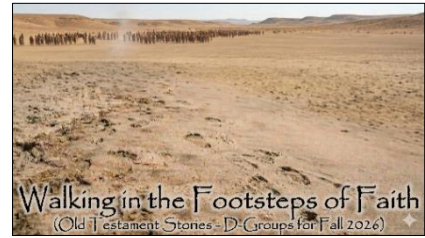


“Walking in the Footsteps of Faith”

OT Stories - Fall 2026 D-Groups

For Wednesday, October 28

4 Kings of Honorable Faith (2 Chronicles 14-35)



The Big Picture - Where We Are in the OT Timeline

Throughout this semester with Old Testament stories, we have focused each week on a single individual - and, of course, the faith in God displayed in each story. For this specific guide, we are going to shift that to focus on a collection of **4 kings of Judah**, the Southern Kingdom. It's all part of this "Divided Kingdom" era - a stage in Israel's history that culminates with each part being overtaken (*i.e.*, the North by the Assyrians in 722 B.C. as told in 2 Kings 17 and the South by the Babylonians in 587/586 B.C. as told in 2 Kings 24-25). Overall, there were far more "bad" kings - all 19 in Israel and over half of those in Judah - than good ones. Yet, it makes the ones of honorable faith stand out all the more. For the sake of time, we want to consolidate and consider 4 of these stories together.

As a reminder, every single king of Judah was a direct descendant of King David - remember the promise the Lord made to him in 2 Samuel 7. Yet, again, not every one of the 20 kings ended up being a "good" one. David himself became the standard by which each is measured. The ~8 commendable ones are described as having done "what was right/ pleasing in the LORD's sight as his ancestor David had done." By contrast, the remaining 12 are described as having done "evil" by either being like the kings of Israel in the North, not seeking the Lord, not getting rid of idolatry, etc. In other words, the appraisal of Judah's king had *everything* to do with their faithfulness or lack thereof! Within the story of 2 Chronicles, these 4 - **Kings Asa (chs. 14-16), Jehoshaphat (chs. 17-20), Hezekiah (chs. 29-32) and Josiah (chs. 34-35)** - are applauded for their faith in the LORD on display.

Such an emphasis is appropriate given the overall purpose of the books of Chronicles. They tell the same broader story as 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings. Yet, there is this key difference, one that makes sense given the book's purpose: **1 & 2 Chronicles focus specifically on the kings of Judah as part of the bigger story of God's relationship with humanity stretching back to Adam, through Abraham.** Within that specific grid, these stories show the importance of God's covenant with His people. Even more directly, they uphold and applaud examples of faithfulness to the responsibilities of such a covenant relationship (as we'll see with these 4 kings), showing that God's blessings come upon His people amidst such a David-like response. Conversely, the examples of *unfaithfulness* offer the reminder of what happens when God's people - led by their king - abandon God and forsake Him; indeed, there are consequences that come as a result. It's believed that Chronicles is compiled (perhaps even by Ezra) as God's people are returning from exile in Babylon. Amidst that time of restoration, it provided a great way to remind the people of their faith heritage ... and, even more, especially to remind them of how much their faithfulness to the covenant relationship mattered!

NOTE: For this week's guide, we have included each of these four stories; feel free to focus specifically on one or two of them or, if you have time, to at least read all four. The questions to consider are general enough to reflect on any of the four. If during next week's D-Group discussion you end up landing on only one of the stories, that's fine as well.

The Close-Up for October 28 - 2 Chronicles 14-20 + 29-32 + 34-35

READ the TEXT: Dig-in to at least one of these and, if time allows, at least read the others.

A broad reflection on each of these four kings (note - *not everything they do is commendable; yet, each of these four demonstrates noble faith and have something valuable to teach us*):

King Asa (2 Chronicles 14-16) ... Asa's story is a king who chose to diligently seek after the LORD. He was a reformer committed to eliminating idol worship that regularly became a snare for God's people. King Asa took to heart a challenge from a prophet with a reminder of the benefits of seeking after God and the tragic results of abandoning Him (see 15:1-8).

King Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 17-20) ... Jehoshaphat continued to lead Judah in the same positive direction - even amidst his questionable alliance with King Ahab of Israel. The highlights of his reign included his commitment to seeing the LORD's commands being honored among His people and a battle with surrounding nations. This story from chapter 20 is a powerful one about the One who fights the battles for His people and gives them victory!

King Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29-32) ... After some challenging times in Judah, Hezekiah became another reforming king. He restored and rededicated the Temple as part of his reforms. Even more, he led in a broad celebration of the Passover in a way that it hadn't been done in 2-3 centuries, stretching back to the days of King Solomon. Chapter 32 tells a famous story of the Assyrians' failed attempt to overtake Jerusalem as Hezekiah trusted in God's sovereign power to deliver His people (see a fuller version of the story in 2 Kings 18-19, especially King Hezekiah's prayer when confronted by this threat in 2 Kings 19:14-19).

King Josiah (2 Chronicles 34-35) ... The last of the reforming kings, the great-grandson of Hezekiah, King Josiah's faithfulness was spurred by a "chance" discovery of God's Law in the Temple while it was (again) being restored. He responded with obedience and led the people in being faithful to the LORD.

Two Key Reminders throughout This Semester

- 1. God is ultimately the HERO of these stories; remember, as part of Scripture, God is *revealing* Himself to us. So, *what do we learn about Him through this story?***
- 2. We read these stories through a Christ-lens. So, *how do we read this story differently in light of Jesus and being His followers?***

Some Additional Questions for Reflection

- *Whichever story, what are some obstacles and threats that these kings faced?***
- *How does each one demonstrate faith in God, especially through faithfulness to Him (i.e., whether seeking after Him, trusting Him amidst a formidable foe, leading the people back to faithfulness, etc.)? What does it look like for us to follow in such footsteps amidst our lives today?***
- *What do these stories teach us about who God is - both His general character and what He desires in covenant relationship with His people? What do these stories teach about God's reward for faith and faithfulness (remember Hebrews 11:6)?***