

Samuel-Kings and Chronicles

Commentary for November 1, 2014 — An Example of Difference in the Ark Story

The account of the arrival of the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem gives a good example of the difference between the objective of the Samuel-Kings narrative and that of the Book of Chronicles.

As you will see in this month's article, "Israel and Judah: 4. The Ark Arrives in Jerusalem" (introduced in the "[November 2014 Newsletter](#)"), the emphasis of the narrative of the Ark's arrival differs in Second Samuel chapter 6 from that in First Chronicles chapters 15 and 16. This is particularly understandable when the two are side-by-side in parallel.

The Samuel-Kings Passage

Recall that Samuel-Kings (also called the Book of the Kings) was the second book of the "Prophets" section of the Old Testament,¹ which includes the three Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) and the single Book of the Minor Prophets. In the correct and proper Hebrew cannon, the Book of Isaiah occurs immediately after Samuel-Kings.² All of the books in the "Prophets" section were written by prophets of Israel — hence the title. The work of a prophet was not just to foretell the future, it also was to teach the people how the Law of God was applied (in reality most always misapplied) throughout the history of Israel.

The purpose of Samuel-Kings was to show the failure and future success and glory of the people of Israel. The Prophets then gave corrective teaching and foretold what God would do if Israel would not repent and follow their covenant with God.

The shorter of the two Ark narratives, 2 Samuel chapter 6 tells the positive actions by David, a "good" king who brought the Ark to Jerusalem. As both the King of Salem and the King of united Israel, David was also a prophet as the apostle Peter tells us in Acts 2:29–30. David prophesied about Christ's advent, death, resurrection, and glorification (Acts 2:31–36).

The final event in Second Samuel, which is not detailed in Chronicles, was the punishment of David's first wife Michal, daughter of King Saul. This account has to do with the personal and political aspect of the kingship of David and has no religious importance or interest for the author of Chronicles.

The Chronicles Passage

The Book of Chronicles is the last of the eleven books in the third (Writings) division of the Old Testament. It restates and summarizes the history of God's people from creation up to the proclamation of Israel's return from exile in Babylon by King Cyrus of Persia. As Dr. Martin notes, the Book of Chronicles was kept in the library at the priestly village of

¹ For a quick review, see the "[Diagram: The Symmetry of the Bible.](#)"

² Samuel-Kings is comprised of First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings in our bibles.

Bethphage “**outside the camp**” on the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem.³ In the Book of Chronicles, were the updated genealogies (additional ones in the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah), of anyone who needed to prove their Israelite heritage before they sought to enter the Temple.

The focus of Chronicles is more religious and about the Temple and its history. Primarily through the Temple narrative, the story of Israel is told. In the Chronicles passages of this month’s article, the Ark’s arrival is the final event before the story arc of the Temple begins. The saga ends with the destruction of the Temple by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and a hope of the Temple’s rebuilding.⁴

The relevant section of First Chronicles chapters 15 and 16 in this month’s article gives greater and much unique detail surrounding the events. In addition, three psalms of David, or perhaps from the time of David, give interesting additional detail to the Chronicles account.

Another section seems boring to us today, but it is important. It has to do with the offices and officers assigned to provide services of the tent that contained the Ark. These details provided in Chronicles gave future generations knowledge about how the services, sacrifices, and administration of the tent of the Ark were performed in the time of David and at the Temple begun by Solomon.

We will see later in Chronicles that the basic administrative structure and offices mentioned in 1 Chronicles 15:1–24 and later in 1 Chronicles 16:37–42, are greatly expanded once the Temple is built. This made the Temple the central place for political, religious, legal, and social affairs (with the spring and fall feasts) for all the people of Israel.

A similar administrative structure began again when the Jerusalem Temple was rebuilt in the time of Zerubbabel and later expanded by Simon the Hasmonean and again by King Herod. The basic system established by King David existed in the time of Jesus and remained in operation until the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD.

That means the structure of operations that King David set up remained in operation for almost 1,000 years, with the exception of the 70-year exile. It all began when the Ark of the Covenant arrived and was set up within the Israelite capital city of Jerusalem, the city of David.

Enjoy this month’s article: “Israel and Judah: 4. The Ark Arrives in Jerusalem.”

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³ “[Chapter 11: The Final Three Books of the Third Division](#)” from Dr. Martin’s book *Restoring the Original Bible*.

⁴ The fulfillment of that hope is told in the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah, which in the proper canonical order comes before Chronicles.