

BFF502 2 Kings 16 – 2 Chronicles 4

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith and Family" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: I am peachy. How are you?

Scott: I'm good. Waking up.

Steve: I'm awake and ready to go. In my studying I've noticed things I've never seen before. Edifying things. I'm excited about what we're going to accomplish today.

Scott: Let's do it.

Steve: Father, in Jesus' name, You said that every word is inspired and profitable and that we don't just live by our favorite words, but we live by all that You have written in Your word and the spirit has authored.

Give us open hearts today, teachable spirits, continue to bless us on our journey of pressing through passages that we might not think are our favorites and yet finding hidden gems. We bless You today, and we draw near to You, and we pray that You'll draw near to us in the process. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Amen. We are going to finish 2 Kings today, and begin 1 Chronicles, with the first four chapters. I'm going to try to not discuss the obvious, because the obvious we can read. 2 Kings 16 is sad, but it's also par for the course in some ways.

Ahaz begins to reign, and he didn't do what was right. Like all the kings, he's measured according to David. He walked like the kings of Israel. He even burned his son. Sad. Then, the king of Syria and the king of Israel came to wage war, and so he sends to one of the interesting names in the Bible, Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, and says, "Help."

He came and helped him, and then when he went back with them to Damascus, he saw their altar. He wanted to be like this king of Assyria. He carefully drew the pattern of the altar. He sent instructions back to the priest and instructs them to build him one like the one in Assyria.

It hurts me because God has so carefully designed His altar. He's the designer of His tabernacle. He designed everything in the temple, and we're going to swap it because we saw something that looked interesting in a different country. Then it says in 2 Kings 17, sadly the king of Assyria captures Samaria. Samaria being the capital of the Northern Kingdom.

In the 16th to 18th verses, they abandoned all the commandments of Jehovah their God, made for themselves metal images of two calves. Here we go again with the calves. They made an Asherah and worshiped all the host of heaven and served Baal. They burned their sons and their daughters as offerings – I didn't like to read that – and used divination and omens, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of Jehovah, provoking him to anger. Therefore Jehovah was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight.

I refer to this removing of Israel, the northern ten tribes, as the dispersion. They're gone. They are being dispersed. This is what the prophets told them was going to happen. They finally reached the end. God was merciful and slow to anger. However He comes to the end of His patience, and Israel is dispersed.

None were left but the tribe of Judah only, the Southern Kingdom. He doesn't leave the land barren. It says in the 24th verse, this is real important. The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Ephah, Hamath, and Sepheravaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria in place of the people of Israel. There are some people who say that they never really left. They did leave. And transplants arrived.

The transplants didn't know the ways of the god of that land, and lions began eating them. In the 28th verse, they sent for one of the priests who had been carried away from Samaria. They came back, lived in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear Jehovah. This was not a real priest.

This was not the real priest from the Southern Kingdom because the Levites and the priests had stayed with Judah, in the Southern Kingdom. These were one of the fake priests. This was the anybody who wanted to be a priest could apply for the job. I'm building on the fake news, obviously, but this is the fake priest who came back and taught them what he knew.

It's not the clear teaching of a proper priest in Judah. In the 33rd verse, it says, They feared Jehovah, but they also served their own gods after the manner of the nations from among whom they have been carried away. To this day they do according to the former manner. They do not fear Jehovah. They do not follow the statutes or the rules or the law or the commandment that Jehovah commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel. They're making up their own religion. It is a form of religion. Some things are similar, but it's not right. It's an amalgamation. A mess.

This is the Northern Kingdom. They're gone now. They've been dispersed. As you're reading through all of this sad stuff about the Northern Kingdom we have a bright spot in the Southern Kingdom. In the third year of Hoshea, son of Elah, Hezekiah begins to reign.

He was 25 years old when he began to reign, and reigned 29 years. He cleaned house and made significant reforms. It's all there, very clear. One thing I wanted to comment on is, "He broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it." It was called Nahushtan.

Nahushtan means copper or bronze. It was the bronze serpent. In Numbers 21, it was the one that Moses set on a pole, and if anybody was bitten, he could look at it and live. It was a type of Christ. It was what we use for our symbol for the medical society. It was a good thing. It was a wonderful thing.

It was pointing people to looking at somebody hanging from a pole, Jesus. What had once been a wonderful source of help had become an object of worship. Then it says in the 4th verse, they'd been burning incense to it. Instead of looking to it for

salvation, they looked at the thing itself. A classic case of the gift replacing the giver. Hezekiah took care of it.

