

Dr. August Konkell, Chronicles, Session 12, Solomon Becomes King

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This is Dr. August Konkell in his teaching on the books of Chronicles. This is session 12, Solomon Becomes King.

The Chronicler now is coming to the conclusion of the account of David and the way in which he has made the preparations for us understanding the kingdom of God.

Yes, he was an empire builder, but mostly what David did is make preparations for the kingdom of God and the one who is going to represent that kingdom is based on the promise which God gave to Nathan. You are going to be buried. You will be with your fathers, but your son is going to be the one who will sit on your throne, and he is going to be the one who represents an eternal kingdom.

Now, of course, that eternal kingdom we begin to see in psalms, like in Psalm chapter 2, which goes far beyond Solomon, but Solomon is the key representative of this king. Let me just remind you a little bit about Psalm 2 because it heads up the Psalter in order to orient us to everything that the Psalter is going to be about, especially in the first 89 chapters. Why do the nations rise, and the people imagine such a vain thing? Why do they say we don't pay any attention to God? Let's tear aside these ropes and these fetters that constrain us.

We're going to do what we want to do, and the one who sits in the heavens will laugh. It's not a laugh of humor. The Lord is holding them in derision.

Who do these people think they are with their mediocre kingdoms to pit them against the kingdom of God, the one who is the Lord? This is the confession of Psalm 2. The one who God has anointed speaks in the third section of Psalm 2. I have anointed my king in Mount Zion, my holy hill. He is the one who will crush the nations like a potter might crush unusable pots. This is the one who rules.

So, you kings be wise, worship the Son. That is the Son of God, the one who represents the kingdom of God, lest he be angry and you perish in the way, in your way of life. So, what David is talking about here is at the heart of the Psalter.

It's at the heart of what these people understand the kingdom of God to be. These two concluding chapters of the book of 1 Chronicles are really very, very important. And if you want to get the gist of the significance of all of 1 Chronicles, meditate on these two chapters with real thoughtfulness because here is where David repeats in his instructions to Solomon everything that really matters, everything that you need to know about his kingdom.

This kingdom is represented in the confessions of Psalm 2. It's not about himself, and it isn't combined with the reign of Solomon himself. That's going to become evident in the book of 2 Chronicles, to which we will now move. In fact, the kingdom of Solomon doesn't end in a very happy way, and the rest of the kings up until the time of Hezekiah are really a kind of mixed example of faithfulness, as we are going to see.

However, this whole story is much more than that. It's the story of Psalm 2. So, David here reminds all of the people of what Psalm 2 has to say. David, in chapter 22, gave the charge to Solomon individually and personally, but now David assembles all the representatives of Israel, all of the leaders, all of those that belong to this great kingdom of God and represent all of their families and the people.

There, he tells them that Solomon is the one who has been chosen to rule on the throne of the kingdom of God. And I want to point out that these are not my words. They are the words you find in the actual text of 2 Chronicles chapter 28.

So don't gloss over them. Actually, it was kind of interesting that when I was compiling the draft of my commentary on Chronicles, I referred to the kingdom of God, and one of the editorial questions was, well, is this really a phrase that's appropriate to Chronicles? And then there were other people on the editorial committee, and I know this from the notes that the lead editor sent to me, who pointed out, well, yeah, the kingdom of God is actually expressly referred to. Now, 28 is one of those most explicit references, but if you start to add up all the different places where the Chronicler makes reference to the one who sits on the throne of the king of Yahweh, it is repeatedly that David is saying, Solomon, this is not your kingdom.

This is the promise that God has given to me, and you have been chosen to rule in a kingdom that is not yours. Preparation has been made for how you shall carry out that rule. And you need to remember that whatever happens to your rule and to your kingdom, the kingdom that you represent isn't going away, and we know that it's not going away because Nathan the prophet said it wasn't going away, because God had said he was building for me a house, and that it was going to be forever, and this I have from the prophet.

And so, remember who you are. Really, there's a whole lot here in Chronicles. As much as it extols Solomon and builds him up to be the greatest that any king could ever possibly be, at the same time, there is so much here that constantly reminds Solomon about who he is.

He's not some great conqueror. He can't claim to be like the mighty emperors of Egypt and King Hammurabi of Mesopotamia and some of these others who, by their military forces, established these great empires. That's not who you are.

You didn't bring this territory under your control, and what you represent is much more than the territory of this empire. So, Solomon is really here, clearly informed about his role. Now, his role is to follow instructions.

You know, I think one of the hardest things to do is to follow instructions. I find it pretty hard to follow instructions. Generally speaking, we tend to know better than what the instructions tell us.

As a matter of fact, I kind of have the habit that whenever I buy something and have to assemble it, like my cantilever umbrella or so forth, I throw the instructions to the side and then figure out how all these pieces should fit together. And I always get berated for that because I'm really not so smart that I can ignore all the instructions. And it's true, I am not so smart that I can ignore all of the instructions.

But I like to think I know better and I can figure this out for myself. Well, Solomon is informed by David right from the start, this isn't your design. You aren't deciding what this representation of God shall look like.

