

Down But Not Out

1 & 2 Chronicles Overview

(preached Pine Grove 3/29/15; Sunday PM)

Introduction

As we have moved through the OT, we have talked about the importance of history in the lives of God's people.

Israel was reminded time and time again to rely upon God's history of faithfulness as they faced new challenges as a nation.

Our own personal history is important to us as well.

We often rely on our past to face the uncertainty of tomorrow.

It is good to look back upon what God has done for us and we are tempted to be anxious for tomorrow.

And we have talked the importance of taking notes of how God has worked in our lives as a way to remember God's faithfulness to us.

Whether that is a handwritten note in your Bible...

A journal of God's goodness to you..

Or simply a mental note.

Along these lines, we also talked about the idea of photo albums being ways to remember God's goodness to us in the past.

If you ask people what they would save if their house was on fire, the men will say the guns and the golf clubs...

And the women will say the pictures.

Why is that?

What is it about the pictures that is so important to us?

Well, they are visual reminders of our past.

You would think that one look through a photo album would be enough and we could set it on the shelf forever...

But that isn't the case.

People often look through photo albums over and over and over.

Our family vacations at the beach every year, and the first year we went, we made a DVD of family pictures set to music.

You simply pop it in and hit play and it scrolls through maybe a 100 pictures of our family.

You would think that we would watch it one time and it would be enough.

But every year, that DVD goes to the beach with us and the entire family watches it.

We have watched that same picture slide show for 11 years now.

And we will watch it again this year.

Why is that?

Well, it is an encouragement to us.

It helps us see God's hand of blessing on our family.

There is a whole range of emotions that are tied up in memories of the past.

From sadness to joy.

But there is also a constant theme of looking at the past and finding hope for the future.

The family vacation that we take is the family on my dad's side.

My grandparents had 3 kids...

My dad and his two sisters...

And now they all have kids.

And those kids have kids.

So, we have 4 generations all together looking at these pictures...

And the blessing is to see God's gracious hand on our family through the years.

But also finding encouragement that God is continuing to work in the youngest generation.

Tonight, we are going to examine two books the OT...

1 & 2 Chronicles..

And the reason that we are doing two books is that much of the information contained in these books is a retelling of history that we have already examined.

1 Chronicles is essentially a parallel of 2 Samuel, which was the story of David coming to reign as king.

2 Chronicles is a parallel to 1 and 2 Kings which is the story of the kings who reigned after David and then the story of the kings of each kingdom.

However, 2 Chronicles only deals with the kings who reigned in the southern kingdom of Judah.

Here's a little graphic to keep it straight in your mind..

Now, the question is why write two 1 and 2 Chronicles if they are simply a repeat of what has already occurred?

To understand the purpose of these books, you need to understand when they were written.

When we finished up the book of 2 Kings last week, we watched all of Israel go into exile.

The northern kingdom fell to the Assyrians in 722 and the southern kingdom fell to the Babylonians in 586 BC.

So, 1 and 2 Kings were written by an author who was exiled out of the land.

And God inspired him to write down the history of Israel while he and the rest of Israel was in captivity.

The words of 1 and 2 Kings would be a reminder to them of why they were out of the land.

They would read these scrolls to the people and all the people would be reminded that they were experiencing the consequences of disobedience.

Well, God was not going to leave Israel in captivity forever...

He was going to bring Israel back into the land.

Their punishment was temporary.

And once they got back into the land, God inspired the writing of 1 and 2 Chronicles.

Though they contained much of the same information, the perspective of the books were different.

1 and 2 Kings were a reminder of Israel's sinful past...

1 and 2 Chronicles provided encouragement to start over.

We can understand this as parents...

When our children disobey, we punish them.

And part of that punishment is to make them consider their sin...

So, we sit them down and we explain what they did and then we give the punishment.

“Daddy told you to come when he called you, and you didn't come, so we are getting punished.”

And there is a certain tone in our voice when we say that.