Then after all the good he accomplished he's besieged by Sennacherib and Rabshekah, and God intervenes. In 2 Kings 19, "Thus says Jehovah concerning the king of Assyria, 'He shall not come into this city, or shoot an arrow there, or come before it with a shield, or cast up a siege mount against it.

"By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into the city, declares Jehovah. For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for the sake of My servant David.'" This is so important that we understand that God watches over His Word to perform it.

This not going to be a popular teaching, this next one. I'm going to predict this. In 2 Kings 20 Hezekiah becomes sick. He's at the point of dying. Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, came to him. This is interesting, the dynamics, because in several chapters here, we see Isaiah, whom we're going to read about later.

Isaiah is the prophet of Hezekiah, and he comes to him and says, "Set your house in order, you shall die, you shall not recover." I wish Hezekiah had said, "Amen," and set his house in order, writes his will, and talks about who is the next king. I don't know for sure, but everything I do know would have been different for his kingdom.

Instead, he cries, he pleads, he moans, and so God gives him 15 more years. During that time, he reveals way too much to the Babylonian princes who come to visit him. He shows them all his treasuries. Then in chapter 21, it says Manasseh was 12 years old when he began to reign. When Hezekiah dies Manasseh was 12, you can do the math. If Hezekiah had passed away when God said he should pass away, Manasseh would not have been born. That's all I'm going to say.

I've heard of people talking, "Oh, I wish God would give me 15 years like he gave Hezekiah." I think, "Just say yes when it's time to go. If we had not had Manasseh, the streets would not have run with blood." I did the math one time. I added up all the kings of Judah, and most of them were decent and some of them were great. Hezekiah, Josiah, Joash, others.

When you add them all up, Manasseh was the wickedest king. He reigned for 55 years, which was more than all the other wicked kings put together. That man was a piece of work. We're not going to see the whole picture in Kings. We're also going to see more about Manasseh later in Chronicles, but I'm not going to bring that up.

I did notice that his mother's name was Hephzibah, which is an interesting name. It means, "My delight is in her," which is the same name as one of the prophetic names for Zion in Isaiah 62:4. He talks about the land being married, which is Beulah, then he says, and Hephzibah, which would be the name of Zion, "My delight is in her.

In 2 Kings 22. Josiah, wonderful Josiah, appears. He did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah. He walked in all the way of David his father. He did not turn aside to the right or to the left. We don't have enough information in here, but boy, you wonder what was the difference between Josiah and Manasseh?

What was it? Was it just in his own human heart? Was it the impact of his parents? Were there prophets praying for him? I don't know, but something was different. He wants to rebuild the house of Jehovah. He sends over his boys, the high priest and the secretary, and they find the book of the law and he reads it.

The first thing that he says is, "We are going to be wiped out because we have defiled the land. We have disobeyed all of these commands." He read it clearly. They sent to a prophetess, and she says, "Tell the man who sent you to me," thus says Jehovah, "Behold, I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants. All the words of the book that the king of Judah has read. You're right."

Then she says, "But it won't happen in your days." 23rd chapter, major reforms. This is another reformation along with Hezekiah. He took away everything that needed to be taken away and implemented what should be done.

It says in the 25th verse, before him, there was no king like him, who turned to Jehovah with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might according to all the law of Moses nor did any like him arise after him.

Now, of course, I read that and I says, "Except David," but of all the other kings that succeeded David, Josiah was the man. I met a little boy the other day at a homeschool conference. His name was Josiah. Whenever I meet someone named Josiah, I smile because I think, what a great name.

Then, 2 Kings 23–26. Still Jehovah did not turn from the burning of his great wrath by which his anger was kindled against Judah because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked him. Jehovah said, "I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there."

Now, we have witnessed the Northern Kingdom being dispersed, and now the Southern Kingdom. It's going to happen at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who appears in the 24th chapter. Blames it on Manasseh, king took him prisoner in the eighth year of his reign, he carried off the treasuries, it's all very clear in there.

This is the captivity. He came up with his whole army in the 25th chapter, he laid siege to it, and then it says, 21st verse, "Judah was taken into exile out of its land." This is a pretty sad end. Judah is taken into exile.

