

14 - 2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles

Key Verse:

INTRODUCTION TO 2 CHRONICLES

2 Chronicles continues the history of King David's royal line. The kings of Judah descended from David in unbroken succession until Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded Judah and conquered Jerusalem in 586 BC. 2 Chronicles records the history of Judah from Solomon to the Exile to Babylon, then ends with the proclamation of Cyrus of Persia, who allowed the exiles to return and rebuild the temple. Solomon built the temple according to David's instructions. He establishes historical continuity with Bezalel, the one who built the tabernacle in the wilderness.

The Chronicler assesses the kings according to whether they were evil or good in the eyes of the Lord.

The Levites are the real heroes of 2 Chronicles. They were appointed to serve in the temple. They were Bible teachers; they influenced the kings for good.

Outline

1:1-9:31 - Solomon's reign; the temple built

10:1-36:14 - The kings of Judah

:

2 Rehoboam

3 Abijah

4 Asa

5 Jehoshaphat

6 Jehoram

7 Ahaziah

8 Joash

9 Amaziah

10 Uzziah

11 Jotham

12 Ahaz

13 Hezekiah

14 Manasseh

15 Amon

16 Josiah

17 Jehoahaz

18 Jehoiakim

19 Jehoiachin

20 Zedekiah

36:15-23 - Babylonian exile and return

SOLOMON'S REQUEST

2 Chronicles 1:1-17

Key Verse: 1:10

1. Give me wisdom (1-10)

God established David's son Solomon as king over his people. The first thing he did was to assemble all the leaders of Israel at Gibeon to offer sacrifices to the Lord on the historic bronze altar of Moses, and to inquire of the Lord. Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings. That night God appeared to him and told him to ask for whatever he wanted. God gave him a blank check on an unlimited bank account. Solomon asked for wisdom and knowledge to be a good shepherd of God's people. He thought about how to fulfill his responsibilities rather than how to enjoy his privileges.

2. I will also give you wealth (11-17)

God was pleased with Solomon's request. Most men would have asked for wealth or honor or the death of their enemies. The Lord blessed Solomon with not only wisdom to rule God's people, but also with riches and honor such as no king before or after him ever had. (Note Dt 17:16,17.)

Prayer: Lord, give me a shepherd heart and wisdom to serve you and your people in my time.

One Word: Wisdom to serve God's people

A GREAT GOD AND A GREAT TASK

2 Chronicles 2:1-18

Key Verse: 2:5

1. A temple for the Name of the Lord (1-10)

The temple was David's dream, and Solomon accepted it as his own. He wrote his father's friend Hiram king of Tyre for technical assistance and lumber to build the temple and his own palace. The temple was to be great, because God is great. Solomon approached his task with a humble heart. Who could build a house for such a great God? Even the highest heaven cannot contain him. Sinful man cannot approach him. Man's most urgent problem is sin. So the temple was to be a place for blood sacrifices for sin. Blood represents life. This was God's way for sinful man to come to him. The temple was a place of prayer and worship. It was a symbol of God's presence in the midst of Israel.

2. Hiram's answer (11-18)

Hiram praised the God of Israel, the Creator of heaven and earth; and he praised Solomon for his wisdom. He agreed to send a skilled craftsman and lumber in exchange for wheat, etc. Solomon organized the people for the great task.

Prayer: Almighty and great God, help us do the great task you have given us--making disciples of all nations.

One Word: A great God and a great mission

SOLOMON BUILDS THE TEMPLE

2 Chronicles 3:1-17

Key Verse: 3:1

1. Rooted in history (1,2)

The temple was patterned after the tabernacle in the wilderness. The temple site was a place of atonement. David had purchased it from Araunah the Jebusite to offer a sacrifice to God when a plague devastated Jerusalem. It was the place of radical obedience, for there on Mt. Moriah, Abraham had offered Isaac.

2. The Most Holy Place (3-14)

Solomon used gold lavishly to honor God with his best. The Most Holy Place was to contain the ark of the covenant. The cherubim represented the angel guardian of the throne room of God.

3. Jakin and Boaz (15-17)

In front of the temple he placed two pillars named Jakin (he establishes) and Boaz (in him is strength). God alone could establish the temple as his dwelling place. In God alone, not in the beautiful buildings, is there strength.

Prayer: Lord, establish me in Jesus whose death atones for my sins. Cover my weakness with your strength.

One Word: A place of prayer and forgiveness

THE TEMPLE'S FURNISHINGS

2 Chronicles 4:1-22

Key Verse: 4:19a

1. The bronze altar (1-18)

The bronze altar was for sacrificing animals as burnt offerings. The basins were for cleansing. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. The sacrificial system was the main point of the temple, for this was the way God provided for sinful man to be forgiven and restored to a right relationship with himself. It points to the perfect sacrifice of Christ (Heb 9:14). The bronze Sea was not in the original tabernacle. In Exe 47 and Rev 22 it becomes a river flowing from God for life and healing. Hiram-Abi of Tyre was the skilled craftsman who made the temple beautiful and functional.