And the design of that is to make them think about what they have done.

But once the punishment is over, we set them free with encouragement.

Ok, you can back and play. Daddy forgives you. But remember what happens when we don't come when Daddy calls us?"

We get a spanking. So go back to playing. Daddy loves you.

In a similar way, 1 and 2 Chronicles was written after the punishment that Israel has experienced.

They have been in exile for 70 years, and now God is encouraging them to get back to work at being his light to the nations.

And they needed the encouragement.

When they got back to the land, it was real different than what they had remembered.

The days of having their own king were gone.

Now, they were going to live in the land under a foreign government.

A Persian king was now governor there.

Jerusalem was in shambles.

The walls of protections around the city were gone.

The temple was destroyed, so God's glory was no longer present among the people.

The land flowing with milk and honey was a distant memory now.

Though it was still the Promised Land, it didn't look like one.

And look, that would have been a great discouragement to the people.

I go back to Whitmire sometimes, and it is depressing.

Though it has always been a small town, the houses that once were the neatest on the block are not maintained.

The stores that I went to as a kid as boarded up and grown over.

The high school building where I roamed the halls is closed and overgrown.

And though there is a new high school and other new things in the town...

It doesn't appear to be at the same standard of 30 years ago.

There are no factories there.

The mill is gone.

The textile company is shut down.

And in some ways, it is quite depressing to go.

And I can't imagine the folks who lived there 30 years before me...

When there was a movie theater there...

And multiple businesses..

And a busy main street.

In some ways, this is what the people faced as they came back to the once hustling and bustling Promised Land.

And I am sure that they were discouraged as well.

So, God inspired someone, who I believe was Ezra, to write the book of Chronicles.

And he went all the way back to Adam and Noah and Shem and Abraham all the way to David and even through exile...

And the point of the books were simply to be a shot in the arm to go back and rebuild.

The purpose was to inspire the people to get back to work...

To remind them that God had worked in that nation for centuries and HE was going to continue to work through them.

In a lot of ways, it was a kick in the pants to get them going...

And Chronicles is going to center around David...

1 Chronicles is going to center on how David rose to power...

And 2 Chronicles is going to focus on who followed David...

And how is that encouragement?

Well, David was Israel's greatest king...

When the people thought of him, they thought of the good ol days...

They thought of the prosperity of the land when he was king..

They thought of being free from their enemies when he was king..

But more than that, they knew that one greater than David was coming....

Every king that followed him was that hope of a brighter future...

We understand this as Americans...

Though I wasn't alive, people talk about the good ol days...

Many people point to the 1950s...

America had gotten through WW2...

Factories were being built..

People were working...

The world seemed to be free from the threat of evil.

People often say that they wish they could go back...

And I understand that....

But guess what a greater decade than the 50s is coming...

It fact, it won't last 10 years, but a 1000 years...and then on into eternity...

We don't need point people back to the 50s, we need to point them in the direction of eternity with the Lord.

And Israel needed that reminder as well...

David had been dead 500 years or more at this point...

But the Lord knew that when Israel thought of him, they had hope...

And he wrote Chronicles to inspire them to look for the greater King who was coming....

Resettle the land..

Build the temple...

Get back to work...

God is still going to bring that King in the future from the line of David...

Don't despair.

The Lord is still at work...

Get your head out of your hands and go to work...

Now, with that introduction out of the way, let's speed through these two books...

The best way to divide these books is like this....

1 Chronicles

I. The Line of David (1-9)

II. The Reign of David's Predecessor, -Saul (10)

III. The Reign of David (11-29)

2 Chronicles

I. The Reign of David's Son Solomon (1-9)

II. The Reign of David's Kingly Line (10-36)

1 Chronicles

I. The Line of David (1-9)

So, let's begin in 1 Chronicles 1 looking at the line that leads up to David as king...

One thing of note in chapter 1 is found in verse 24...

