



2 Chronicles: God Who Responds

Memory Verse: 2 Chronicles 5:13-14 "The trumpeters and musicians joined in unison to give praise and thanks to the Lord. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, the singers raised their voices in praise to the Lord and sang: 'He is good; his love endures forever.' Then the temple of the Lord was filled with the cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God."

Background

Second Chronicles is the 14th book of the Bible and the 9th book of history in the Old Testament. Originally combined with 1 Chronicles as one book, 2 Chronicles was written between 450 to 430 BC to the remnant of Jews returning to Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity and exile. Jewish tradition suggests Ezra the priest as author. The author of Chronicles, whomever that may have been, was a very thorough historian, compiling information from numerous official and unofficial historical documents cited throughout the book.

2 Chronicles covers the same period of history found in 1 and 2 Kings. Beginning in 971 BC when Solomon ascends to the throne, 2 Chronicles covers his reign, building of the temple, and continues with the division of the kingdom into Israel and Judah. Second Chronicles focuses on the southern kingdom of Judah and the Davidic line, especially those kings who did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. The book follows Judah until its people were taken into captivity in 538 BC.

The Short Story

The history of Israel from Solomon ruling a united kingdom and building the temple to division, deterioration, and destruction of the temple and the kingdom of Judah.

What's the Big Idea?

Like 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles is told from a priestly and spiritual perspective. Temple worship is especially emphasized in 2 Chronicles and the focus is on the Kingdom of Judah because the northern kingdom was full of apostasy, worshipping false gods and refusing to acknowledge the Temple in Jerusalem. The author of 2 Chronicles devotes much writing to the eight good kings of Judah while skimming over the 12 evil kings. Each of these kings is seen through their relationship with the Lord and to the temple as the center of worship. Reverence to the Lord, His laws, and the temple are often seen in the reigns of the good kings. These kings destroy foreign altars and idols as they go about restoring the temple while the wicked kings lead Judah into more idolatry. One wicked king even gives treasures from the temple of God to the Assyrians and shuts the doors of the Temple (2 Chronicles 28). The structural state of the temple in 2 Chronicles is a good depiction of the spiritual state of God's people. The temple and Jerusalem are destroyed by the Babylonians as the God's people are taken into captivity and exile. Nevertheless, God is faithful and He moved the heart of the Cyrus king of Persia to release the Jews and decree that the temple be rebuilt in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 36:22-23).

So What? Why is this book so important? What was God's purpose for the book?

To the post-exile Jews returning to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, there were many lessons to be learned from the history presented in 2 Chronicles. They needed to be reminded of the awesomeness and uniqueness of the Lord God Almighty. Second Chronicles was also a good reminder that God blesses His people when they are obedient and joyfully worship Him alone. Therefore, 2 Chronicles is filled not only with lessons from the past, but also hope and encouragement for the future. God had brought them back from exile and had a plan for their future. He was still their God and they His people. After the Exile, Israel never worshipped foreign gods again. God remains faithful to His people today and what He has done for us and the blessings we have experienced in the past can encourage us and give us hope for the future. We can press on in faith, hope, and confidence as we worship the Lord for "He is good; his love endures forever" (2 Chronicles 5:13).

Teaching Text

2 Chronicles 7:1-6 ‘When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. The priests could not enter the temple of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled it. When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the Lord above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, “He is good; his love endures forever.”

Sermon-Based Discussion Questions

- At the conclusion of Solomon’s prayer God signals His divine approval by doing what?
- What prevented the priests from entering the Temple? What does the cloud represent?
- What was the response of the people physically and audibly to this amazing event?
- God promises to be attentive to our prayers if we will do what (list three specific things)?
- What does this phase reveal about God ? “ He is good; His love endures forever”

Practical Application

- How much thought/effort have you given to seeking God’s divine approval, His Amen in your life?
- When have you experienced His Amen? What was your response? How did you feel?
- Here are the question to answer for a God encounter from 2 Chronicles 7:13 *Do you belong to him? Do you claim His identity? Do you walk in humility? Do you pray and seek him? Do you turn away from evil?* Which of these speaks most to you today and why?

Hitting the Highpoints

- 2 Chronicles 6:14-18 “But will God really live on earth among people?”
- 2 Chronicles 7:12-22 “Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves... “
- 2 Chronicles 15:16-19 “Asa’s heart remained completely faithful throughout his life... “
- 2 Chronicles 16:8-9 “The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth to strengthen those....
- 2 Chronicles 19:8-10, You must always act in the fear of the Lord, with faithfulness...”
- 2 Chronicles 20:21-22, ““Give thanks to the LORD; his faithful love endures forever!”

Bonus Features

Not only is Jesus the King of our lives, but we can marvel, just as Solomon did so many, many years ago, that God, through his Son Jesus, lived among us...not in the temple (which was eventually destroyed when God allowed people from other nations to capture His people because of their sin), but in human form in order to reveal His eternal purpose to us (forgiveness of sin and eternal life with Him). In doing this, God once again reached out to us in love, just as He did in Solomon’s time, to be with us. God wants to be OUR king...He wants to rule in our lives...He wants our bodies to be His temple where His spirit can live, and He accomplished ALL OF THAT through his Son, Jesus....The King of kings and Lord of lords!

Personal Takeaways and Notes