2. The golden altar (19-22)

The golden altar was for burning incense. It was the place of prayer. It stood before the curtain to the Most Holy Place. The old tabernacle in the desert had only one table and one lampstand; the temple had 10 of each. The lampstands and the bread of the Presence placed on the tables represented the presence of the living God in his house.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for Jesus, the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world.

One Word: Repent, be cleansed and pray

THE ARK BROUGHT INTO THE TEMPLE

2 Chronicles 5:1-14

Key Verse: 5:14

1. The ark (1-10)

The ark contained the Bible--the two tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb. This represented God's covenant with his people. It was a covenant based on God's love and grace. He had delivered them from bondage in Egypt, cared for them in the desert and brought them to the promised land. They were his people. The covenant was like a marriage contract. The Law was given them to obey so that they might express their love for God.

2. The glory of God fills the temple (11-14)

When the ark, carried by Levites, was brought to the temple, everyone took part. All Israel assembled and offered sacrifices. The priests brought the ark to its place in the Most Holy Place; then they withdrew. The Levites who were musicians formed an orchestra and choir. As they played and sang, the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

Prayer: The Lord is good; his love endures forever. Lord, help me obey your word.

One Word: An everlasting covenant of love

PRAISE GOD WHO KEEPS HIS PROMISES

2 Chronicles 6:1-17

Key Verse: 6:15

1. Solomon blesses the assembly (1-11)

David loved God and wanted to build a house for him. God's heart was moved by David's sincere desire. He promised David that his son would build the temple for his Name. Solomon thought that God's promise was fulfilled when he built the temple. But actually it was David's descendant Jesus who, through his death and resurrection, built the true temple. God's plans are larger than we can imagine. God makes promises and keeps them. The ark of his covenant was placed in the temple.

2. Solomon's prayer (12-17)

Solomon was a king, but he knelt before the King of kings in front of the whole assembly, and lifted his hands in prayer. His prayer is based on God's promises. He

praised God who keeps his covenant of love with his servants. He remembered the obligation of David's son to walk before God.

Prayer: Praise the Lord who keeps his promises. Help me to walk before you and keep your word.

One Word: God keeps his promises

O LORD, HEAR AND FORGIVE

2 Chronicles 6:18-42

Key Verse: 6:21

1. May your eyes be open toward this temple

Solomon prayed that the temple be a place where people's broken relationships with God were healed. Sacrifices offered on the altar look forward to Jesus, the perfect sacrifice. The temple would be the focal point of prayer for God's people, no matter where they might be. What can God's people do when defeated in battle or when disaster strikes? They must repent. They must turn from sin toward God. When they spread out their hands toward the temple, repent and ask God's mercy, he will hear from heaven, forgive, heal and restore. Still he deals with each person according to his doing, for God knows each heart.

2. So that all people of the earth may know

Solomon held the whole world in his heart. He saw the temple as a place of prayer for all nations. (32-35) All the world must know and fear the God of Israel.

Prayer: Lord, have mercy on this sinner. Forgive me for Jesus' sake. He is our temple. Through him alone we may come to you.

One Word: Hear from heaven and forgive

IF MY PEOPLE WILL HUMBLE THEMSELVES

2 Chronicles 7:1-22

Key Verse: 7:14

1. His love endures forever (1-10)

The glory of God filled the temple and all the people knelt to worship. The dedication of the temple was a joyful celebration of the goodness, mercy and unchanging love of the Lord.

2. The Lord appears to Solomon (11-22)

God accepted the temple which Solomon built and dedicated. He promised to hear his people, to forgive them and heal their land if they would humble themselves, seek his face and repent of their wicked ways. He also promised to establish Solomon's throne if Solomon and his descendants lived according to God's word. God remembered his promise to David (18), a promise which would be fulfilled by the Messiah. But if God's people should turn from God's word and worship idols, God promised to uproot them from the land, and reject the temple itself. God will not compromise with idols.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for hearing me when I pray and seek your face with a repentant heart. Thank you for your great faithfulness to keep your promises.

One Word: God is always ready to forgive and heal

SOLOMON'S RULE

2 Chronicles 8:1-18

Key Verse: 8:16

1. Building and construction (1-10)

The places mentioned in these verses tell us the broad extent of Solomon's kingdom. He built fortified cities and store cities in the far reaches of his kingdom. They were well-protected by his army. He did not destroy the Canaanites; he made them his slaves, and used them as labor in his extensive building projects. Solomon was a builder and an able administrator.

2. Pharaoh's daughter (11-18)

Solomon followed the law of Moses and the instructions of David regarding temple worship, sacrifices, feast days and the work of the Levites. But he was a worldly man and a compromiser. He married Pharaoh's daughter because of pride and politics. He knew that this was a compromise, and he resolved it by not bringing her to the City of Zion (the part of the city of Jerusalem where the temple and the king's palace were). His double life planted the seeds of division which bore fruit during his son's reign.

Prayer: Lord, help me not to compromise with the world.

