

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles-Rebuilding the House of God



We are now at exit 14 on Route 66, traveling into 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles. Someone emailed recently and said they were staying in a campground on historic Route 66. It is amazing how we are never going to look at Route 66 the same again. Anytime we are traveling that historic highway, or see a sign, motel, or restaurant on Route 66, it is going to remind us of this series, from the garden of ruin to a city of full restoration.

Chronicles, originally, in the Hebrew Bible was one book, but as you know by now, it was divided by the Greek translators because they desired to put a copy of every book in the world in their famous library in Alexandria. In the last lesson, we covered 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles, but also used the last two verses of 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles to see the overall theme of Chronicles. It was written to tell us that David had a desire to build God's house and couldn't. God raised up one of his sons, Solomon, to build the House of God at Jerusalem. The book ends with the children of Israel being in Babylon in exile, and Cyrus, king of Persia, decreeing that Yahweh, the God of Heaven, the God of Israel, was going to use him to build God's house again at Jerusalem in Judah. Because of that, Cyrus actually began to set the children of Israel free.

Chronicles is not a repeat of Kings. Many of us may have not read it as we should have because it covers the same material as Kings covered; but Chronicles does not have the same purpose as Kings. Kings was written to a people who were in exile to answer the question of why they were there. The author of Kings used Israel's history to let them know the reason they

were in exile (both the Assyrian and Babylonian exile) was because of sin. In Kings, we discovered that sin brought God's house down. Kings opens with the House of God being built and it ended with the House of God being burned.

## **Rebuilding the House of God**

Chronicles starts with the House of God being built, but ends with the decree to build it again. Chronicles is not being written to a people in exile to tell them they were there because of sin. The chronicler has a different purpose. Yes, he uses Israel's history, but takes them all the way back to Adam to answer the question of why they are back in the land of promise after the exile. The answer was to not only build your house, but also rebuild the House of God. The Chronicler began by reminding them who they were. They were not just a son of Adam, but a son of Abraham; and a Messiah would come from the lineage of David. While David's descendants were not sitting on the throne at this time, the lineage is still alive and the Chronicler wants them to be looking for a coming king; but first, he wants them to remember who they are. The reason was because when you lose a sense of identity, you lose a sense of purpose. Once you begin to struggle in your identity, you struggle in why you are here and what your purpose is. Here is a group of people, set free from Babylonian exile, back in the land of promise, and they do not understand why they are free. Thus, the Chronicler is writing to remind them they are there not to just build their house, but also to build the House of God. The preacher was preaching to know who you are in order to know what to do, and he wanted them to build the House of God. Therefore, the principle from Chronicles is that God wants us to know who we are so we can know what to do.

As Christians, we want to know who we are, why we are here, and what are we supposed to be doing. We are to be building God's house, not a physical temple in Jerusalem, but the Temple of God around the world, the Temple that truly houses the manifested presence of the Spirit of the Almighty God. Is that exciting, or is that exciting!?

It is one thing to be a sinner, separated from God. Jesus isn't your Lord and Savior, so it is perfectly okay for you to manifest your identity and do

what comes naturally, which is to build your house. That is what sinners should do; build their house. However, it is another thing to be a saint of God living in the same community, and only be concerned with building our house. If we polled most Christians in the Church, how many could honestly say they are most concerned about God's house? If we looked at our time, resources, gifts, abilities, and life and measured by our actions, how many of us are more concerned with our house rather than God's house? Chronicles isn't written to tell us not to be concerned about our house, but to tell us not to be concerned with our house *only*. While we build our house, God wants us to be building His house, which is the family of God, the Church of Jesus Christ.

## **Remember Who You Are**

If there was ever a day when the Church in America needed to relook at Chronicles, it is probably today. Just like the children of Israel, many of us suffer from what I call spiritual amnesia. Satan has done such a good job of getting us to think that we are just sinners saved by grace. We are still who we used to be except, we are saved. Therefore, it is okay to be involved in what we are because we are just an old sinner. But praise God for the grace of God, because when we die, we will go to Heaven. Lie, lie, lie; this is not true! You are not an old sinner saved by grace. You used to be a sinner, but if you have truly been saved by grace, you have experienced a change of life, a change of nature, a change of identity, and you are now set apart from sin to salvation for the glory of God. So the chronicler would say remember who you are so you know what to do, and that is to be involved in God's kingdom, be involved in His work.