²⁴ Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, ²⁵ Eber, Peleg, Reu, ²⁶ Serug, Nahor, Terah, ²⁷ Abram, that is Abraham.

Who was Abraham descended from?

First Adam and Eve...

But after God destroyed all the earth except Noah, his sons and their wives, which son did Abraham descend from?

Well, he came from Shem's line?

What does that mean?

Well, if you ever hear in the news that someone is persecuting the Jews, they are often called Anit-Semitic?

Well, what does that mean?

Why not call them anti-Jewish?

Well, the Jews began with Abraham, who was a descendant of Shem...

Who were often called Shemites...

Over the years, the h was dropped and Jews are a Semite people....

Simply menaing they were descendants that began with Shem, who was one of Noah's 3 sons.

In chapter 2, we see that David was a descendant of the tribe of Judah...

In Revelation 5, heaven is weeping because no one is able to open the scroll that contains the deed to the earth....

And then John writes that that Jesus steps forward and is able to open the scroll...

And what does John call Jesus?

He calls him the lion of the tribe of Judah...

Judah is the Davidic line.

And then chapters 3-9 contain more genealogy of Israel.

The point is that God has been at work from the very beginning to bring about His plan through hthe nation...

For a Jew returning to the Promised Land after years of exile, it would be encouraging to know that God has been at work for years....

All these “he was the son of...” or “these were the sons of” are all reminder that God had blessed Israel for centuries...

They have survived and they are going to continue to survive....

What is the point of a family tree?

To see which leaf you are and to carry your weight...

The generation coming back to the land had a job to do...

God is simply replying their history to remind them that they are no ordinary people...

II. The Reign of David’s Predecessor, -Saul (10)

In chapter 10, the author reminds the reader of Israel’s first king who was Saul...

III. The Reign of David (11-29)

In chapter 11, David follows Saul as king over the people...

And if you simply flip with me through the remaining chapters of 1 Chronicles, you will see David's reign as king over Israel...

In chapters 13-15, David bring the ark to Jerusalem...

As a symbol of God's presence with them...

In chapters 18-20, David leads Israel into battle against the surrounding nations.

In chapter 22, David plans for a temple are revealed.

In chapters 23-27, David lays out how the kingdom is to be organized..

In chapter 28, David addresses the nation one last time before dying in chapter 29...

That leads us to 2 Chronicles, which in the original text would have simply been chapter 30...

2 Chronicles

I. The Reign of David's Son Solomon (1-9)

David's son Solomon follows him to the throne as king over Israel.

Solomon asked for wisdom and got it and tremendous wealth to go along with it...

In chapter 2, he begins building the temple, which he completed in 2 Chronicles, which end in the 1st verse of chapter 5.

Solomon dedicates the temple to the Lord in chapters 6-7...

Once the temple is dedicated...

Chapters 8 and 9 describe the prosperity that Solomon experienced as king..

And the last verse of chapter 9 describes Solomon's death..

That brings us to the final section of these two books...

II. The Reign of David's Kingly Line (10-36)

Chapters 10-36 focus on the reigns on the kings of Judah, which was the southern kingdom of Israel.

The final one to fall and be exiled to Babylon.

And it lists many of the kings that we talked about in 2 Kings last week.

We see the story of good king Joash.

We see the story of good king Hezekiah.

But do you remember how 1 Kings ended?

Well, Nebuchadnezzar came in, destroyed Jerusalem and carried off the people...

It was a depressing ending to say the least...

Well 2 Chronicles has a similar ending....

¹⁸ All the articles of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his officers, he brought them all to Babylon. ¹⁹ Then they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all its fortified buildings with fire and destroyed all its valuable articles.

²⁰ Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹ to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath ^[d] until seventy years were complete.

But then look down to verse 22...

22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia—in order to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah—the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, ²³ “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up!’”

There it is...

There is the hope of the people to whom 1 & 2 Chronicles was written...

Captivity is over...