One Word: Don't plant evil seeds

SOLOMON'S GLORY AND FAME

2 Chronicles 9:1-31

Key Verse: 9:8

1. The queen of Sheba's visit (1-12)

She came with hard questions and expensive gifts. She talked with Solomon about everything, and was overwhelmed by his wisdom and wealth. She praised God who loved Israel and put a king like Solomon on the throne. Years later, Jesus praised this Gentile queen who humbly learned from God's servant. (Mt 12:42)

2. Solomon's splendor (13-31)

Solomon's splendor and wealth is described in terms of gold. Kings sought audience with him to hear his wisdom. In spite of his human wisdom, he did some unwise things. By his personal lifestyle, he planted seeds of destruction in his nation. Storing up gold, importing horses from Egypt, and having foreign wives are expressly forbidden in God's word. (Dt 17:16-17). When his time came, he died. All his wealth was of no value to him.

Prayer: Lord, give me the humble, learning mind of the queen of Sheba, and help me to live with a lifestyle that honors you.

One Word: Obey his word; bear his blessings

REHOBAM'S YOKE

2 Chronicles 10:1-19

Key Verse: 10:7

1. I will scourge you with scorpions (1-14)

When Rehoboam was crowned king, seeds of rebellion were already growing. Solomon had burdened the people with a heavy yoke of harsh labor. The elders asked Rehoboam to lighten their load. He was a proud young prince with no shepherd heart for his people. He took the advice of the young men, and announced a hard policy--he would increase their burden, not reduce it.

2. To your tents, O Israel! (15-19)

A young man named Jeroboam had come back from exile in Egypt. The prophet Ahijah had predicted that he would be king of Israel (1Ki 11). Solomon knew his political aspirations--that's why he had fled. Now he returned to be the spokesman for the people. When the people of northern Israel saw that Rehoboam had no

intention of lightening their load, they rebelled and went home. So Israel was divided. The southern kingdom was Judah; the northern kingdom was called Israel.

Prayer: Lord, help me to follow wise advice, not my own pride.

One Word: One man's pride destroys a nation

THE KINGDOM IS DIVIDED

2 Chronicles 11:1-23

Key Verse: 11:16

1. Rehoboam obeys the Lord (1-4)

When Jeroboam led northern Israel in a revolt against Rehoboam, he went home and mustered an army. His first reaction was to fight and put down the rebellion. But when he heard the word of the Lord from Shemaiah, he did not fight his brothers. He obeyed and went home. There he built up the defenses of the towns of Judah. The Levites and priests supported him.

2. Some set their hearts on seeking the Lord (5-23)

Jeroboam made calf and goat idols and established his own religion in northern Israel. But many Levites in the north would not serve his idols. They were faithful to God. They abandoned their homes and lands and went to Judah, where they could worship God. Israelites from every tribe who set their hearts on seeking the Lord followed them to Jerusalem to worship God. Rehoboam had a large family; he established Abijah as prince to follow him on the throne.

Prayer: Lord, raise up a remnant of people who are faithful to you in spite of great material loss.

One Word: Set your heart on seeking God

BECAUSE REHOBOAM HUMBLLED HIMSELF

2 Chronicles 12:1-16

Key Verse: 12:12

1. They humbled themselves (1-7)

Rehoboam became successful and proud. He stopped studying and obeying God's law. So God punished him by removing his protecting hand and allowing Shishak king of Egypt to invade and capture many cities of Judah. The Egyptians came as

far as Jerusalem. The prophet Shemaiah rebuked Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah. They accepted the rebuke of God's servant, humbled themselves and repented. So the Lord did not pour out his wrath on them through Shishak. His army did not destroy Jerusalem.

2. To serve God or to serve men? (8-16)

God allowed Shishak to attack Jerusalem and carry off the temple treasures. Rehoboam learned the hard way that it is better to freely serve God who loves us than to serve the kings of other lands who only exploit us. Rehoboam tried to cling to past glory by making bronze shields and substituting them for the gold ones which Solomon had made. He did not set his heart on seeking the Lord.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to follow your word with a sincere heart, and humbly repent.

One Word: Serve God with a pure heart

BECAUSE THEY RELIED ON THE LORD

2 Chronicles 13:1-22

Key Verse: 13:18

1. Abijah's speech (1-12)

The battle lines were drawn up between Israel and Judah. The army of northern Israel was larger and more powerful than the army of Judah. Abijah stood on Mount Zemaraim and told Jeroboam and the army of Israel that they were depending on false gods and false priests; he told them that they were fighting against the kingdom of the Lord, so they could not win. He said, "God is with us; he is our leader. Do not fight against the Lord...."

2. God routes Jeroboam (13-22)

Jeroboam ambushed Abijah's troops. Judah's situation looked hopeless. The men of Judah cried out to the Lord. Then they shouted a battle cry. The army of Israel was defeated. God gave Judah victory because they relied on him. Do you cry out to the Lord or try to struggle through some problem alone?

Prayer: Lord, help me to walk in your ways and grant that I may never allow foolish pride to keep me from crying out to you in time of need.

