

Trust in Yahweh in Chronicles and Isaiah

I. Trust in Yahweh in Chronicles

- A. One of the purposes of Chronicles is to explain the turning points in Israel's history as being directly related to their trust or lack of trust in Yahweh (Eichrodt 307-308).
- B. The Chronicler begins the theme of trust in Yahweh with the Genealogies
 - 1. One of the interests in the Chronicler's genealogies are battles 1:46; 2:22-23; 4:10, 38-43; 5:10, 18-22, 25-26 (Wright 152)
 - 2. The battle accounts in the Chronicler's genealogies demonstrate both victory for faithfulness to Yahweh, and retribution for unfaithfulness to Yahweh
 - a. Examples of victories due to faithfulness to Yahweh: 4:10; 5:20
 - b. Example of retribution for unfaithfulness to Yahweh: 5:25-26
- C. The Chronicler develops the theme of trust in Yahweh in his particular version of history by demonstrating when the kings and leaders trusted in Yahweh and turned to him in time of need, they prospered (Von Rad, 353)
 - 1. The Chronicler skips straight to the death of Saul in his narrative and explains his rejection in terms of his lack of trust in Yahweh through seeking a medium (10:13-14)
 - 2. The Chronicler highlights the faithfulness and resulting successes of David
 - a. Many of the narratives from 2 Samuel do not appear in the Chronicler's retelling of the story
 - 1. David hiding from Saul who sought to kill him is missing (1 Sam 20:1-26:25)
 - 2. The difficult transition from Saul to David as King is missing (2 Sam 2:2-5:5)
 - 3. The account of David and Bathsheba is missing (2 Sam 11:1-12:27)
 - 4. Absalom's rebellion and David's run from him is missing (2 Sam 15:1-18:33)
 - b. The Chronicler's chronology of David generally runs as follows
 - 1. A united Israel comes to him at Hebron after Saul's death and anoints him king without struggle. (1 Chr 11:1-3)
 - 2. David captures Jerusalem (1 Chr 11:4-9)
 - 3. David brings the Ark to Jerusalem after some difficulty (1 Chr 13:1-15:29)
 - 4. David appoints levitical musicians to serve before the ark (1 Chr 16)
 - 5. David plans to build the temple (1 Chr 17:1-27)
 - 6. David wins many military victories and never loses (1 Chr 18:1-20:8)
 - 7. David numbers the people which causes God's wrath (1 Chr 21:1-30)
 - 8. David gathers materials for the building of the temple and commits it to Solomon his son (2 Chr 22:1-19)
 - 9. David organizes the Levites for temple service (1 Chr 23:1-26:32)
 - 10. David gives his final speeches and dies in peace (1 Chr 27:1-29:30)
 - c. The two difficulties of David that the Chronicler includes help to develop the theme of trust in Yahweh
 - 1. The failed first attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem was because David consulted with his captains (1 Chr 13:1) and not with Yahweh according to the ordinance (1 Chr 15:13) on how to accomplish the transport.
 - 2. David numbered his military men, which reflected a lack of trust in Yahweh, so God inflicted punishment (1 Chr 21:1-17).

3. David wanted to fall into the hands of God in his wrath, not in the hands of man, which reflects his trust in God (1 Chr 21:13).
3. The Chronicler idealizes the reign of Solomon
 - a. Solomon fights no battles, there is no mention of a general northern Assyrian exile, and Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem results in Hezekiah's prosperity (Wright, 175).
 - b. Solomon builds the temple and reigns in a peaceable, prosperous kingdom (2 Chr 1:1-9:31)
 - c. The reign of Solomon, according to the Chronicler, gives a picture of the "ideal" of Israel. A faithful Davidic king who judges wisely and a faithful priesthood serving in the temple at Jerusalem, and uncommon wealth in the land.
4. The Chronicler sought to show that God's salvation and judgment affected each generation individually (Von Rad, 349)
 - a. Abijah's trust in Yahweh resulted in victory (2 Chr. 13:14-16)
 - b. Asa's reign involved both trust and unfaithfulness
 1. Asa's trust in Yahweh resulted in victory (2 Chr. 14:12-14)
 2. Asa initiated religious reform which resulted in peace (2 Chr 15:8-19)
 3. Asa's reliance on Aram instead of Yahweh resulted in loss of peace and rejection of God (2 Chr. 16:2-3, 7-14)
 - c. Jehoshaphat trusted in Yahweh
 1. Jehoshaphat relied on God which resulted in a stable kingdom under his rule (2 Chr. 17:1-6).
 2. The Lord rescued Jehoshaphat in battle (2 Chr 18:31)
 3. Jehoshaphat relied on God when threatened by the Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites and God rescued them (2 Chr. 20:3, 12, 15, 20, 23-24).
 - d. Uzziah was both faithful and unfaithful to Yahweh
 1. Uzziah prospered when he sought Yahweh (2 Chr 26:5, 7)
 2. Uzziah was unfaithful by arrogantly offering unlawful offerings to God, which resulted in leprosy (2 Chr 27:16-21)
 - e. Jotham became mighty because he ordered his ways before Yahweh (2 Chr 27:6)
 - f. Ahaz's extreme lack of trust in Yahweh led to his downfall
 1. 2 Chr. 28:16 - Ahaz sought Assyria instead of Yahweh
 2. 2 Chr 28:21 - Ahaz took utensils from God's house to give to the king of Assyria to try and stop him from afflicting Judah.
 3. 2 Chr. 28:23 - Ahaz sought the help of other gods instead of Yahweh.
 - g. Hezekiah's trust in God resulted in God's help against Assyria
 1. Hezekiah restored proper cultic and public worship (29:1-31:27)
 2. Hezekiah sought the Lord with all his heart and prospered (2 Chr 31:20-21)
 3. Hezekiah trusted in Yahweh during the Assyrian crisis, so God rescued him (2 Chr 32:8, 20-22)
 4. Hezekiah became proud which incited God's wrath, but then humbled himself, which delayed God's wrath (2 Chr 32:23-26)
 5. Hezekiah's reign is portrayed as an idealistic time of few battles and peace because Hezekiah's reforms returned the nation back to the way Yahweh intended that things should be in Israel (Wright, 173)
 - h. Manasseh acted very wickedly but sought Yahweh after being distressed, therefore God delivered him, and Manasseh repented (2 Chr. 33:11-17)

