

PREACHING THROUGH II CHRONICLES

This book continues the narrative of First Chronicles, with which it forms a unit. It begins with the reign of Solomon, about 1000 B.C., and concludes with the close of the Captivity in Babylon, about 500 B.C. The Book of Ezra follows it directly, telling of the return from Babylon.

“The memory of the righteous is blessed,
But the name of the wicked shall rot”

(Proverbs 10:7).

Great emphasis is placed upon the historical outworking of God's promise that His people would prosper if they remained true to Him, but if they wandered in sin and idolatry, they would suffer. Note that the record dwells at length on the reigns of the better kings and pays a much briefer notice to the wicked and idolatrous kings.

Second Chronicles is definitely a history of the kings in David's line. There is no record of the Kingdom of Israel, the ten northern tribes, after their revolt from Judah.

Archaeological discoveries have borne out, in a most interesting fashion, the history recorded in this book. The wars of Judah's kings are recorded from the enemies' point of view on tablets, arches, and walls discovered in Mesopotamia. The events of Hezekiah's reign are most generously established. The tunnel by which he brought water into Jerusalem (32:3, 4) still exists. His defensive walls (32:5) have been traced as described. Sennacherib's invasion, the failure of his siege of Jerusalem, and his assassination by members of his own family (32:1-23), are all recorded in Assyrian inscriptions.

ANALYSIS OF SECOND CHRONICLES

Chapters 1-9	Reign of Solomon and building of the Temple.
10-13	Reign of Rehoboam and division of the kingdom. Abijah's reign.
14-20	The good kings Asa and Jehoshaphat.
21,22	The evil reigns of Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah.
24-26	The reigns of Joash, Amaziah, and Uzziah mix evil with good.

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- 27,28 The evil reigns of Jotham and Ahaz.
- 29-32 The great reign of Hezekiah.
- 33 The evil reigns of Menasseh and Amon—
57 years.
- 34-35 The good reign of Josiah.
- 36 The four last kings of a dying realm; captivity;
Cyrus' decree for release.

Sermon Outlines Provided:

- “House of Prayer” (II Chron. 6:12-21)
- “The King and the Teachers” (II Chron. 17:1-9)
- “Evil Companions Corrupt Good Manners” (II Chron. 18:1-3;
19:1-3; 20:35-37)
- “Humble Judgment” (II Chron. 28:8-15)

Other Suggested Sermon Topics:

- “The Big ‘If’” (II Chron. 7:11-22)
- “The Passing of the Prophet” (II Chron. 24:15-22)
- “The Great Deliverance” (II Chron. 32:9-23)
- “Honor Thy Father” (II Chron. 34:1-3)

QUESTIONS OVER II CHRONICLES

1. What did Solomon ask God to give him? (1:10)
2. Where in Jerusalem did Solomon build the House of the Lord? (3:1)
3. What was in the Ark of the Covenant when Solomon had it brought into the Temple? (5:10)
4. Who was the next king after Solomon? (9:31)
5. In comparison to his father, how did Rehoboam describe his type of discipline? (10:14)
6. What did Azariah tell Asa about one's relationship with the Lord? (15:2)
7. Why was the Lord with Jehoshaphat? (17:3-4)
8. Whom did Joash murder? (24:22)
9. When Hezekiah commanded the people to give, what was their response? (31:4-12)
10. What did Amon multiply? (33:23)

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HOUSE OF PRAYER

(II Chronicles 6:12-21)

INTRODUCTION —

The Temple was complete and the time of dedication had come. Last stone set in place and made fast. Last gorgeous pillar set and covered with its gold leaf. Tapestries and hangings in place. Altar and brazen sea ready to be used. Now the king goes to his knees before God in the presence of all the people. "My house shall be called a house of prayer." "When they shall pray toward this place, then hear Thou in heaven."

I. THE SYMBOL OF GOD'S PRESENCE, AND THE CENTER OF PRAYER.

A. The Temple was such a symbol in Israel, replacing the tabernacle.

B. Christ is our Temple, "God with us"—"if ye shall ask anything in My name."

1. "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).

2. The place of prayer is where we turn to Him.

C. The house of worship is a house of prayer. We come together to Him.

1. Acts 2:42. ". . . and in prayer."

2. It is the place of gathering on His Day.

3. Here is *His Table*.

4. It is the place of bringing offerings in His name (I Cor. 16:2).

5. His word is here spoken and heard.

II. ADMONITION, "ENTER INTO HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING AND INTO HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE."

A. There are dangers in church-going which cannot harm the prayerful.

1. If there is "see how good I am," God knows exactly how good we are not. Pharisee prayed *with himself*, "I thank thee that I am not as others."