One Word: Rely on the Lord

ASA, A KING WHO CALLED TO THE LORD

2 Chronicles 14:1-15

Key Verse: 14:11

1. Bearing God's blessing in peace-time (1-7)

Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. He smashed the idols. He was one of the few kings who destroyed the high places (where idols were worshiped). He sought to reform the nation according to the word of God. So God blessed his reign with peace. He worked hard in peacetime to build up the towns of Judah. He knew that peace and prosperity come from God, not from his own skill and ability.

2. God who helps the powerless (8-15)

Asa had an army of brave fighting men, and they were equipped with shields and spears and bows. But Zerah the Cushite marched against him with a vast army and 300 chariots. The situation looked bad. Asa prayed. Read verse 11. He knew that he and his men were powerless, so he relied wholly on God. God gave Asa and Judah a great victory over the Cushites.

Prayer: Lord, remove the high places from my heart. Thank you for hearing the prayers of the powerless who rely on you alone.

One Word: There is no one like the Lord

BE STRONG AND DON'T GIVE UP

2 Chronicles 15:1-19

Key Verse: 15:7

1. If you seek the Lord, he will be found (1-7)

The land of Judah was troubled. There was violence and disorder everywhere. It was not safe to travel. Nations and cities crushed each other. Azariah the prophet told King Asa that the problem was a spiritual one. People did not study or obey the word of God, so there was chaos in their hearts. He challenged the king to seek God wholeheartedly and to get rid of every vestige of idolatry. He said, "Be strong and don't give up, for your work will be rewarded."

2. All Judah rejoiced (8-19)

King Asa took courage. He diligently removed idols and he repaired the Lord's altar. When the people of Israel saw that God was with Asa, they came south in large numbers. Asa and the people made a covenant to seek the Lord with all their hearts-

-and they were full of joy. Those who did not seek him were put to death. Asa even deposed his own idol worshiping grandmother. His reforms were thoroughgoing.

Prayer: Lord, turn the hearts of the people of this nation to seek you. Help me to seek you with all my heart.

One Word: Be strong and don't give up

THE EYES OF THE LORD

2 Chronicles 16:1-14

Key Verse: 16:9a

1. Asa relies on the king of Aram

Asa became proud in his old age. When the king of Israel blockaded his northern border, Asa didn't seek God's help; he raided the temple treasury and sent gold to Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria. It was a politically wise move, for Ben-Hadad broke his treaty with Israel and sided with King Asa. But spiritually, it was a disaster. Hanani the seer rebuked Asa for not trusting God. He reminded him of God's unfailing help in the past. God's eyes range to and fro throughout the earth, looking for a man or woman whose heart is fully committed to him. He shows his might on behalf of such a person. This is God's promise.

2. Asa's sickness

But King Asa didn't repent. He became angry and put the prophet in prison. He became a brutal dictator. Later, he was afflicted with a painful disease in his feet. But he didn't seek God's help; he only sought help from physicians. He died a painful and miserable death.

Prayer: Lord, help me to have a heart that is wholly committed to you--to the end.

One Word: A heart fully committed to God

THE KING WHO TAUGHT THE BIBLE

2 Chronicles 17:1-19

Key Verse: 17:6

1. A heart devoted to the Lord (1-9)

Jehoshaphat walked in the ways of the Lord which David had followed. He had personal faith. He sought God and followed his commands. He removed idols from

the land. He not only uprooted false religion, he developed a positive program of Bible teaching, by sending some of his officials with Levites and priests to go around to all the towns in Judah and teach the people the Bible.

2. A time of peace and prosperity (10-19)

When the people had God's word in their hearts, the fear of the Lord fell on all the kingdoms around them, and no one dared make war on Judah. Philistines and Arabs brought him tribute. So Jehoshaphat became more and more powerful, and his people enjoyed peace and prosperity. The word of God in the people's hearts is the key to any nation's strength.

Prayer: Lord, raise up Bible teachers for the people of our land and turn the hearts of our leaders and people to yourself.

One Word: A heart devoted to the Lord

AN UNWISE MARRIAGE

2 Chronicles 18:1-11

Key Verse: 18:4

1. First seek the counsel of the Lord (1-4)

At first, Jehoshaphat did not compromise with northern Israel (17:1). But after he had acquired great wealth and honor, he decided that he could bring peace, and eventually unity to Israel. So he arranged for his son to marry the daughter of Ahab. This marriage did not bring unity; it almost led to the destruction of Judah. When Jehoshaphat came home from a visit with Ahab, God's servant rebuked him for loving those who hate God (19:1-3). Jehoshaphat thought he could handle it. When Ahab invited him to join him in battle, Jehoshaphat insisted that they first seek the Lord's counsel.

2. Is there not a prophet of the Lord? (5-11)

Ahab's powerful wife, Jezebel, was a Baal worshiper, so the 400 prophets he called were probably prophets of Baal. They all advised him to "Go and win." But Jehoshaphat wasn't satisfied. He insisted on asking a prophet of the Lord. Ahab did not want to ask Micaiah because Micaiah always told him what he didn't want to hear.

Prayer: Lord, keep me from presumptuous pride. Help me to love those who love you.