## **Solomon Questions**

2<sup>nd</sup> Kings starts with Solomon. Quickly, we realize Solomon is going to be the son who is going to build God's house. The wisest man on the planet did the most unwise thing a man could do. This blows me away! How could a man write the Song of Solomon and then love more than one woman. He didn't love two. He didn't love three. He didn't love four or five. He loved many women until at one point they counted the women in his life; he had 700 wives and 300 concubines. This man had a capacity to love. There is a

lesson for you men, and it is that there is a danger in ever loving more than one woman. You love one woman and one woman only, because the woman you love will have a great influence on us. The women in Solomon's life actually turned his heart from God. A man who had a heart for God now has a heart for the gods of his wives. We discover that when Solomon was building the House of God, he prayed this great prayer to God because he recognized he was the son who was going to fulfill the promise to his father that he will get to build God's house. As he is building God's house, he is wrestling with wondering if the God in Heaven will really dwell in this building. He finally concludes that His presence will be in the building, but God will still be in Heaven. He talks about all these circumstances of why they would go there to pray, which is basically because they have blown it. So Solomon prays to God and says if we blow it and we come to this house and pray, will you answer? Will you heal? Will you forgive? In 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles chapter 7, God answers.

## **God Answers**

In Chapter 7:13, God begins to tell us what will happen when they notice it isn't raining anymore. Now remember, in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings Solomon talked about a period of time when it is not raining and they recognize they have sinned. You see, Israel was God's covenant people but it was based on a conditional covenant. The conditional covenant was that if Israel were faithful to God, God would be faithful to them. If Israel were unfaithful to God, God would abandon them.

This sounds strange to many of us, but that is just the truth. As a matter of fact, we are going to learn in chapter 36 that the very reason God is going to let the Temple be burned and the whole Southern Kingdom be destroyed under King Nebuchadnezzar is to let the whole world know that Israel had abandoned God. Did you get that? Because they quit following Him, the God who led them out of Egypt, and were serving other gods, the Temple was ransacked and destroyed and all the nations will look at them and know what they have done.

## **Scripture**

Here in 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 7:14, God tells Solomon that when it quits raining:

***"...if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."***

## **God's Plan for His Temple**

Let me just stop right here and make a point. I don't want this to be a point of contention but it is the truth. This verse was not given to the United States of America. God never made a covenant with the United States, never. He did make a covenant with the Church, of which the United States of America is a part. This verse is not teaching what America should do. This verse is teaching what the Church in America, as well as the Church in every country on the planet, should do. That is to humble ourselves, pray, and seek His face. At the same time, we are to turn from our wicked ways and God will hear, forgive, and heal. Is that a promise, or is that a promise!? Remember that it is a promise to God's Old Testament covenant people, Israel, for His house to stand in Jerusalem, so that all the nations would know He is God. His plan today is not for His Temple to stand in Jerusalem. God's plan today is for His house, which not a place but His people, to stand literally all over the planet so all the world will know He is God!

## **An Unfaithful King**

In 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles, God goes on to tell Solomon that if you will walk like your father walked, it is going to be good and there will always be somebody sitting on the throne. But if you sin, there will no longer be someone sitting on the throne, and this house will crumble. Did you hear that? God told Solomon that as king there is a lot on your shoulders. If you are faithful, this is going to happen, and if you are unfaithful, this is what will happen. We know Solomon, he was unfaithful, and the house fell. When that house

fell, it was about God's people being sinful and God being holy. God is a God of His word, and now, the kingdom is divided.

## **The Kingdom Split**

There are a lot of things that are different in Chronicles than there were in Kings. Chronicles only deals with the Southern kingdom. The only time a Northern king is mentioned is when he interacts with the Southern king. In Kings, it was all about the kings of Israel. It was about the kings of Judah; this one was bad, this one was bad, whoops, this one was good, this one wasn't bad, and so on. But Chronicles was all about the Southern Kingdom because it is about the twenty kings who descend from David. It was written to a people who were living in the Promised Land, who do not have a temple. He wants them to rebuild the Temple so He only deals with the Southern kingdom because the Northern kingdom abandoned the Temple as soon as the kingdom split.

