

## **Title: Picking Up The Pieces**

Bible Book: 1 Chronicles 0

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Subject: History, Lessons Learned from; Revival; Renewal

Objective: History has proven that a time of rebellion against God calls for a time of revival – a revival only God can provide. Is that not what we need now in America? Dr. Wagers shares a message from 1 and 2 Chronicles that reminds us of how God can change things when His people turn to Him!

### Introduction

Late one night, in 1914, Thomas Edison's facilities in West Orange, New Jersey were heavily damaged by fire. Edison lost about a million dollars' worth of equipment, along with a lot of paperwork containing the details of his inventions.

Walking about the charred embers of his hopes and dreams the following morning, the 67 year old inventor said, "There is value in disaster. God has worked it out so that all of our mistakes are burned up. Now, we can start anew."

The book(s) of Chronicles is the chronicles of beginning afresh, and starting anew. Their hearts had been filled with apathy, apostasy and anarchy; thus, God allowed them to encounter 70 years of captivity. Now that the captivity is over, it's time to pick up the pieces and start anew.

### Central Theme

Many believe the books were written by Ezra. They were written AFTER the Babylonian captivity to demonstrate the significance of their history.

### Central Truth

[1 Chronicles]

“And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. [12]He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever.” (17: 11-12)

[2 Chronicles]

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” (7: 14)

Central Thrust

1-2 Chronicles is focused on the worship of God, both personally and corporately. It was to be central in their Jewish lives, and it is to be central in our lives. We must maintain His Temple, by ensuring that Jesus is on the throne of our hearts.

Genesis: The Book of Ruin

Exodus: The Book of Redemption

Leviticus: The Book of Regulations

Numbers: The Book of Readiness

Deuteronomy: The Book of Remembrance

Joshua: The Book of Realization

Judges: The Book of Regret

Ruth: The Book of Romance

1-2 Samuel: The Book(s) of Royalty

1-2 Kings: The Book(s) of Revolt

1-2 Chronicles: The Book(s) of Renewal

1 Chronicles: David's Famous Reign

2 Chronicles: Solomon's Further Reign

1-2 Kings

1-2 Chronicles

Written before Captivity      Written after Captivity

Prophets

Priests

Highlights N. Kingdom (Israel) Ignores N. Kingdom (Israel)

Human Standpoint

Divine Standpoint

Man Ruling

God Overruling

## I. The Remnant That Returned

In the original Hebrew, in which these books were written, 1-2 Chronicles formed one book. They were later separated by the translators. The book of the Chronicles is not a mere repetition of the book of the Kings.

For example, the revival under Hezekiah is given only 3 verses in Kings, but is described in 3 chapters in Chronicles. Since most believe Chronicles was written by Ezra, between 450-425 B. C., it was written from the standpoint of the remnant that had returned to Jerusalem.

### A. The Judgement Behind Them

A key to understand 1-2 Chronicles is that the books were written After the 70 years of Babylonian captivity. Interestingly enough, proof of that is given at the end of 2 Chronicles.

[36: 22-23] “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, [23]Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.”

The time of the Prophets came to be during the times of the Kings. However, 1-2 Chronicles is written, by Ezra, from the standpoint of the Priests.

722 B.C.

Israel (Northern Kingdom) taken captive by Assyria

586 B. C.

Judah (Southern Kingdom) taken captive by Babylon

1-2 Chronicles highlights/focuses on the history of Judah that after 70 years of Babylonian captivity. The captivity was the result of the judgment of God, which Jeremiah the prophet had spoken.

God's Worker was ridiculed, God's Word was rejected; thus, God's Wrath was received.

## B. The Job Before Them

After 70 years in a strange land, the remnant that returned found themselves back home, in the Land of Promise. However, a great, monumental task was before them. Their cities were in heaps of rubble, their Temple was destroyed, and the land was desolate and lay in ruins.

Most devastating of all, the throne of David was gone. The 1st remnant that returned under Zerubbabel had the responsibility of building a Temple, not a throne. God would establish the throne. Although the throne of David was gone, the royal line remained.

