

*Things Omitted: The Importance of Chronicles for  
Preaching and Teaching*

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**Part 1: The Literary and Historical Nature of Chronicles**

**I. Introduction**

- A. Why the historical lack of interest in this biblical book?
  - 1. The title.
  - 2. Not considered a primary sourcebook for history or theology.
- B. Why Chronicles is fun and inspiring.
  - 1. Deals with joy, music, and restoration.
  - 2. It is a “preacher’s history.”

**II. The Chronicler as historian.**

- A. Contrary to much of his characterization, the Chronicler is a historian.
- B. But this is a strange kind of history:
  - 1. 1/2 is word for word from Samuel and Kings.
  - 2. 2/3 of Chronicles deals with two kings: David and Solomon.
  - 3. Almost no mention is made of the northern kingdom of Israel.
  - 4. Some kings are heavily criticized; the sins of others ignored.
- C. Currently popular to criticize the Chronicler’s skill as an historian.
  - 1. He is a collector, organizer, and evaluator of events of the past.
  - 2. He selects and interprets events of the past which help him make his case for his present community.
- D. The Chronicler’s principle of historical selection.
  - 1. Chronicler focusses attention on Judah; the history of the North is virtually deleted.
  - 2. The genealogies of chapters 1-9 deal almost entirely with God’s “chosen families,” David and Levi.
  - 3. 1 Chronicles 10 on deals with Judah’s kingship.
  - 4. David and Solomon as almost perfect, heroic figures.
  - 5. Reason for the Chronicler’s selection methods: whether or not the king(s) “sought the Lord.”

**III. The Chronicler as writer.**

- A. The Chronicler's sources and method as a writer:
1. Sources:
    - a) Samuel and Kings.
    - b) Pentateuch and psalms.
    - c) Many other sources.
  2. Method:
    - a) Quote Samuel and Kings, and alter, expand, or omit as needed.
    - b) Quote or synopsise other sources.
    - c) Add interpretive or explanatory details.
    - d) Difference between pre-exilic main sources and his post-exilic style.
- B. Example of the Chronicler's method as a writer: the Chronistic Psalm in 1 Chronicles 16.
1. Sources for chapter 16:
    - a) 16:1–3 = 2 Samuel 6:17–19.
    - b) 16:4–7 = the Chronicler's addition of Levitical families of singers.
    - c) 16:8–36 = the "Chronistic Psalm," from three other Psalmic sources:
      - (1) 16:6–22 = Psalm 105:1–15.
      - (2) 16:23–33 = Psalm 96:1b–13a.
      - (3) 16:34–36 = Psalm 106:1b and vv. 47–48.
      - (4) Psalms 105 and certainly 106 are post-exilic.
  2. The structure and theology of the Chronistic Psalm:
    - a) Vv. 8–13: Introduction to the new "Song of David."
      - (1) These verses introduce the "new psalm" and also introduce the Chronicler's main themes: Give thanks, praise, remember, and seek the Lord.
      - (2) Give thanks, praise, and remember are also the three functions of the Levitical singers in 16:4–7.
      - (3) "Seeking the Lord" is one of, if not the, most important theme in the book of Chronicles.
    - b) Vv. 14–22: The "Remember" section:
      - (1) Continues the quote from psalm 105.
      - (2) The people are to remember the covenant with Abraham, when he wandered among foreign nations.
    - c) Vv. 23–33: The "Praise" section:
      - (1) Almost a complete quotation of psalm 96.
      - (2) The people praise God for his attributes as king, judge, and creator.

- d) Vv. 34–36: The “Give Thanks” section:
  - (1) Comprises only the beginning and end of Psalm 106.
  - (2) Psalm 106 is a communal lament for the sinfulness of the people, leading to exile.
  - (3) The Chronicler uses only the beginning and closing, to capture the thanksgiving of the psalm, as well as the petition for god to “gather them from the nations.”
- 3. The Chronistic Psalm is like the TV show Mash, ostensibly about the Korean War.
- C. The Chronicler is a homiletical Bible teacher, taking the bible and interpreting it for the discouraged community in the post-exilic era.

**The Chronistic Psalm: The New Song from the Bricks  
and Mortar of Three Older Ones**

***The Introduction Section: Commands to Give Thanks, Praise, and Remember (vv. 8–13)***

**(= Psalm 105:1–7)**

(with other terms the Chronicler likes, such as “Seek!”)

O *give thanks* to the LORD, *call* on his name, *make known* his deeds among the peoples!

*Sing* to him, *sing praises* to him, *tell* of all his wonderful works!

*Glory* in his holy name; let the hearts of those who *seek* the LORD rejoice!

*Seek* the LORD and his strength, *seek* his presence continually!

**Remember** the wonderful works that he has done, the wonders he wrought, the judgments he uttered,

O offspring of Abraham his servant, sons of Jacob, his chosen ones!

***The Remember Section: Verses 14–22 (= Psalm 105:8–15)***

He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

**He is mindful of** (Hebrew: “**remember!**”) his covenant for ever, of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,

the covenant which he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac,

which he confirmed as a statute to Jacob, as an everlasting covenant to Israel,

saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan, as your portion for an inheritance.”

When they were few in number, and of little account, and sojourners in it,

wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people,

he allowed no one to oppress them; he rebuked kings on their account,

saying, “Touch not my *anointed ones*, do my prophets no harm!”

***The Praise Section: Verses 23–33 (= Psalm 96:1b–13a)***

**Sing** to the Lord, all the earth! Tell of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!

For great is the LORD, and **greatly to be praised**, and he is to be held in awe above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are idols; but the LORD made the heavens.

Honor and majesty are before him; strength and joy are in his place.

Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come before him! Worship the LORD in holy array;

tremble before him, all the earth; yea, the world stands firm, never to be moved.

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, and let them say among the nations, “The LORD reigns!”

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it, let the field exult, and everything in it!

Then shall the trees of the wood sing for joy before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth.

***The Give Thanks Section: Verses 34–36 (= Psalm 106:47–48)***

1Chr. 16:34 O *give thanks* to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever!

1Chr. 16:35 ¶ Say also: “Deliver us, O God of our salvation, and gather and save us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.

1Chr. 16:36 Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!” Then all the people said “Amen!” and praised the LORD.

***Notes***

Psalms 105 and 106 are clearly Post-Exilic in composition (after 587 B. C.). Psalm 96 may be pre-Exilic, but all three songs are in the context of book four of the Psalter, which mostly features Exilic and post-Exilic psalms. Psalm 96 itself is composed of the “bricks and mortar” of several (probably) older psalms, such as 95:1-3, 98:7-9, etc. Psalm 105 is a Thanksgiving Psalm for God’s goodness in redeeming Israel in the past. Psalm 106 is a penitential psalm, a lament asking for God’s forgiveness and to “gather them from the nations.

It is probable that none of these songs pre-dates the exile. The Chronicler is using well-known, canonical compositions from his own day and has created a new psalm which addresses his major concerns: 1) that Israel should seek the Lord, and he will respond and restore them; 2) that Israel should remember the covenant, especially with David, and that God has not abandoned that covenant; 3) that a major responsibility of worship and cultic leaders is to praise God for his attributes; it is also indicative that the time of the Chronicler is one which calls for praise and singing; and 4) that if Israel is repentant, thankful, and cries out to God, like Psalm 106, he will gather them from the nations as in Psalm 106.