One Word: Marriage doesn't solve problems

A PROPHET OF THE LORD

2 Chronicles 18:12-34

Key Verse: 18:13

1. I can only say what my God says (12-27)

Micaiah was an unpopular man because he spoke the truth. The messenger sent to summon Micaiah advised him to give the king favorable advice--as everyone else was doing. Micaiah told him that he would speak only God's word. Micaiah tried to say only something good, but he could not. He prophesied King Ahab's death in battle if he attacked Aram at Ramoth Gilead. He told him that the other prophets were full of a lying spirit. The false prophets were so angry that one slapped Micaiah. Ahab was so angry that he had Micaiah put in prison.

2. Ahab's death (28-34)

Ahab took special precautions. He did not dress in his royal robe or ride in his royal chariot. Only Jehoshaphat went to battle looking like a king. But a stray arrow pierced Ahab's armor and he died. The word of God's prophet was fulfilled. Ahab could not cheat death.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be faithful to teach your word as it is. Raise up Bible teachers with the courage of Micaiah.

One Word: Say only what God says

FEAR THE LORD

2 Chronicles 19:1-11

Key Verse: 19:9

1. A king who set his heart to seek God (1-3)

Jehoshaphat made an unholy alliance and was almost killed in battle; when he returned, he was rebuked for making an alliance with those who hate the Lord. He accepted the rebuke, and set his heart on seeking the Lord.

2. Leaders who fear God (4-11)

Jehoshaphat went out into the country side and sought to turn the people back to God. He could not do it alone, so he appointed God-fearing men and instructed them to judge between the people with justice and impartiality, with fear of God in their hearts. He appointed priests, Levites and family heads in Jerusalem and charged

them also to care for the people faithfully and wholeheartedly, in the fear of the Lord. They were to teach the people about the wrath of God, and warn them not to sin. They were to speak with faith and courage.

Prayer: Lord, grant leaders who fear God. Give me courage to teach your word faithfully, without compromise.

One Word: Serve in the fear of the Lord

JEHOSHAPHAT'S PRAYER

2 Chronicles 20:1-13

Key Verse: 20:12b

1. A vast army of enemies (1-5)

The Moabites and Ammonites joined with others to make war on Judah. They were a vast army, and when Jehoshaphat heard about it, they were already marching toward him. Jehoshaphat was greatly alarmed, but he did not seek a human solution. He mobilized his people to fast and pray. They came from every town in Judah to seek help from the Lord.

2. Our eyes are on you, Lord (6-13)

Jehoshaphat and all the people--men, women and children--stood before the Lord. The king prayed. He remembered how God had exercised his almighty power to drive out the Canaanites and give the land to the descendants of Abraham, his friend. He remembered God's promises concerning the temple. He remembered how Israel had obeyed God and spared these enemy nations. He confessed his powerlessness and helplessness and turned things over to God.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to stand in your history and turn my eyes to you in prayer.

One Word: Fix your eyes on the Lord

STAND FIRM AND SEE GOD'S DELIVERANCE

2 Chronicles 20:14-30

Key Verse: 20:17

1. Stand firm (14-17)

God's word came to a young man through the Spirit of God. He encouraged the king and all the people. He also prophesied specifically how the battle would be

fought and won. They would not have to fight, but just stand firm, and God would deliver them. Still today, when we stand firm and depend only on God, God himself fights for us.

2. How to stand firm—sing praises to God (18-30)

The king and all the people worshiped and praised God, then followed God's instructions. Jehoshaphat planted faith in God in the people. Instead of focusing on weapons or fighting men, he appointed singers to praise God. Then God defeated the enemy; they turned on one another. They all died, and great plunder was left for the men of Judah. They again praised God, went to the temple and made joyful music. When surrounding kingdoms heard how God had fought for Judah, the fear of God came upon them.

Prayer: Lord, help me to stand firm and depend on you alone in the face of impossible situations.

One Word: Stand firm: praise God before battle

A LAMP FOR DAVID

2 Chronicles 20:31-21:20

Key Verse: 21:7

1. Man's failure and God's faithfulness (20:31-21:11)

Jehoshaphat did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and God blessed him with seven sons. He tried to take good care of them before his death. But he made a serious mistake. He made an alliance with Ahab's son, Ahaziah. His oldest son married the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. Under her influence, Jehoram had all his own brothers and many other princes killed. Then the people rebelled against Jehoram because he had forsaken God and led his people into idolatry. One woman's influence is so strong. But God had promised to maintain a lamp for David and his descendants forever. This was God's mercy, which ultimately climaxed in Jesus.

2. A letter from Elijah (12-20)

Elijah the prophet, who lived in northern Israel, wrote Jehoram a letter rebuking and warning him. But he did not repent. He finally died, just as the prophet had said. And no one regretted his passing.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your faithfulness. Raise up women of good influence for our families and nation. Help me to hold onto your promise.