- i. Both Zedekiah and the Priests were unfaithful to Yahweh and mocked God's messengers.
 1. God brought the Chaldeans to burn the temple and carry the people away into captivity (2 Chr 36:13-21)
 2. Since all of the leaders abandoned God's "norm", God allowed them to be deported to Babylon (Wright, 174)
5. The Chronicler demonstrates that faithful behavior is accompanied by many children, building projects, a well-equipped army, victory in war, cultic reforms of tribute from the nations (Klein, 1000).
- D. The Chronicler develops the theme of trust in Yahweh in the portrayal of key addresses
 1. Many scholars refer to the speeches and prayers of the kings and prophets in Chronicles as "Levitical sermons" (Klein, 998)
 - a. The form of a Levitical Sermon basically involved doctrine, application, and exhortation (Thompson, 262).
 - b. Many now doubt whether this was an established Levitical genre (Klein, 998)
 2. Key addresses emphasize trust in Yahweh
 - a. David's address to the priests: The reason for God's wrath in the first ark transport attempt was because they did not seek Yahweh according to his ordinance (1 Chr 15:13)
 - b. David's Psalm of praise when the ark was brought to Jerusalem exhorts the people to trust Yahweh (1 Chr 16:7-36)
 1. Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his face continually (1 Chr 16:11)
 2. Remember his wonderful deeds and his covenant (1 Chr 16:12-17)
 3. Then say, "Save us, O God of our Salvation" (1 Chr 16:35)
 - c. David's charges to Solomon include the charge to trust Yahweh
 1. Observe God's ordinances, be strong and courageous (1 Chr 22:13; 28:20).
 2. Seek Yahweh, and Yahweh will let you find him. If you reject him, he will reject you forever (1 Chr 28:9).
 - d. David's charge to the leaders included the exhortation to set their hearts and the souls to seek Yahweh (1 Chr 22:19)
 - e. David's charge to all Israel included the charge to observe and seek after all the commandments of Yahweh in order to keep the land (1 Chr 28:8).
 - f. Abijah tells Jereboam that Yahweh is with Judah because they have remained faithful by having a Davidic king and the proper cult at the proper place, so Jereboam had better not attack or he will lose (2 Chr 13:4-12).
 - g. Azariah tells Asa that if he seeks God and is faithful to him, God will let Asa find him. Asa heeded and enjoyed peace (2 Chr 15:1-7, 19).
 - h. Hanani rebukes Asa for not relying on Yahweh, so Asa lost his time of peace (2 Chr 16:7-9)
 - i. Jehoshaphat led Israel in prayer in a time of crisis, and states that their eyes were on God for deliverance, and God replies through Jahaziel that they will not even have to fight, but should remain courageous (2 Chr 20:5-17)
 - j. When Sennacherib invaded Judah, Hezekiah tells the people to rely on God to fight their battles (2 Chr 32:8).
- E. Trust in Yahweh in Chronicles involves maintaining the "norm"
 1. The "norm" for Israel involves a united Israel under a faithful Davidic king with the proper levitical system in place at the temple in Jerusalem (Wright 175).

2. Maintaining this norm resulted in God's blessing of victory against enemies, but deviation of this norm resulted in God's retribution through military defeat.
3. God's retribution was for the purpose of repentance (2 Chr 16:12)
 - a. The Chronicler ends the book with the Cyrus proclamation that he would allow Yahweh's people to return and rebuild the temple
 - b. This has the appearance of a second chance. The question after all that has been told in Chronicles is this. Will Israel now be faithful?