[1: 1-3: 15] "Adam" to "Zedekiah"

God had never allowed the line of David to become broken or lost. Through all of the long, dark ages, God had preserved His people, as well as His purpose. The returning remnant had a job to do. David and Solomon served as object lessons.

### 1. Reestablish The Priority Of Worship

[1 Chron. 13-17]

One of David's most notable feats was recovering and returning the "Ark" of God to its rightful place. The Ark represented the manifest presence of God. The Ark was Not a replacement for God; but, a representation of God.

[16: 1] "So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and

they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God.”

2 significant structures in Israel’s history.

Tabernacle: Located in Gibeon

Temple: Located in Jerusalem

In the Tabernacle, the Ark rested in the Holy of Holies between the “cherubim.” However, when David brought back the Ark, he didn’t return it to the Tabernacle in Gibeon; rather, he returned it to Jerusalem, the city of the King.

In so doing, David set up a center of worship on the very site where the Temple would later be built.

The Authority Of The Priests Is Replaced By The Authority Of The King

When the King comes, the ark is to be established on a permanent site, not in a tabernacle made of skins and tent poles; but, in a Temple made of precious, priceless, and permanent things.

Although the Temple would not be built until Solomon’s day, the Temple site, in Jerusalem, symbolized a new beginning for Israel. The returning of the Ark was the first step in reestablishing the priority of worship.

[1]

Nothing Is To Take The Place Of Worship

Personal

Primary

Permanent

Precious

Preeminent

“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. [24]God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” (John 4: 23-24)

“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.” (Hebrews 13: 15)

Daniel Baumann said, "Worship is not a doorway, but a stairway. It is a stairway on which there is movement in two directions: God comes to man, and man goes to God."

Warren Wiersbe is right, "Worship isn't a buffet dinner where you have the privilege of selecting what pleases you most. Worship is a full-course meal where God writes the menu.”

Worship is not something just to be performed on Sunday; it is to be practiced Everyday. Worship is not so much about style as it is about Substance. The emphasis is not how we worship, but WHO we worship.

Cannot Worship With Dirty Heads, Dirty Hands, And Dirty Hearts!

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? [4]He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.” (Psalm 24: 3-4)

## 2. Rebuild The Place Of Worship [2 Chron. 3-6]

David gave Judah a Sceptre

Solomon gave Judah a Sanctuary

David: The Preparatory Work

(Planning, Provisions, Praying)

## Solomon: The Perfect Work

(Implementation, Consecration, Dedication)

Conceived in the Mind of David

Constructed under the Ministry of Solomon

[2 Chronicles 3: 1-2] “Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father. [2]And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.”

[2 Chronicles 5: 1] “Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the Lord was finished: and Solomon brought in all the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.”

[2 Chronicles 5: 13-14] “Then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord. [14]So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.”

2 Chronicles 6: Solomon’s Request

2 Chronicles 7: God’s Response

[7: 1-2] “Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house. [2]And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lords had filled the Lors's house.”

Then, the Lord appeared to Solomon, and gave His stamp of approval to the rebuilding of the Temple, the place of worship.

[7: 13-16] “If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; [14] If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. [15]Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. [16]For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for

ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.”

This building is only that, a building. However, this is the building that has been solidified, specified, and sanctified as the place where the Body, Bride, and Beloved of God assemble to worship.

I Wonder, If We Would Assemble To Worship Correctly, Reverently And Submissively, Reverently, And Submissively, If The ‘Glory Of The Lord’ Would Fill The House?

## II. The Record That Remained

1-2 Chronicles covers the longest period of any of the books of the Bible, beginning with Adam and ending with the decree of Cyrus, King of Persia.

This record was written by the priests to show the returning remnant the significance of their history. It includes:

### A. A Special People

[1 Chronicles 1-9]

1 Chronicles 1-9 is like reading a Hebrew telephone directory. Names are given of many we have never heard of before, or will never hear of after.

An old Scottish preacher was reading the opening chapter of Matthew 1, he read, “Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judah and his brethren.” Then, he paused and said, “And they kept on begetting one another all the way down this side of the page and clear on to the other side.”