You aren't deciding what this temple of God is going to be all about. And so David gives all of the plans, and these verses are described in detail. We're going to look at them in the temple building of Solomon as to how this temple is supposed to be structured, the way in which it's supposed to look.

Then, David goes on in chapter 29 to talk about the way in which not only do you have the plan, but you've got the materials. So, what is your job? To make sure this gets done. That's your task.

Make sure that there is a temple here that represents the worship of God with the music and all of the testimony that is represented by this most holy place. It's actually quite profound. And we're going to talk about that when we come to the structure of Solomon building the temple itself.

Then, in conclusion, what David does is provide blessings to Solomon. Here's the provision. Here's the plan. Now he says a couple of times, my son Solomon is young and inexperienced.

That's certainly how I feel about just about everybody else in this world. I'm 73 years old, and all the rest of them are young and inexperienced. They really don't know all the things that they should know.

But the fact of the matter is that some of us who have been around this pilgrimage for a few decades longer really have gone around a few bends. And we do know the

kinds of unexpected surprises that take place. So, David is giving clear instructions to Solomon: don't assume too much, do what you're told, and you will be blessed.

Here, David gives this very profound blessing upon Solomon, the way in which God is going to honor him and his life when he carries out all of this work. Then, we have the actual installation of Solomon as king. So, before David leaves Chronicler's history, we have David establishing Solomon to become the king.

There's a great festival of all Israel, and Solomon is made to be the ruler upon the throne of God. If you read the book of Kings, it doesn't look like it came to be quite this way. We know the story of Adonijah, and we know that when David became rather incapacitated and couldn't function as a king anymore, Adonijah gathered around him a priest and he gathered around him some warriors, and he conducted a great celebration in the valley in which he had himself proclaimed as king.

Nathan had to remind Bathsheba to talk to David because Solomon is to be the successor and king. That's all the political side of things.

That's the human side of things. That's the way they happen and it often isn't very happy in the way that they work out. The Chronicler wants us to see what God had in mind here all along.

And what God had in mind all along was that David knew. Now, in 1 Kings, there's no question David knew. When he's reminded of the promise that he had made to Bathsheba and to Solomon, he carries it out, and Solomon is made king, and Adonijah comes to a very unhappy end for his attempt at a revolt.

The Chronicler just has no need to repeat all of that because what God was doing in all of those messy events was carrying out his promise to David which is that Solomon shall be made king. And so, in the Chronicler's view of things, David gave the charge to Solomon. He gave the blessing to Solomon and then he established Solomon enthroned upon the kingdom of God.

We then have the conclusion of David's reign and the way that it's recorded, and this is something that's going to become characteristic of the Chronicler, the way that it's recorded in all of the records. What is interesting here, and some careful studies have been done of this, is that all of the records that the Chronicler refers to are really the same records that we have in Kings. The Chronicler often gives names of the prophets who wrote these records, but they're prophetic records.

They aren't royal records. Kings don't keep this kind of an account of their reign. They don't tell all these bad things about themselves.

Prophets do that. But the Chronicler uses all of these royal records, and he talks about the way he used these records to tell the account of David. And of course, it's very obvious he used these records and a lot of others that were available to him to give us the kind of detail that he wanted to give us about Israel and the kingdom of God.

So, we have really established a couple of key premises of the Chronicler's history. We have established the identity of these people in Yehudah. They may be despised by the Persians or used by the Persians and despised by the Ammonites and the Samaritans and everything else, but they have to keep all of that into perspective.

They have to know who they are. They are Israel, and they are all Israel. And then they have to know their heritage.

They have an incredible heritage. What they look back on is the destruction of their temple and the end of their state. But the Chronicler says, you know, that's never the real point.

God wasn't interested in you being a state. God was interested in you being a nation, and as a nation, you represent his kingdom, and that doesn't depend on you being a state or an empire. It depends on you knowing that God is your king, and when you make God your king, and you worship your king, then you know your significance, your importance, and you will be the ones who point out and come to show the insignificance of all of the other great military powers, which are going to pass away.

Most of us couldn't name a single Persian king, the ones who so terrified the inhabitants of Yehud in his time. Some of us have heard of Alexander the Great, but we probably couldn't even name a single one of his successors. We might know the names of a couple of Roman emperors, such as Caesar Augustus and so forth.

That's about it. That's how much we know about all these great and powerful kingdoms. The Chronicler knows that.

He reminds us of what Psalm 2 tells us. The nations rage. They go on, they rise, they fall.

And the nations that are powerful around us now don't make any mistake about it. They're as passing as all the ones that have come before us. We, like the Chronicler, belong to a different kind of kingdom. And that's what these last two chapters of 1 Chronicles are all about.

And that's what we need to remember when you read them. So let me encourage you, if knowing all about the genealogies is a little discouraging in terms of understanding the history of Israel, start with 28 and 29. Ponder them because

they're telling you who you are and that you don't need to worry and shouldn't be preoccupied with all of these other raging powers around you.

You show the kingdom of God by the way you worship him in your temple. That's the point we're going to pick up. So, I conclude 1 Chronicles with a little sermon, but it seems to me the Chronicler would be pleased with me concluding with a little sermon because that's really what he wants you to know.

We are part of the kingdom of God.

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