Go back and build the Lord a temple.

And what is the point of all this?

God is not finished with his people Israel.

Yes, they have disobeyed.

Yes, they have turned their backs on God.

But, no! God is not finished with them.

He has plans for them still.

Those final verses of 2 Chronicles change everything!

A new day has dawned in Israel.

Just like we don't punish our kids forever...

It's not like we say...

“Oh...you're talking back to me...”

Hit the road and never and never come back..

God had brought a new day for Israel..

Listen to Psalm 30...

*I will extol You, O Lord, for You have lifted me up,
And have not let my enemies rejoice over me.*

² *O Lord my God,*

I cried to You for help, and You healed me.

³ *O Lord, You have brought up my soul from
[a]Sheol;*

*You have kept me alive, [b]that I would not go
down to the pit.*

⁴ *Sing praise to the Lord, you His godly ones,
And give thanks to His holy [c]name.*

⁵ *For His anger is but for a moment,
His favor is for a lifetime;*

*Weeping may last for the night,
But a shout of joy comes in the morning.*

Two quick applications for all of our hearts from this...

First, today is the day to go to work serving the Lord.

The past is simply that.

It is past.

Everyone of us has sinned against the Lord.

Everyone of us has experienced His discipline.

The question is now what we have done, but instead the question is what do we need to do?

Israel had every reason to simply take a seat on the bench and wait to die.

But God was telling them in 1&2 Chronicles, his work is not done...

And more importantly, He is not done with them.

I don't care if you are 19 or 90, don't let your past sins make you ineffective in your service to the Lord.

God is not with you until you breathe your last.

There is forgiveness and mercy with God.

If you are saved, confess your sins to God, wipe your slate clean and look for a way to build His kingdom.

If you are not saved, repent of your sins, trust in Jesus to save you, and make the most of the days you have left.

And the one more lesson for us all...

I have heard people describe the a\past at Pine Grove...

Folks in the balconies...

Ministries going on every day of the week...

People getting saved...

Let me tell you something, God is not done with this place here...

There are folks all around Fairview who need to be saved..

There are Christians here that need to grow in their walk with the Lord.

There are kids here that need to be taught the Bible.

There is ministry everywhere to do here.

God didn't send this church to Babylon to leave her there forever...

He hasn't brought you through a crisis so you now rest in peace...

He has brought you through a trial to show you that HE is faithful to this body of believers...

He has brought you through a trial because there is more to be done here...

I didn't come to this church to take it easy.

I came to lead, care, and feed the body of Christ.

I didn't put a dart board on the wall and throw a dart to determine which book to start with on Sunday morning...

I started in Mark because no church can love others unless they first love Christ.

The reason we are walking with Jesus every Sunday morning is because we need to watch him do ministry before we can do ministry.

The reason we are going through the Bible on Sunday nights is not to make us smarter than the church down the street.

The purpose is to establish that the Bible is going to be our authority on all matters that take place here..

But it cant be your authority unless you know what is in it...

And you can't know what is in it until you get a grand overview of it all..

The reason we are in the OT on Wednesday night is to show you the sovereignty of God in the world.

There's no better place to see that than in the lives of His people...

Ruth, Jonah, Esther, Hannah, are all people who saw God work sovereignly in their lives.

And a church needs to embrace the truth that God is actively at work in this world at all times...

He is the one changing circumstances and hearts..

He is the One who is never caught by surprise..

And Wednesday nights are teaching us that truth over and over...

I say all that to say because you need to know that I am not up here just content with how things are...

No, there is work to be done, and the first act of business is get our hearts right before the Lord.

To increase our Love for Jesus, to increase our love for the Word, and to increase our praise of a sovereign God.

1 & 2 Chronicles were written to get Israel's mind right after captivity...

To refocus their efforts upon resettling the land, rebuilding the temple and making God big in the world.

And though we live in a different day, may we be no less committed to doing God's work right here where HE has placed us.