Now, I'm going to read something that I learned from "The Bible Project," one of the many wonderful resources we have online. Here's what it says – "While Chronicles is two separate books in our modern Bibles, this was originally written as one coherent story. It was only divided later due to scroll length."

Another important detail is that the book's current location in the Christian Bible is different from their original location. In most English Bibles, Chronicles comes right after the books of Samuel and Kings. That's what we read. That's why we're reading it now.

However, most of Chronicles repeats the content of those books, many people start reading and think, "Wait, I read all of this, they end up skipping it." That's a shame

because this is a really unique and important book in the "Old Testament" with a very intentional design.

In the traditional Jewish order of the Bible, Chronicles is actually the very last book, because it summarizes all of the Jewish scriptures. It begins with the first word Adam, the name of the first human character in the beginning of scripture. It goes all the way through to the last paragraph announcing the return of Israel from exile.

We're going to start with 1 Chronicles. Since we're still following the Christian Bible, but that was really helpful to read because the first word is Adam in 1 Chronicles 1:1. Adam, from the very beginning, think of Chronicles now as a summation of the whole Old Testament historical books.

1 Chronicles 2 talks about the sons of Israel, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, etc. 1 Chronicles 2:12. Boaz fathered Obed. Obed fathered Jesse. Jesse fathered Eliab, his firstborn, Abinadab II, Shimei III, Nathanael IV, Radi V, Ozan VI, David VII. There you get the whole family. There's all David's siblings.

Then it says their sisters were Zorah and Abigail. Zorah had three boys, Abishai, Joab, and Asahel. These would have been David's nephews. I think I've said in a previous podcast they were cousins. They might be the same age, but it looks like he would have been Uncle David. Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa was Jethar the Ishmaelite.

There's the whole family tree of David. 1 Chronicles 3, we get a little bit more detail in the sons of David. After you read about Solomon and Solomon's sons, it's a record of all the kings of Judah, all the way down to Zedekiah, etc.

Here is what I noticed this time, I hope this blesses you as much as this blessed me. This is the first time I've seen this. In 1 Chronicles 3:19, speaking of the sons of Zerubbabel. Now if you remember, Zerubbabel, we're going to read about him later after the return from the captivity. They go to Babylon for seventy years, they return unto Ezra and Jeremiah, and they had Zerubbabel.

He was the governor. He was the king figure in the return of the captivity. Remember, God made promises to David that his sons would not lack a man on the throne. Usually, we run ahead and say, "Oh, Jesus took care of that." If you read in 1 Chronicles 3, all the kings of Judah were descended from David and Solomon.

Zerubbabel, he has Meshullam and Hananiah and Shelamith was their sister, and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jeshub-Chesed. Five. Now those names caught my attention this morning, especially the last one. When I read, and this is how you pronounce it, Jeshub-Chesed, and the H is really a CH. It's a guttural H.

When I read Jeshub-Chesed, I thought, "Wow. I know what Chesed means." That means God's loving kindnesses, His covenantal love, one of my favorite words in the Old Testament. I wondered what Jeshub means. Jeshub means return. When you put them together you have lovingkindness returned or lovingkindness will return.

I noticed Ohel which means tent, which brings to mind the tabernacle. Berechiah, is blessing and his name means, "Blessed by YHWH" for -iah refers to Yahweh.

Hasadiah, means the loving kindness of YHWH. These are Zerubbabel sons that he's

coming back with. They've returned from the exile. They are focused on God's lovingkindness, His blessings, and their return, especially these descendants of David. This is really important because you name your son that during this era when they're beginning to rebuild the city, you are infusing hope and confidence that Jehovah's loyal covenant love has returned you to Zion. His covenant mercy has been preserved. Remember, I'm going to read this again. In the traditional Jewish order of the Bible, Chronicles is actually the very last book because it summarizes all of the Jewish scriptures. It begins with the first word Adam, the name of the first character in the beginning of Scripture. It goes all the way through to the last paragraph announcing the return of Israel from exile.

I had no idea how significant Zerubbabel's children were and his name. As the governor of this new community, rebuilding, restoring all of God's promises to Jerusalem, and he names his children – Ohel, tent, Berechiah, blessed by YHWH, Chesed, loving kindness of YHWH, Jeshub–Chesed, which means loving kindness will return, has returned. They are hopeful names. I have goosebumps telling you this. Most people, when reading 1 Chronicles 4:9 will think of a man named Bruce Wilkinson. He used to be president of Walk Through the Bible.

