus which point to Him being the fulfilment of God's Temple.

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. All this took place to fulfil what the Lord has said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel – which means, 'God with us.'" (Matthew 1:21-23)

4. Chronicles ends the Old Testament telling the people after the exile to wait in hope for the King to come, and Matthew begins the New Testament by saying "He's here!"