One Word: God kept his lamp burning

ONE SEED OF HOPE

2 Chronicles 22:1-12

Key Verse: 22:11

1. One powerful and evil woman (1-10)

After Jehoram's death, his youngest son Ahaziah became king. The wicked queen mother Athaliah encouraged him in doing evil. One day he made an unfortunate visit to his mother's relatives in Israel. During his visit, a coup d'état which destroyed the house of Ahab erupted. This was God's judgment on Baal worship in Israel. Ahaziah was killed. When his mother heard about it, she proceeded to kill all heirs to the throne--including her own grandchildren. She took over the government. It looked as if the lamp of David had gone out.

2. One faithful and courageous woman (11-12)

Jehosheba was a royal princess and the wife of Jehoiada the priest. She rescued her nephew, the infant son of King Ahaziah, and hid him from Athaliah so she could not kill him. Jehosheba hid baby Joash in the temple for 6 years. The lamp of David flickered, but did not go out.

Prayer: Lord, give me faith and courage so that I may be used by you.

One Word: A faithful woman; a seed of hope

THE FLICKERING LAMP OF DAVID REKINDLED

2 Chronicles 23:1-21

Key Verse: 23:3b

1. The king's son shall reign (1-11)

Jehoiada and his wife hid Joash for 6 years. Then he showed his strength by organizing a coup d'etat to depose Queen Athaliah. He claimed God's promise to David. (3b) The Levites played key roles in protecting the boy king, but the coup was supported by all the leading men of Judah. 7 year old Joash was crowned king in the temple. He was given a copy of the Bible. They all shouted, "Long live the king!"

2. No compromise with Baal (12-21)

After executing Athaliah, Jehoiada made a covenant that he and the people and the king would be the Lord's people. Then he, with the Levites, purged the land of Baal worship and restored the worship of the Lord according to God's instructions in the Bible. When the king was brought from the temple to the palace to sit on David's throne, all the people rejoiced.

Prayer: Lord, raise up men and women of faith and courage who can lead our nation back to the Bible.

One Word: Claim God's promises with action

AS LONG AS JEHOIADA LIVED

2 Chronicles 24:1-27

Key Verse 24:2

1. Joash repairs the temple (1-16)

Jehoiada the chief priest chose Joash's wives, and surrounded him with people who loved God. Joash worked hard to please God and Jehoiada. He began and completed an ambitious project to restore the temple. He removed every remaining vestige of Baal worship, and led the people to worship God wholeheartedly.

2. The murder of Zechariah (17-27)

Then Jehoiada died. Zechariah was his son. When he saw that King Joash had yielded to the influence of certain corrupt officials and allowed the people to indulge in the orgies of Baal worship, he spoke out. King Joash forgot the kindness of Jehoiada and ordered Zechariah stoned to death. The Lord removed his hand of protection and Judah was invaded by the army of Aram. Joash was wounded, then murdered on his bed by some of his officials.

Prayer: Lord, help us to live before you from the beginning to the end, and be faithful to you from the heart.

One Word: Be faithful from first to last

AMAZIAH'S VICTORY AND DEFEAT

2 Chronicles 25:1-28

Key Verse:25:8b

1. Amaziah's victory (1-12)

Amaziah started well. He punished according to the word of God those who murdered his father. When Judah was threatened by the Edomites, he mustered a large army and hired mercenaries from northern Israel. When the man of God told him to send the mercenaries home, he gave up his own idea and obeyed. He trusted God to give him victory, and when he marched against Edom, he won a great victory.

2. Amaziah's defeat (13-28)

The Ephraimites whom he had dismissed plundered Judah on the way home, so he challenged Jehoahaz of Israel to fight him. But Amaziah had become proud because of his victory over Edom. He brought idols back from Edom and worshiped them. God is insulted and angered by idolatry. He handed Amaziah over to Israel. He was defeated and Jerusalem ravaged. He was killed by his own countrymen.

Prayer: Lord, victory and defeat are in your hands. Help me to trust and obey you.

One Word: Worship the Lord only

UZZIAH AND JOTHAM

2 Chronicles 26:1-27:9

Key Verse: 26:5; 27:6

1. God gave him success (26:1-15)

Uzziah's reign was long and prosperous. As long as he sought the Lord, God gave him success. He was successful in war and he was a good administrator in time of peace. He was a builder and a man who loved the soil. His army was large, well-trained and well-equipped. He became famous.

2. Pride led to his downfall (16-23)

In his pride, he ignored God's word and went into the temple to burn incense on the altar of incense. This kind of religion displeases God, for God must be worshiped in God's way. When the priests tried to stop him, he became violently angry. Then, leprosy broke out on his forehead.

3. Jotham his son succeed him (27:1-9)

Uzziah lived a leper's isolated life until the day of his death. Jotham his son ruled. He was blessed because he walked steadfastly before the Lord.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to fear and obey you to the end of my life.

One Word: Walk steadfastly before the Lord

AHAZ FORSAKES THE LORD

2 Chronicles 28:1-27

Key Verse: 28:19a

1. Ahaz' idolatry, fear and failure (1-8)

Ahaz was a man driven by fear. He thought that many religions were better than one. He was superstitious and sincere--and what he did was detestable to God.

2. Men who feared the Lord (9-15)

Aram defeated Judah and took prisoners; Israel also invaded and took many prisoners and much plunder. But a prophet of the Lord reminded the men of Israel that they had conquered Judah because God permitted it. He told them to send the captives back, and because they feared the Lord, they did.