Remember when the kingdom split, Jeroboam realized that if he was going to be a strong king and keep the ten tribes together, he couldn't continue to let them go back in the Southern kingdom. He couldn't let them go back to Jerusalem to worship in the Temple and make sacrifices there, believing that God was there. So he set up other worship centers, because in order to be a strong king, he had to get their allegiance away from the Temple in Jerusalem. The moment Jeroboam took the people's allegiance away from the Temple; he was taking their allegiance away from God. He quickly began to teach them they could worship the way they wanted to worship. They didn't have to worship the way God had ordained to be worshipped.

This is what we are struggling with in America. I believe on Sunday morning you should be in the House of the Lord. Monday morning through Saturday morning, you can worship God in your bass boat on the lake, or anywhere else can worship Him anywhere you want to worship Him. But on a certain day of the week, He said not to forsake the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is. And on that day, the Church doesn't meet scattered; the Church meets assembled.

The Northern kingdom made up their own way to worship God. You can worship Him here and you can worship him there. Yes, God is everywhere,

but there is a time when God wants to manifest who He is and, it's not through creation; it is through Jesus and His body, the Church. I am not talking church attendance. I am talking church participation. I am talking about being the body of Christ who meets together, corporally, to worship Him, King of kings and Lord of lords, because we have been set free. According to the Chronicles, we have been set free to build God's house.

## **The Kings and the Temple**

Some of us do not enjoy Chronicles because it is all about the people, the king, and the Temple. Have you noticed that every king that is ultimately judged good or bad is judged based on how the Temple and how he viewed it?

Because of modern technology today, it would be easy to believe you can be a Christian and don't need the Church. I mean, you can hear sermons on TV and the radio. Sunday school teachers can't compete with what you can hear all week long. All over the world, pastors and teachers are writing books you can buy and read. These can become distractions. It can cause us to minimize what God put us here to do, which is to build His family, His house, His Church. It is through the people of God that He manifests His presence.

When you read Chronicles, you discover it is all about the king and the Temple, and how he views the Temple. That is why Joash, Hezekiah, Josiah, great kings of Israel, worked to repair and restore the Temple. Can you imagine the Temple that Solomon built, after hundreds of years, being neglected? The doors need fixing, and at one point, evidently in Hezekiah's day, they shut the Temple down. They just closed the doors and turned out the lamp! It wasn't being used; they were not even keeping Passover anymore. Can you imagine a church today meeting and never taking the Lord's Supper? Can you imagine a people so living their life that their church, the House of God, becomes neglected?

So God raised up Joash. He raised up Hezekiah. He raised up Josiah. Josiah's story is amazing! Evidently, they had a custodial problem. The people neglected the House of God and it was totally in need of a cleaning, and so they began to clean the Temple. As they are cleaning the Temple,

they find the Word of God. They find the Law of Moses that God gave Moses that he hand wrote! Imagine someone coming to church wanting to know the Word of the Lord and we don't know it because we can't find it.

The opposite of that is Uzziah. Uzziah started reigning in the place of his father at 16 years of age. His father had been a good king until a false god turned his heart. Now Uzziah is sitting on the throne. Uzziah reigned for 52 years and he followed in the footsteps of his father and all the good things that he did. The Bible tells us Uzziah was a farmer. He loved the soil. I like him already! That means he couldn't wait to get his kingly duties done, then he would slip out to his farm and tend his animals. He just loved the dirt. Then, the Bible says that he had been so blessed that he became prideful.

There are seven verses about Uzziah in Kings and twenty-three in Chronicles. In Kings, he was just like everybody else; he sinned. Kings didn't tell us why he became a leper, but we surmised that it was because he sinned. But Chronicles does tell us why he became a leper, and it tells us what his sin was. God had told him, Uzziah, you run the country, but leave My house to My priests. In his pride and arrogance as king, (descendant of the line of David) Uzziah went into the Temple and the presence of God, took the altar of incense, and started to light and burn incense to God. God had specifically said the only people that could do that are the descendants of Levi. But in his arrogance, Uzziah went into the Temple, and immediately the priest said, what are you doing here? Get out of here; run! Instead of running, Uzziah got mad, and when he got mad God struck him with leprosy. So now, this man has to build a private house for himself. He can't live in the palace any longer, and can never go into the House of God again. A leper was considered unclean, and an unclean person could not come into the presence of God. When they buried Uzziah with the kings, they put on his stone, "He was a leper." That is how holy the Church is...

