

1 Chronicles

Summary

The books of 1 and 2 Chronicles are a survey of the time period of the united and divided kingdoms in the history of Israel. The book of 1 Chronicles begins with a series of genealogies (chapters 1-9) that lead up to the time in which David was king of a united Jewish people. After this, the narrative focuses on David's life, major military events, and the priestly aspects of David's reign. Most of the book of 1 Chronicles focuses on the southern tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, specifically on the priestly duties and customs. When reading the book of 1 Chronicles, the reader must keep in mind that it was written after the exile, in which the Northern Kingdom and tribes were no more. However, because the Southern Kingdom had returned to Jerusalem and the surrounding area, there was a need to compile records for keeping. Throughout the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles, there are themes of following and trusting God or forsaking God. The chronicler shows that the up-and-down history of Israel directly links these two concepts.

Author

Though the author is unnamed in 1 and 2 Chronicles, it has traditionally been attributed to Ezra, the scribe.

Date

The most common date given for the writing of 1 and 2 Chronicles is after the return from exile in Babylon. More specifically, scholars date the book in the latter half of the fifth century around 450-400 B.C.

Primary Characters

Saul (1 Chronicles 8-10)

David (1 Chronicles 11-29)

Solomon (1 Chronicles 22-29)

Historical Moments

Genealogies Recounted (1 Chronicles 1-9)

Saul's Death (1 Chronicles 10)

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15-16)

The Covenant with David (1 Chronicles 17)

Death of David (1 Chronicles 29)

Major Theological Themes

The Temple Is the House of the Lord - Throughout the Old Testament, the Spirit of the Lord dwelt in the Ark of the Covenant inside the temple. This temple was a moving tabernacle in the days of Exodus, but later became a solid construction under Solomon. When Christ sacrificed Himself and paid for our sins, the temple was no longer necessary. The Holy Spirit was given to New Testament Christians to dwell within all those who believe, leading Paul to teach in 1 Corinthians 6:19, "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?" Let us be grateful that we no longer have to make sacrifices in the temple because of the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The Davidic Covenant - In 1 Chronicles 17, we see a picture of the covenant that God made with King David. In 2 Samuel 7:10-13, we see an unconditional covenant between God and David. This covenant forecasts the truth that the Savior of the world (the Messiah) will come through the tribe of Judah. This Messiah would establish an eternal kingdom. God promises ultimate deliverance for the Jewish people, which is finally fulfilled by Christ in the New Testament.

Lessons Learned from 1 Chronicles

Seeking God Is Important - The chronicler consistently uses terminology like "seeking God" to show what a true follower of Jesus should be doing. It shouldn't be a passive behavior in which someone waits to see what God does in his or her life. It is the act of seeking God's will through prayer and obedience to His Word. Let us never be satisfied with sitting back and waiting for God to do something big with our lives, but let us always seek after him desperately.

Worship Is at the Heart of God - The reason why so much time is spent on the temple and worship regulations is that it was extremely important to David and to the heart of God. There is nothing God desires more than for His people to worship Him and have true fellowship with Him. Worship is not just singing in church, but it is an entire lifestyle of offering everything to God and putting Him as the center of our lives.