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2. If there is display, "God looketh on the heart" and not on garments.
 3. If there is tendency to empty form, the presence of God gives sincere meaning.
 4. Fault finding—we stand before our own judge. You can't pray for one and find fault at the same time.
- B. Have we lost the sense of "House of Prayer," that the special services of prayer should be so poorly attended?
1. Prayer meeting for teachers and officers before Bible School.
 2. Wednesday evening prayer and study hour.
- C. Opportunities for prayer in public worship.
1. "Say amen at the giving of thanks" (I Cor. 14:16). (Share in public prayer.)
 2. Upon entering, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit"—prayers for others.
 3. At time of communion; let Him walk again among us, and carry to Him our praise.
 4. At the invitation.

III. SUBJECTS OF PRAYER IN THE HOUSE OF GOD.

A. Among Israelites.

1. Repentance—"forgive."
2. Neighbor and neighbor, nation and nation, drought, pestilence. The foreigner's prayer, the warrior's prayer, prayer in captivity.

B. Subjects for Christian prayer.

1. Likewise humble repentance, prayer for forgiveness.
2. Thanks for salvation.
3. "Casting all your care on Him, for He careth for you."
4. Especially prayers including others of the church.

CONCLUSION —

He is our Temple; to Him we invite.

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THE KING AND THE TEACHERS
(II Chronicles 17:1-9)

INTRODUCTION —

We dare to tell a story of what happened more than 2800 years ago, and that of a man who used a book, more than 500 years old already, as the basis of his instruction. Jehoshaphat, (Jehovah judges), son of Asa (physician), comes to throne at age of 35. Characterized by industry, intelligence, faith. Reigned 25 years.

I. HE SOUGHT A *PERMANENT* POLICY OF IMPROVEMENT FOR JUDAH.

A. Asa had destroyed heathen idols, even deposed own mother (weeds came up again). "He that governs well, leads the blind; but he that teaches, gives him eyes" (South).

B. Jehoshaphat sends teachers throughout the land.

C. There is a permanent nature to what you have learned.

1. You know reasons; they will be good forever.

2. You have gained lasting characteristics:

a. Has it given sympathy and caused you to espouse good causes? Has it made you public-spirited? A brother to the weak?

b. Have you learned to make and keep friends?

c. Can you look an honest man or woman straight in the eye?

d. Can you see something to love in a little child? Will a lonely dog follow you in the street?

3. True education trains not only to make a living, but to make a *life*.

II. JEHOSHAPHAT SENT *PRINCES*. (Alexander the Great: "I owe my father for living; teachers for living *well*.")

A. The best in the country, and the noblest, were none too good.

B. You will come more and more to appreciate your own teachers.

C. They mark one of the noblest groups in the country.

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1. None other would have stuck through, with poor pay, etc. as they have. A Grade School teacher says, "I wouldn't be happy doing anything else because I feel I am rendering a worthwhile service to humanity—and the Lord knows they need it."
2. Make teacher's pay worthy, but don't make it tempting.
3. Pride in teachers who are members of this congregation.

D. *More princes needed.*

III. JEHOSEPHAT'S POLICY WAS SUCCESSFUL.

- A. It brought a strong nation, respected by neighbors, who paid tribute.
- B. America's power is due to her placing value on people—education.
- C. Values less easily counted. Citizenship—"Improve your schools or enlarge your prisons" (Horace Mann).
- D. To continue success, the work must go on.
 1. Cry for better schools, but spend more on liquor than on education. Keeping criminal 2% of population costs five times more than to educate 100%.
- E. What schools need more than money:
 1. Teachers who love their pupils and their job.
 2. Pupils taught to respect people and property.
 3. Parents who are really interested in the right kind of education.
 4. Citizens who will free schools from politics.

IV. JEHOSEPHAT'S PROGRAM WAS *RELIGIOUS* EDUCATION.

- A. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."
- B. This makes a life more than a living.
- C. While the classroom discussed airy theories, Christianity demands a commitment to the best.
- D. How does the religious element in your education stack up?

"Come and learn of Me" (Matt. 11:29). "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." (John 14:6).

EVIL COMPANIONS CORRUPT
GOOD MANNERS

(II Chronicles 18:1-3; 19:1-3; 20:35-37)

INTRODUCTION —

Well-known lessons from little-known characters. Jehoshaphat — King of Judah, 877-852, fifth generation from David (son of Asa). 150 years and 9 kings before Hezekiah. Sent religious teachers about Israel. Organizer. Won war over Moab and Ammon by help of the Lord. We look into his unfortunate alliances.