## **The Temple Will Stand Forever**

Let me tell you what Chronicles is about. To rebuild His house, we need a son to sit on the throne. We need a king, but not a king like the ones we



have had. We discover that as it goes with the king, so it goes with the people. That is why we need a king who is different. The writer of Chronicles is trying to establish is that we need to build the house, but the one who will really build the house is the coming King, and that is Jesus.

Jesus was faithful to God, so God was faithful to Him. Now, I want you to listen. Because the kings of Israel were not faithful to God, they brought the house down. The house did not stand. Today, there are many people in churches who are very legalistic, very law based, and they still believe we are in a conditional relationship with God. That is not true. We are now in an unconditional relationship with God, based on this fact; Jesus, the King, has come. Because He was faithful to God, God has been faithful to Him. Because of this, the House of God that has been built by Jesus will stand forever. There will never be a time when God will abandon His house again!

In the Old Testament, the prophets will actually see the Spirit of God leave the Temple long before the Temple is destroyed. In the New Testament, the Spirit of God will never leave the House of God, because Christians, as the House of God, are sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption. That means the Church will be here in its fullness until the return of Jesus Christ! And because Jesus is faithful to God, God will be faithful to us, and we will stand forever. Man may abandon the Church, but God will never abandon His Church!

## **Judged Because of One Man**

There is a point in 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles chapters 6 and 7, where Solomon asks God, if a foreigner came into Your Temple, would you answer his prayer too? Then he added, so that all the world may know You are God. I believe that the Temple being built in Solomon's day was a picture of the true Temple, the Church, which would be built one day. There would be no wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles, but God having a desire that all the world would know who He is.

You see, in God's economy, there are many times that one represents all. It is called the Doctrine of Imputation. In the Garden of Eden, Adam blew

it. When Adam blew it, we all blew it. We all shared in him blowing it, and we all became sinners.

Have any of you men ever thought that if you were in the garden, you would have done differently? Just wipe that thought from your mind. You would not have done any differently. You would have still done the same thing Adam did. You listen to your wife sometimes when you aren't supposed to. It got the whole world in trouble, and it still gets us in trouble.

Now, if you ladies are offended over that, I'm sorry, but just be offended. I know some of you think like my wife. You think if you were in the garden, you would not have done what Eve did. You would have done like Eve and you would have listened to the snake too, because some of you still listen to the master snake; you listen to Satan.

The bottom line is we were all judged guilty because of one. But this ultimately leads to the one act of righteousness by the King, Jesus, being imputed to all who are in Him. While we were made unrighteous by the act of Adam, we are made righteous by the act of Jesus!

## **God's Purpose for the Temple**

In Chronicles, many times what the king does affects all and stands for all. Have you ever noticed in the New Testament, when Paul is praying, he always acknowledges the Father as "the God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." He is saying that Jesus is our Messiah! For see, in the Old Testament the king's god was God. The king's father was God. So when the New Testament talks about God being the Father and God of the Lord Jesus Christ, he is saying that Jesus is the son of David, He is the Messiah! Because he was faithful to God, God will be faithful to Him. Because he built the House, being we, the Church, the House will stand forever. Jesus represented man to God, but His body represents God to the world. That is God's ultimate purpose.

That is why Jesus got so aggravated at the Temple. He said you have turned this into a den of thieve! It is to be a house of prayer, it is supposed to be a place for a person to seek God because of trouble, and if they meet

God's requirement, He will answer. But people quit going to the Temple to pray. It became a house of merchandise. It became a place of business.

Does it bother any of you that when people have their deepest darkest needs, many of them never come to the Church anymore? But when people seek God, they are supposed to know where He is. He is supposed to be in the House, which is in your life and in my life. When was the last time a sinner with a really big problem came to you wanting God? Please examine what your life says about the House of God. We have not been put here to go to Heaven instead of Hell; we have been put here to build the House of God.

God wants us to be a people, not a place, where other people who are seeking Him can find Him. God's purpose of the Church is to use us to point people to Jesus. When we get them to Jesus, Jesus will get them to God. Jesus represents us to God, but He uses us to represent Him to the world.