3. The Lord humbled Judah (16-27)

Instead of repenting and turning to the Lord in time of trouble, Ahaz became worse. He offered sacrifices to the gods of Damascus, the country which had defeated him. This made the Lord very angry. Then he invited big trouble. He asked a super power Assyria for help. He invited an invasion.

Prayer: Lord, help me to fear you, so that I may not fear anyone else.

One Word: Fear God and repent

HEZEKIAH PURIFIES THE TEMPLE

2 Chronicles 29:1-36

Key Verse: 29:10

1. Consecrate Levites and the temple (1-19)

Hezekiah perceived the real reason for national defeat and disgrace. God was angry with his people because of their unfaithfulness. He assembled the priests and Levites and told them to repent personally, then clean up the temple. Hezekiah decided to make a covenant with God and restore Biblical worship so that God's fierce anger might turn away. Levite leaders consecrated themselves, then purified the temple.

2. A nation worships God (20-36)

The king and his officials went into the temple to offer sacrifices to God. Sin is rebellion against God, and only God can solve man's sin problem. The consecrated priests slaughtered animals and poured blood on the altar, just as the Law prescribed. Blood represents life. Sin is atoned for by blood. This looks forward to Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Worship is joyful.
(30)

Prayer: Lord, bring repentance to our nation, and start with me.

One Word: True repentance brings joy

HEZEKIAH CELEBRATES THE PASSOVER

2 Chronicles 30:1-27

Key Verse: 30:18b-19

1. The proclamation (1-12)

Hezekiah did something that had not been done since the days of Solomon. He invited Israel and Judah to gather in Jerusalem and celebrate the Passover together. (6-9) Some of the Israelites mocked the messengers, but many of the people of Israel humbled themselves and went to Jerusalem. God gave the people of Judah unity of mind to obey God's word. (12) The Levites prepared to serve, for many were needed.

2. The Passover (13-27)

There were many problems which could have prevented this large and diverse crowd from eating the Passover together. But Hezekiah was not legalistic. He did his best to do everything according to the law, but he allowed the Israelites who had come with repentant hearts, seeking the Lord, to eat the Passover, even though they were not properly purified. And he prayed for them.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for Jesus our Passover Lamb. He alone gives us peace with you and true unity and peace with one another.

One Word: Set your heart on God

A KING WHO WHOLEHEARTEDLY SOUGHT THE LORD

2 Chronicles 31:1-21

Key Verse: 31:21

1. Idol smashing and tithing (1-8)

After the Passover celebration, the Israelite pilgrims smashed idols and returned home. Hezekiah then sought to restore temple worship according to God's law. He assigned tasks to the Levites. He himself gave sacrificially, and he ordered the people to give to support God's servants. The response was overwhelming. The people gave with joyful and generous hearts. Giving is an important expression of faith.

2. Good stewards of God's blessings (9-20)

Hezekiah was a good steward. He provided storerooms to take care of what had been given, and he ordered that careful records be kept. He also appointed faithful men to be in charge of distribution. The instructions in the Bible were carefully followed. Hezekiah did what was good and right and faithful before the Lord. He sought God and worked wholeheartedly. (20,21)

Prayer: Lord, help me to seek you in all things, and help me to be a good businessman and faithful steward.

One Word: Seek and serve God wholeheartedly

SATAN'S ATTACK AND THE LORD'S DEFENSE

2 Chronicles 32:1-23

Key Verse: 32:7,8

1. Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come (1-19)

The army of Assyria rolled through the land, sweeping away everything in its path. Hezekiah strengthened the walls of Jerusalem, cut off the flow of water to the enemy and did what he could to prepare, but he did not depend on human defenses. He told the people to trust in the Lord. (7,8) The king of Assyria sent messengers and letters which told the people, "Don't believe..." He told them that God could not help them, and that Hezekiah was deceiving them. Words that plant doubt in God and his servant are from Satan's arsenal.

2. Hezekiah prays (20-23)

King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet cried out to God in prayer, and the Lord sent an angel who annihilated all the fighting men in the Assyrian camp. God is fully able to hear and answer our prayers when we trust him.

Prayer: Lord, I believe that you are stronger than all the forces of Satan. Strengthen my heart to trust you and help me to pray and not despair.

One Word: The arm of flesh or the Lord God?

HEZEKIAH'S PRIDE, SUCCESS AND DEATH

2 Chronicles 32:24-33

Key Verse: 32:26

1. Hezekiah's pride and repentance (24-26)

Hezekiah had been a humble man of prayer. Once, in his latter years, after tasting the strong wine of success and prosperity, he was sick. He prayed; God answered his prayer and healed him. But he became proud. He was not thankful, and did not acknowledge God's work in his life, so God became angry. God hates pride and ingratitude. A good past record does not give one license for pride. Hezekiah repented of the pride in his heart, and God forgave him.

