

Bible Through the Year 2017

Week 18 Notes (1 Chronicles 7-16, 2 Samuel 5, and Various Psalms)

Introduction to Week 18...

Last week I gave a brief introduction to the book of Psalms and this week I want to dig a little deeper into its structure and organization. I also want to talk a little bit about the book of Chronicles.

Let's start once again with the book of Psalms, which is a book that contains 150 Hebrew poems, songs and prayers. 73 of these are attributed to David, 28 are attributed to other specific authors and there are 49 Psalms that remain anonymous. Now many of these Psalms were originally sung by choirs made up of Priests, "whom David put in charge of the service of song in the house of the Lord (1 Chron 6:31)." These men were Levites and they were appointed to sing the praises of Yahweh as their primary ministry service.

But the book of Psalms was organized and arranged as we have it today after the time of David, in fact it was put together sometime after Israel's exile in Babylon. Last week I mentioned how this book is broken up into 5 smaller parts/books and this is easy to see in our Bible translations, just take a look at the heading above the 1st Psalm. Each of these sections has a very similar benediction and by the time you get to the end of the Psalter you will see that the last 5 Psalms all start with the same phrase, "Praise the Lord!" Those last five Psalms serves as the conclusion to the book as a whole.

Psalms 1 and 2 form the introduction to the Psalter. Psalm 1 talks about the blessings that will come to those who meditate on the Law of God, which is a reference to the Torah or the first 5 books of the Bible. Psalm 2 is a poem about the Messianic promise given to King David in 2 Samuel 7 and this Psalm ends by saying, "Blessed are all who take refuge in Him," meaning in the future messianic king.

This introduction lets us know that when we read from the book of Psalms we are reading the prayer book of God's people. It encourages us to be faithful to God's Word and to put our hope in the messianic king that is to come. If you want to learn more about this book I would encourage you to head over to thebibleproject.com and check out their video on Psalms. While you're there check out all their resources, they're fantastic visual overviews and lessons on the Bible that are wonderfully done. So check them out.

The other book that we are going to be reading this week is the book of Chronicles and this book is more than just a repeat of the history we read in 1 and 2 Samuel. Chronicles actually serves as a chronicle of the whole of Biblical history. The book begins by giving the genealogy of humanity starting with Adam and moving all the way to David, who serves as the key figure for this book.

The theme of the book is the significance of the covenant God made with David and the hope that it brings to God's people. This theme would have been especially helpful given that the book was written during or after the point in time when the Davidic kingdom had fallen and the nation of Israel had been taken into exile in Babylon. This book was written to remind Israel that God still had a plan for them that was connected to the line/family lineage of King David. We will be reading more about this specific promise next week.

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Here is something to discuss...

In the book of Chronicles, we get the impression that the author wants to put us on the fast track when it comes to seeing David established as King over all Israel. We don't read the stories from David's youth but instead we pick up in chapter 11 with David being crowned as King over all Israel. Now by this point he had already been crowned as king over Judah but now the entire nation is united under David's kingship and his first act as king was to establish his capital city.

Jebus was the city on the hill that David had his eye on but there was a problem; the city was controlled by a group of people known as the Jebusites. David brought his forces to the city and they captured it making it the stronghold of David. He renamed it Jerusalem. His next act as king was to have the Ark brought to the city and set up in a new tabernacle. Then as the Ark was coming into the city David danced before the Lord. He was celebrating that God's presence was once again coming to dwell in the midst of the people.

David is a much different king than Saul. Over and over again we read that David would stop what he was doing and put his plans on hold until he had consulted with the Lord. Over and over we read these simple phrases like, "And David inquired of God." In chapter 15 when preparations were being made for the Ark to be brought into the city it was David who gave instruction for how the Ark was to be carried because he read about it in the Word of the Lord.

The Chronicler wants us to see the differences between Saul who did not keep the command of the Lord (1 Chronicles 10:13-14) and David who consistently consulted the Word of the Lord. David was doing what God had commanded the King of Israel to do. The king was to copy down the word of God and meditate on it day and night so that he might lead God's people according to God's commands.

Now, we know that David wasn't able to do this perfectly. In fact, he sins big time later on in this book and it causes a whole host of problems for God's people. But something is going to happen in chapter 17 that will make all the difference. As David seeks to build a house for God (a temple) God refuses to let him do so. And instead God promises to build a house for David. This house will be established by God and it will last forever. One of David's own descendants will sit upon the throne and His kingdom will never fail.

This promise is about Jesus who comes from the line of David and brings Salvation to all God's people. Jesus is the better David who laid down His life for our freedom and who never fails to lead us according to the pure Word of God.

Take some time to discuss the early life of David paying special attention to the differences between David and Saul. Also take some time to discuss the similarities to David's first acts as king and the first acts of Jesus as King of Kings. David claimed a city as his own, when Jesus comes He will claim the world as His own...

Here is something to meditate on...

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Next let's turn our attention to Psalms 1 and 2 which serve as the introduction to the book of Psalms. I've already mentioned that these two psalms hold out the hope of blessing that comes to those who meditate on the Word of God and the blessing that comes to those who put their trust in God's coming Messianic King. What I would like for us to meditate on this week is the fact that these two Psalms lay ground work for the gospel in our lives.

Psalm 1 talks about the man who is blessed and contrast that with the sinner who will face God's judgment. The blessed man reads God's Word, stays rooted in it and bears fruit from it. The blessed man will endure the seasons of hardship and even the judgment of God. The blessed man or woman need only delight in the law of God and turn to it day and night; if he does this blessing will come and that's where Psalm 1 poses a challenge for us.

The truth is that none of us can maintain this level of devotion to the Word of God. We might sincerely try to be faithful and to devote ourselves to this life but our sin is greater than our devotion. So while we should strive to live this blessed life the reality is that we will fail, time and time again.

But the next Psalm opens the door to our greater hope in the messianic king in whom we can take refuge. The blessings of God will come to us not through our obedience but through our Savior and as we come to take refuge in Him we will learn obedience to Psalm 1 in a whole new light. It is not by our obedience that salvation will come but through the Messiah we will take refuge in the true Passover Lamb and in our joy at His grace we will be transformed by the renewing power of God's Word.

Take some time to meditate on these two Psalms and how they point us to Christ in specific and unique ways.

Here is something to pray about...

Psalm 106 is a Psalm of praise to God for all that He has done throughout the history of Israel. This Psalm starts by looking at the work of God during the Exodus account and then it follows the history of Israel all the way to the point of exile. It shows two things the faithlessness of the people and the faithfulness of God.

I want you to take the time to read through this Psalm, think about the pattern that you see and consider how this pattern shows up in your own life. Consider the incredible mercy and grace of God. Consider the steadfast love that He shows us every day. Consider the promises that He has made that haven't yet come to pass and think about the fact that these will be ours despite our repeated disobedience.

Think about the fact that our God loves us enough to discipline us, to teach us obedience through discipline, but at the end of the day He still:

⁴⁴ Nevertheless, he looked upon their distress, when he heard their cry. ⁴⁵ For their sake he remembered his covenant, and relented according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

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Take the time to pray through this Psalm paying special attention to praising God for His amazing love for His people.