

Lessons from 2nd Chronicles

Second Chronicles continues the history of Israel that was begun in 1 Chronicles. This book repeats information and many stories that are in 1 and 2 Kings but from a slightly different viewpoint.

The book of 2 Chronicles begins with the rule of King Solomon, then tells the history of the two separate kingdoms of Judah and Israel down to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

King Solomon is honoured as the ideal king of Israel. The first part of 2 Chronicles (1-9) includes events from his rule, especially the building and dedication of the temple in Jerusalem and the beginning of worshipping there.

The second part of the book (10-36) begins with the rebellion of the northern tribes of Israel and the division of the country into two separate kingdoms, Judah in the south and Israel in the north. This part of 2 Chronicles is the history of Judah down to the time of Jerusalem's fall and destruction. Unlike 2 Kings, the book of 2 Chronicles includes very little information about the northern kingdom. According to 2 Chronicles, the people of Israel were sinful and turned their backs on the Lord, and so their history did not deserve to be told.

Second Chronicles, like 1 Chronicles, is very concerned that the Lord be worshiped in the proper way. Hezekiah and Josiah are two of the most respected kings of Judah because they were always faithful to the Lord and did many things to see that he was properly worshiped and that his Law was obeyed.

This book tells how Jerusalem was destroyed and the people of Judah were led away as prisoners to Babylonia. But the book concludes with hope for the Jews. King Cyrus of Persia lets them return to Judah, and he promises:

The Lord God will watch over any of his people who want to go back to Judah (36.23b)

Here are 11 Lessons From The Book of Second Chronicles

We Can't Put God in a Box

1 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 2.5, 6

Even though Solomon was building a temple for God, the king understood that no house on earth would be large enough to contain the Lord. All Solomon was doing was building a place where God would be worshiped.

God is greater than our biggest church. He is larger than our grandest ideas about him. Our churches, music, sermons, and other spiritual helps are meant to make it easier for us to learn about God and to praise and worship him.

Fire From Heaven

2 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 7.1-10

Solomon had just finished his urgent prayer: "From your home in heaven, listen to their sincere prayers and forgive your people who have sinned against you." This was a prayer the Lord would answer in a dramatic way. His "dazzling glory" (v.1) filled the temple. This fire in God's house - a sign of God's presence - was to be kept burning at all times.

The people's response to the fire and the Lord's glory is interesting. They did not stand around discussing the meaning of the events. They quickly got down on their knees and worshiped the Lord.

God fills our lives with his presence. The "fire of God" in our hearts is intended to be kept burning at all times. When we are alone with no one watching or listening, this is when we are our true selves. At times like this, pray the kind of prayer Solomon prayed. The Lord will fill you with himself and you will know it.

If You Will Obey

3 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 7.12-22

Every agreement has conditions. Here the Lord lays down a few simple ones. He reminded Solomon that the only way his kingdom would continue was if Solomon would do as David had done and obey the Lord. If Solomon or his people began to worship foreign gods, they could be sure that God would punish them.

God's promises to us are similar. He promises that if obey him, he will take good care of us. But if we chase after the "gods" of money, power, sex, pride, houses, cars, or anything else instead of him, the good gifts from God will be pulled out of our hands.

These are not harsh conditions. We can't expect to double-cross our friends and expect to keep them. God proves himself to be our best possible friend. Let's not put anything in his place.

Seeking Wise Counsel

4 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 10.1-19

Solomon's son, Rehoboam, did not have the great wisdom his father had. That did not mean, though, that he had to make poor decisions. Unfortunately, he took the advice of his peers rather than drawing on the wisdom of the older, wiser senior officials who had served his father so well.

Most of us tend to listen more to our friends than we do to our elders. Be careful! Our friends may not be the best source of wisdom since they probably see things just as we do. Usually, the best guidance comes from someone who had been around longer than we have. Experience is a good teacher.

Action, Not Just Words

5 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 15.1-19

King Asa backed up his words with actions. Encouraged by the message from God's prophet, Asa was not afraid to confront the idol worshipers in the nation. He ordered the idols destroyed, and that there should be no more worship of any god but the true God. Asa also repaired the Lord's altar at the temple in Jerusalem.