2. Hezekiah's mistake (27-33)

Hezekiah's pride led him to do something very foolish. He allowed envoys from the Babylonian Empire to inspect his wealth and power freely. They turned out to be spies, and within a few years, Jerusalem was conquered by Babylon and God's people were scattered and enslaved. (2Ki 20:12-21) Pride destroys men and nations.

Prayer: Lord, guard my heart against useless pride and help me to serve you with a humble, thankful heart all my days.

One Word: Pride goes before a fall

TWO EVIL KINGS

2 Chronicles 33:1-25

Key Verse: 33:13

1. Manasseh's evil influence (1-20)

The evil things which Manasseh did are recorded in verses 1-9. Manasseh led the people of Judah and Jerusalem to do more evil than the Canaanite nations which the Lord had destroyed. God warned Manasseh and the people, but they paid no attention. So God sent the king of Assyria. When he led Manasseh away with a hook in his nose to Babylon, he repented. God accepted his prayer of repentance and restored him to his throne in Jerusalem. Then Manasseh tried to undo the evil he had done, but it was too late. God accepts repentant sinners, but evil influence is hard to remove.

2. Amon (21-25)

Amon, son of Manasseh, followed his father to the throne. He did all the evil things his father had done, but he did not repent. His officials assassinated him. They were punished and Josiah his son was put on the throne.

Prayer: Lord, help me to live a life that influences people for good, not evil.

One Word: God hears repentant sinners

A TEENAGE KING

2 Chronicles 34:1-13

Key Verse: 34:3a

1. Josiah sought God in his youth (1-7)

When King Josiah was 16, he began to seek the God of David. He declared war on all forms of idolatry and personally supervised the work of tearing down, burning and destroying the idols, images and altars of pagan gods. Josiah discovered that God hates compromise.

2. Josiah repairs the temple (8-13)

When King Josiah was 24, he decided to repair the temple of God. He sent responsible officers with the necessary funds to do the work. The high priest and the Levites supervised the workmen from job to job. The Levites were Josiah's hands and feet in carrying out his reforms. They were shepherds and Bible teachers. They worked with their hands. They were also secretaries, scribes and doorkeepers. And all the Levites were musicians. What joyful work this must have been!

Prayer: Lord, raise up men who seek you in their youth. Use hard-working young men to turn our nation back to you.

One Word: Seek God while you are young

GOD'S BOOK IS FOUND

2 Chronicles 34:14-33

Key Verse: 34:27

1. The Book of God is found (14-21)

While they were repairing the temple, Hilkiah found the long lost Bible. This means that God's people had not read his word for many years. This is why they had lost direction and were living in spiritual darkness. When the Book was read to King Josiah, he realized that he and his people had not been living according to God's word. Fear of God came to his heart; he repented and tore his clothes.

2. Hulda, a Bible teacher (22-33)

Josiah needed a Bible teacher to help him understand God's word. The high priest and the king's officials went to Hulda, an ordinary housewife who loved God. She was a prophetess. She rebuked and encouraged the king according to the word of God. He listened to her and called everyone to assemble to hear the word of God read. He renewed the covenant to obey God's word.

Prayer: Lord, turn the hearts of the people of this nation to your word and to repentance and commitment to you.

One Word: Read the Bible and repent

A KING WHO DID HIS BEST

2 Chronicles 35:1-27

Key Verse: 35:18

1. The great Passover celebration (1-19)

King Josiah ordered that the Passover be celebrated in Jerusalem. He wanted to remind the people of God's grace in delivering them from Egypt. He wanted to please God by keeping his commands. He provided from his personal possessions all the sheep necessary, and involved all the people in Jerusalem in the celebration. The Levites were the men who helped him most. They did the hard jobs of preparing and serving the animals. None of the kings of Israel or Judah had ever celebrated the Passover like this. (Hezekiah had not followed God's word when he celebrated the Passover.-- 2Ch 30)

2. Josiah's death (20-27)

When Pharaoh Neco went up from Egypt to fight the Babylonians (605 B.C.), Josiah, in his zeal to defend God's people, ignored Neco's words of advice, which were from God, and marched out to fight an unnecessary battle. He was killed (609 B.C.).

Prayer: Lord, help me to do my best to serve you--even in the worst of times.

One Word: Do your best to serve God

GOD'S HAND OF JUDGMENT AND RESTORATION

2 Chronicles 36:1-23

Key Verse: 36:15

1. The fall of Jerusalem (1-21)

The kings who presided over the last days of Judah were weak and evil. Defeat and failure had led some kings to repent and turn to God, but these men were stiff-necked and proud. Religious leaders, with the exception of Jeremiah, were also corrupt. God sent many prophets to call the people to return to God, but they mocked God's messengers and despised his word, so finally, God sent his people into captivity in Babylon. The Babylonians burned the temple and broke down the walls of Jerusalem.

2. God used Cyrus of Persia (22,23)

Jeremiah did not live to see the return from exile, but he prophesied about it. God controls history. After 70 years, he brought about the defeat of Babylon by Persia, and he moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to send the people of Israel home to rebuild the temple.

Prayer: Lord, turn the hearts of your people to study your word and return to you. Help me to be one of your faithful remnant.

One Word: God controls history.