II. Trust in Yahweh in Isaiah

- A. One of the themes of Isaiah is that all history is subject to the will of Yahweh and human plans are futile unless they are of Yahweh (Gowan, 62).
- B. One of the purposes of the book of Isaiah is to provide an explanation of the conditions which prevailed in Jerusalem in Isaiah 1 and the change which gradually takes place moving to the picture presented in Isaiah 65-66 (Dumbrell, 113)
 1. Isaiah moves from rejection to restoration
 2. One of the themes presented in Isaiah for the cause of the rejection was unfaithfulness and a lack of trust in Yahweh.
- C. 3 Terms related to trust in Isaiah (Eichrodt 284-286)
 1. *batah*, trust - Isa 30:15
 2. *hasah*, to seek refuge - Isa 14:32
 3. *kowe yhw*, those who wait for Yahweh - 57:13
- D. Faith in God calls for passivity, intense spiritual activity, and taking risks (Eichrodt 282).
 1. Faith involves "conversion" (Isa 9:13; 31:6).
 2. Faith involves "calm trust" (Isa 26:3; 30:15).
- E. Isaiah develops the theme of trust in Narrative
 1. Ahaz did not trust in Yahweh
 - a. During the Assyrian crisis, Yahweh wanted Ahaz to trust God. (Isa 7:1-12)
 1. Isaiah stressed the importance of trust in Yahweh (Isa 7:9)
 2. The play on words in Hebrew would be similar to: "If your faith is not firm, you will not stand firm" (Anderson 233).
 - b. God even offered a sign, but Ahaz refused to trust in Yahweh (Isa 7:1-12)
 - c. Ahaz refused to trust in Yahweh and chose to trust in Assyria, God said he would bring Assyria against Judah (Isa 7:13-8:8).
 - d. Ahaz chose to trust in military alliance with Assyria, which backfired on him (2 Chr 28:5-15).
 2. Hezekiah trusted Yahweh but had one fatal failure.
 - a. When Sennacherib invaded Judah, Hezekiah went to the Lord, and he delivered Jerusalem (Isa.36:1-37:38).
 - b. When Hezekiah became mortally ill and was about to die, he prayed to God and God restored his health, giving 15 years to his life (Isa. 38:1-22)
 - c. Hezekiah showed all his treasure to some representatives from Babylon which resulted in the prophecy about the wealth being taken to Babylon. (Isa 39:1-8)
 1. The reason this was a bad move was because Babylon had been fighting against Assyria, and this meeting with Merodach-baladan was probably supposed to be a pre-cursor to some sort of alliance against Assyria (Motyer, 297).

2. Another reason this was a bad move could have been due to Hezekiah's pride in all his wealth and power (2 Chr.32:25), which in reality came from God.

F. Isaiah develops the theme of trust through prophecy

1. Isaiah 10:20-27
 - a. A remnant will return from exile and never trust in anyone by Yahweh (Isa 10:20-23)
 - b. God appeals to the people not to fear Assyria because God will punish Assyria (Isa. 10:24-27)
 - c. This is an example of a theme in Isaiah that God has complete power over the nations and the whole world (Gowan, 62).
 - d. This portrayal of God's complete power should inspire trust in his people that God, not a foreign power, is the one who can save them.
2. Isaiah 20:1-6 – Isaiah demonstrates the futility in reliance on Egypt by prophesying that Egypt and Cush would be carried away naked and barefoot
3. Isaiah 28:1-22 – A woe to arrogant pride and lack of trust in God.
 - a. Even though this text is dealing with a foreign alliance, a specific nation is not named so that the author can expound on some general principles (Motyer, 227).
 - b. In arrogant, sarcastic pride, God's people reject his word, and in their false sense of security have a party (Isa 28:1-13).
 - c. The covenant they had made that was not with God was in reality a covenant with death (28:14-15)
 - d. The people are summoned to trust in the cornerstone the God laid in Zion (28:16)
 1. This stone could be a reference to Zion, which embodies all the promises of God, or the Davidic monarchy, or the Lord himself (Motyer, 233)
 2. Whatever the stone refers to, the message is one of trust (Motyer, 233).
 - e. If they do not trust, an overwhelming scourge will trample the people (Isa 28:18-22).
4. Isaiah 30:1-15; 31:1-9 – Messages against alliances with Egypt is a common theme in Isaiah (Robinson, 901).
 - a. When God's children decide to take refuge in Pharaoh instead of Yahweh, it will result in disaster
 1. Egypt's help is useless and empty (Isa. 30:6-7)
 2. God's people will be shattered because they refused God (Isa. 30:12-15)
 3. The Egyptians are only men and not God (Isa. 31:3)
 - b. Only in reliance on God can there be salvation
 1. Salvation and strength will result from repentance and quiet trust in God (Isa. 30:15).
 2. The only hope is for God's people to return to him (Isa. 31:6)
5. Isaiah 40:27-31 –
 - a. This comes as a message of hope following the announcement of disaster in chapter 39 of Isaiah (Motyer, 307).
 - b. In verse 31, *qawa* can be rendered "hope", "waiting" in the sense of patience, or "resting" in the sense of calm trust (Motyer, 308). The object of this word is Yahweh.
 - c. Those who hope, or trust in Yahweh will be renewed (Isa 41:31).

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