It is one thing to say we want to live our lives in a way that pleases God. It is quite another to get rid of the idols in our lives and begin restoring the things of God to their rightful place in our lives. Fresh commitments are fine, but we need to prove our words with our changed lives.

The bad News Prophet

6 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 18.2-27

King Ahab had a group of paid prophets who told him only what he wanted to hear. Jehoshaphat, however, hoped to hear from at least one prophet who truly spoke for God before he went into battle with Ahab's army. Micaiah was such a man, but Ahab hated to hear his messages because Micaiah always had bad news for this king.

Micaiah's response in verse 13 should be our motto when we are under pressure to back away from the truth: "I'll say whatever the living Lord my God tells me to say.: Just because we speak the truth, though, doesn't mean it will be accepted or we will be applauded. Micaiah was put in prison for telling the truth. We may have to suffer for speaking the truth, but it is better to suffer by being honest than to sin by lying.

A Parent's Worst Nightmare

7 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 21.1-20

The marriage King Jehoshaphat had arranged between his son, Jehoram and the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel now came back to haunt God's people. Instead of following in his father's footsteps, Jehoram was more influenced by his idol worshiping wife, Athaliah. Together this couple led the country of Judah downhill. One of the most telling comments about this king's life was that when he dies in terrible pain, no one was sad.

What will people say about you when your life is over? What kind of legacy will you leave behind? Will your life be one that draws people closer to the Lord or a life that makes it harder for people to find the true God?

You Can't Force Change

8 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 27.2-6

Jotham was a good king who obeyed the Lord. It is not surprising that his rule was one of peace, power, and prosperity. Despite Jotham's good example, though, the people of the nation did not change their ways.

You may be doing your best to obey God, but someone else you know chooses not to follow your example. You can lead them in the right direction, but you cannot force them to change. Don't be discouraged, though. Something you say or do may strike them in a way that leads them to God.

Where Do You Put Your Trust?

9 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 32.7, 8

King Hezekiah was a practical man. He made all possible preparations against King Sennacherib's coming attack on Jerusalem. Notice that even against the powerful Assyrian army, Hezekiah's trust was not in his own preparations, but in the fact that "the Lord our God fights on our side" (v.8),

No one's trust in this God had ever been unrewarded. The answer is often better than we had hoped.

Look What I Found!

10 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 34.8-33

When Hilkiah found part of God's Word during the temple repairs, his comment was one of delight and amazement. Josiah heard God's Word being read, and his heart was excited. The king realized that he and the people had failed to live the way God had commanded.

God's Word is powerful. Besides giving us information and encouragement, it also points out those places in our lives where we have not quite lived up to God's standards. It also shows us how we can overcome these weak points and find peace with God. Our Bibles should never gather dust due to lack of use.

Light in the Darkness

11 Short Commentary & Lesson from 2 Chronicles 36.22, 23

Even when God punishes his people, he does not leave them without hope. Granted, many of those who had disobeyed God had lost their homes and land. Many were killed. But even while the people were captives in Babylonia, God gave them his Word through prophets such as Daniel and Ezekiel.

Eventually, Babylonia was defeated by Persia. Forty-eight years after the temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed, Cyrus (the ruler of Persia) announced that the remaining Israelites could return to their land.

Twenty-two years later, the temple was rebuilt and God's people were home again. In the darkest moments of our lives - when everything we have treasured is gone - God will still give us a sense of his presence in his word. He promises to bring us into a bright future if we will trust him.

Promises For Us

Prisoners of war survive by thinking about their families. Soldiers under extended combat conditions crave out moments to escape into pleasant memories of home and peace. Terminal patients linger over photographs that recreate for a moment days of joy and health. Severely depressed people find moments of hope in beautiful music.

The Israelite survivors of the Babylonian captivity found courage and hope in the stories of the heroic kings of 2 Chronicles. The eight good kings of Judah's history dominate the pages of this book. At the end, the story leaps over the 70 years of captivity to highlight the Persian decree to send the Israelites home at the government's expense. Good things do come out of bad situations.

You, too, can pick yourself up after the disasters of life if you can look back and remember the times in your past that God has helped you and cared for you. Second Chronicles is selective. The story skips over many of the bad things that happened through the years to highlight the good ones. When you are recovering from a bad time, follow the same principle. Remember what God has done and accentuate the positive.