I. NOT WILLING TO STAND ALONE, HE
SOUGHT ALLIANCES.

- A. Our own day needs to learn the value of being and standing alone.
1. Moses on the mount; Amos following the sheep; Elijah in the wilderness; John the Baptist; Paul in Arabia.
 2. Paul in prison; Milton, the blind; John Bunyan in prison, produced alone.
 3. "Jesus went into a mountain apart to pray" (Matt. 14:23).
- B. He who can be content alone is the one worth following in the crowd. — Each of the men whom we have named was a leader of men.
- C. "I have to live with myself, and so I want to be fit for myself to know."

II. WHEN JEHOSHAPHAT AND AHAB BECAME
ALLIES, THEY WENT ON *AHAB'S* MISSION. —
(Can two walk together, except they be agreed?)

- A. The tendency is downward, as each will do in company what he would not alone. (American Legion convention breaks up the furniture.)
- B. The story of every criminal — "He fell into bad company."
- C. Partnerships and marriages often have deleterious effect on religion. Both go the easiest way.

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- D. By contrast, Jesus, "wine-bibber and glutton" (?) was Master and Teacher at every banquet.

III. THE ALLIANCES RESULTED IN DEFEAT AND DISGRACE.

- A. The better partner may not be affected morally, but his witness is lost. Such alliances do not command the respect of very men for whose favor they are formed.
- B. This is the direction of friendships and partnerships formed for the sake of present advantage. (Charlton learns to drink for the sake of his business.)
- C. "My son, consent thou not" (Prov. 1:10). (No wine on the table in William Jennings Bryan's affairs.)

IV. THE GREATER EVIL WAS RESERVED TO JEHOSHAPHAT'S SON, JEHORAM.

- A. "He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab; for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife; and he did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah . . . and he departed without being desired" (II Chronicles 21:6, 20).
- B. The sins of the fathers are, in this sense, visited upon the children.
 - 1. Contracts with Rome, in mixed marriage: Think of the children!
 - 2. When the boys begin to talk and act like Dad's partners, then what?
 - 3. A youngster dies of acute alcoholism, having "entertained," as Dad and Mother.
- C. Some friendships cost too much. "Friendship with the world is enmity against God" (James 4:4).

CONCLUSION —

A safe rule; make Christ your first partner, then join in friendship with those who can share that partnership.

HUMBLE JUDGMENT

(II Chronicles 28:8-15)

INTRODUCTION — the story of Ahaz.

Weakling king of Judah, admirer of things Assyrian, worshiper of whatever gods were at the moment in favor. Constantly warned by Isaiah, but to no avail. Disrespected by neighbors round about, who recovered cities. Defeated by Syria and Israel in combination. The message of Oded . . .

I. GOD BRINGS JUDGMENT UPON THE SINNER; DEFEAT WAS FOR THE SINS OF JUDAH.

A. Perfect justice is never seen in the earth; not all events are judgment.

1. "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2).

2. "Suppose ye that the eighteen men on whom the tower of Siloam fell were sinners above all that are in Israel?" (Luke 13:4).

B. Some evils, both to guilty and innocent, are direct result of sin.

1. Present wave of violent crimes—lack of home training, materialism, alcohol and drugs.

2. Accidents—over one-fourth are alcohol-related.

C. General warnings in catastrophe?

1. Air crashes—too big a hurry to think of eternal.

2. Weather-crop failures, storms, etc.: "Still not all in your hands."

II. GOD SAYS, "THOU DOEST THE SAME THINGS THYSELF" (See Rom. 2:1, 17-24).

A. Thus no human judge has the right to be harsh with his brother.

B. "Condemn not that ye be not condemned" (Matt. 7:1).

"Let each one know himself.

To gain that knowledge let him labor,

Improve those failings in himself

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He condemns so in his neighbor.
O how lenient our own faults we view,
And conscience voice adroitly smother:
But O how harshly we review
The selfsame failings in another!"

- C. Dare we condemn atheistic cultures? What do we do with the Lord's Day? What with God's Word? What do we read, laugh at, be entertained by? Gambling, profanity, obscenity . . .

III. ODED'S HEARERS CAUGHT THE POINT— MERCY IN RESTITUTION.

"Ye that are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness . . ." (Gal. 6:1, 2). "Blessed are the merciful . . ." (Matt 5:7).

- A. We need God's view—"The mighty he hath brought low, and exalted them of low degree" (Luke 1:52).
—easy to have respect to the proud, uncaught criminal, and to shy away from the man with a prison record.
- B. Mercy to the punished and penitent.
- C. The Christian has mercy to give, better than clothing and gifts. He has the story of a loving Savior.

CONCLUSION —

See Rom. 3:21-25. "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Gal. 3:22).