While many of these names may not be significant to us, they are significant to God, as well as the history of Israel. Their genealogies help us understand Bible chronologies.



These are the names of selected people and special people; protected people and preserved people.

## B. A Sovereign Purpose

[1 Chronicles 1: 1-3: 15]

“Adam” to “Zedekiah”

God Had Preserved A Special People For A Sovereign Purpose.

When they returned home, the Temple was gone and the Throne was gone, but the Treasure wasn't gone. God had preserved the line of David to execute His sovereign purpose of bringing Jesus Christ into this world.

The Companion Bible offers an insightful commentary to 1-2 Chronicles. “These books belong to quite another part of the Old Testament, and do not follow in sequence to the books of Kings. They are, according to the Hebrew Canon, the conclusion of the Old Testament; and, the genealogies here lead up to that of Matthew 1: 1, and the commencement of the New Testament. They end with the ending of the kingdom; and, the question of Cyrus, ‘Who is there?’ (2 Chron. 36: 23) is followed by the answer, ‘Where is he?’ (Matthew 2: 2), and the proclamation of the kingdom by the rightful King and His forerunner. It begins with the first Adam and leads on to the ‘last’ Adam. It deals with the kingdom of Judah because Christ was proclaimed as the successor of David.” [2]

During the period of the Hebrew history of the Old Testament, Israel came into conflict with 4 world powers.

Egypt: Israel Grew Up

Assyria: Israel Gave Up

Babylon: Israel Girded Up

Persia: Israel Got Up

Against This Changing Panorama Of World Empires, God Wrote Hebrew History. Through It All, God Was Working His Eternal, And Sovereign Purpose To Ultimately Bring Christ Into A Lost, And Dying World For Jews And Gentiles.

Ray Stedman: “God never wins His battles by majority vote; because there is no minority in Heaven. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost are the majority all by Himself!”

From the Creation to the Flood to Egyptian bondage through the Red Sea, in the wilderness, to the Land of Promise, through the times of the Judges, Kings, Prophets, and through 70 years of captivity, where man ruled, God Overruled!

He overruled the passions and powers of men, immutable in His counsels, invincible in His purposes, from generation to generation, pursuing His eternal purpose to prove that He cannot be impeached, He cannot be overtaken, and He cannot be dethroned. [3]

All the way until today, God has allowed, arranged, and assigned every single act of history to execute His sovereign purpose. He is a law unto Himself, in Himself, and all by Himself; and, is under no obligation to give an account of His matters to anyone.

It matters not who you are, or where you are; you are there because of:

God’s Allotment

God’s Assignment

God’s Appointment

God’s Arrangement

What a comfort just to know that He knows what we don’t know. His eye is on the clock, His hand is on the compass; He doeth all things well, and He maketh no mistakes. Hallelujah!

### III. The Revival That Renewed

The times of the Kings were some of the darkest days of Israel’s illustrious history. Idolatry, immorality, apostasy, and apathy filled the land. The worship of the preeminent God had been replaced with the worship of many pagan gods.

Of the 39 kings, in Judah and Israel, only 9 of those kings had decent reigns. However, all of Israel's kings were wicked; only Judah could boast of a few kings who did that which was "good and right in the eyes of the Lord his god."

James MacDonald said, "Revival is renewed interest after a period of indifference or decline."

During this time of degradation, God sent 5 periods of reformation. These were times of revival to renew the hearts of the people.

#### A. Asa - Faithful Determination

[2 Chronicles 14-16]

The 1st revival was during the reign of Asa.

[2 Chronicles 14: 3-5] "For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: [4] And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. [5] Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him."

Asa:

Tore Down

Took Up - Idolatry

Threw Away

[Asa even took away the throne from his own mother, Maachah, because she "had made an idol in a grove."  
(15: 16)]

[15: 3, 12-13] "Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. And they entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; [13] That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death,

whether small or great, whether man or woman.”

To remedy the hearts that had been drifting away from God, Asa’s revival ignited a faithful determination to follow the Lord, seek the Lord, and obey the Lord. It was made into a National Law!