In 1984, according to my research, he wrote a little booklet, which in 2000 he had reprinted for the National Day of Prayer, and it sold, eight million copies. It was on the "New York Times" bestsellers. It was about the prayer of Jabez.

1 Chronicles 4:9, Jabez was more honorable than his brothers. His mother called his name Jabez, saying, because I bore him in pain. (Jabez, I think the Hebrew means to grieve.)

In the tenth verse, Jabez called upon the God of Israel saying, "Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from harm so that it might not bring me pain." God granted what he asked. Bruce Wilkinson wrote, "The Prayer of Jabez," and the whole idea is ask, live honorably, but ask audaciously.

Pray that God would enlarge your border and bless you and be with you and keep you from harm. It's a big prayer. This was a big thing back in 2000, which would be 26 years ago, and this all came from somebody reading 1 Chronicles 4 and they noticed verses 9 and 10.

I would like to hear Bruce Wilkinson's testimony about that, but I couldn't find that this morning. That verse, God made real to him over 40 years ago. He wrote a little pamphlet, and then it became a bestseller in the Christian world. OK, Scott. There you go. Well,

Scott: If you think you've learned a lot reading the Bible, unless you've studied all the Hebrew and know all the names, Apparently there's still many levels of stuff to learn. Yes, I'm among the crowd who skims most of this. Now I'm thinking, "Wow, there's a lot in here" layers and layers of stuff that can be delved into. I remember that when that book was such a big deal too. I remember some people who were claiming it as one of those name and claim it riches things.

There was a company that I got briefly involved with that was one of those make lots of money companies and promising all the wealth and everything. That Prayer of Jabez book got really popular among them for a little while.

Steve: Absolutely. It did have its detractors, and you're absolutely correct. The health, wealth, and prosperity gospel people, they were probably passing it out for presents for Christmas and birthdays.

The principle is, if you read that scripture, he prayed a big prayer and God answered him. Yes. It does encourage us to pray and to ask. I often tell people about 2012 when I was going through my most difficult year of my life, I did a lot of asking. I needed to be asking because I was hurting. I needed help. I asked people for help. I asked therapists for help. I asked people to pray for me, and I asked God for a lot of help.

I noticed that God showed up every time I asked. It convicted me. I should be asking more. I should pray in everything. I think that's what Paul said, with thanksgiving.

Scott: It's a good thing.

Steve: Isn't that something about Zerubbabel's kids, though?

Scott: Yeah. Very cool.

Steve: I'm going to give all the credit to the Holy Spirit because I was reading this, and I didn't even notice they were Zerubbabel's kids. I noticed that one name. It stuck, and I went, "Oh, Chesed. I know Hased. I have a dog named Chesed. That's my favorite word in the Old Testament. What does that have to do with Jeshub?"

Then I looked back a little bit more and I said, "Oh, Hasadiah." Then I saw Berechiah. I said, "Man, I'm going to look up all five of those names." I did, and they all blessed me. Then when I was on Bible hub, they connected the dots for me. It said, "Remember Zerubbabel. He's the line of David, and his line is being continued. He was also the governor of the restored Jerusalem."

Steve: All the names of his kids are so hopeful and filled with God's covenant love.

Scott: Very cool.

Steve: It's the Holy Spirit that inspired me to study that little name as it jumped off the page at me. I began to dig, and then God revealed more. Thank You, Father, for Your word. Thank You, as God said, I have done the same thing. I have scanned these passages some years and not caught these gems. Thank You for revealing the gem of Jabez to Bruce Wilkinson over 40 years ago.

Thank You for these names of Zerubbabel's children that breathe hope and restoration and covenant. Thank You for this perspective that this is really an overview of all of this, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles put together.

Help us to learn because we've also witnessed not just hopeful stuff, we saw the end, the demise of the Northern Kingdom, the Southern Kingdom has now been taken captive. God help us. God save us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Another big takeaway that I glossed over, but I think it's worth noting where the antipathy between the people that lived in Jerusalem in the time of Jesus and Samaritans, because these Samaritans were not their distant brothers. These were not the Northern Kingdom.

These were transplants from foreign kingdoms, and they had such mixture of their religions and their gods with a little bit of Jehovah sprinkled in because they were taught by a fake priest in my mind. It makes sense why there was this contention between Samaritans and Jews.

Scott: That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith and Family podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@gmail.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.