[15: 19] “And there was no more war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.”

## B. Jehosophat - Helpful Exhortation

[2 Chronicles 17]

[17: 9-10] “And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.”

This time of revival and reformation sparked a return to the teaching, and exhortation of God’s Word. This revival also resulted in rest.

[17: 10] And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.”

## C. Joash - Dutiful Obligation

[2 Chronicles 23-24]

Youngest King Of History - 7 Years Old

[24: 4] “Joash was minded to repair the house of the Lord.”

[24: 8-10] “And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the Lord. [9]And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the Lord the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness. [10]And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.”

The rebuilt Temple had been neglected, because the people had stopped giving. The doors were shut, no sacrifices were being given, and no worship took place.

This revival sparked a sense of obligation in the hearts of the people to give time, talents, treasures, tithe and toil to restore God's house into what it ought to be.

#### D. Hezekiah - Careful Consecration

[2 Chronicles 29-32]

[29: 5] “Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place.”

By the time Hezekiah came to power, the Temple had become filled with filth, rubbish and garbage all throughout the courts. Hezekiah orders the cleansing of the Temple. It took the workers 16 days to remove all of the refuse.

“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? [20]For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.” (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20)

We Must Cleanse God's Temple From Anything That Has Dirtied Our Minds, Degraded Our Bodies, Or Defiled Our Hearts.

#### E. Josiah - Purposeful Restoration [2 Chronicles 34]

Josiah was the last good, godly king of Judah. By the time he came to the throne, things had so regressed that the people actually forgot where a copy of the Book of the Law was located.

[34: 14] “And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses.”

[34: 30-31] “And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the Lord. [31]And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.”

This revival brought about the purposeful restoration of heralding the Word, hearing the Word, and heeding the Word.

Those are the 5 by-products and evidences of true revival. Revival is not sinners being saved; that is evangelism. Revival is saints being shaken up, hearts getting heated up, and souls being stirred up to faithful determination to STRAIGHTEN up, helpful exhortation to Listen up, dutiful obligation to Pay up, careful consecration to Clean up, and purposeful restoration to Follow up.

Vance Havner said: "A revival is the church remembering, the church repenting, and the church repeating. There never was a real revival that did not produce heartburn and hallelujahs. It will weed out a crowd, prune the church, purify the Body and advertise itself. Churches have held revivals, but someone needs to turn loose and let God do His own thing in our midst."

For 25 straight years, at the beginning of the 1800's, revivals and 2 spiritual awakenings flared all across the country, and abroad. During the Civil War over 250,000 soldiers, Union and Confederate, made professions of faith. However, studying history also reveals news of sadness. There has not been a great season of continual revival in America for more than 100 years.

One writer asks, “How can we explain that? The answer is simple. Just as in the days before Israel's exile, God's people in America have turned their back on their Creator. Sure, there are more churches today than at any other point in history. There are even churches bursting at the seams with people. But, on the whole, churches have lost their way. They've left their first love. They've grown cold. They're teetering on the border of death. We must look into our hearts. We must search our souls. We must prepare our church. After all, the stakes are high. At risk is not just the reputation and future of our church, but the reputation of Jesus Christ. His sacrifice and His church are on the line.”

Spurgeon said, "There is no church, however good as it is, which might not be better; and there are many churches sunken so low that they have abundant need, if they would prevent spiritual death, to cry aloud, 'Lord, revive us!' Yet, above all, we want a revival, if we would promote the glory of God. The proper object of a Christian's life is God's glory. The Church was made on purpose to glorify God; but it is only a revived Church that brings glory to His name." [3]

Just as in the life of Israel, when God shows up, shows out and shows up, a time of refreshing, renewal and revival will allow us to pick up the pieces and go on for the glory of God.

#### Endnotes

- 1) Adventuring Through the Bible, Ray Stedman, ppg. 192-193.
- 2) The Companion Bible, Part II, Joshua-Job, pg. 531.
- 3) "Exploring the Scriptures," John Phillips, pg. 77.
- 4) "Spurgeon and Revival," ppg. 10-12.