

Summary of content

Introduction

1 and 2 Samuel and **1 and 2 Kings** are mainly historical narratives related to the history of Israel from Samuel the last judge through the united kingdoms under David and Solomon to the divided kingdoms and eventual fall of Israel and Judah.

1 and 2 Chronicles covers much of the same material covered by **2 Samuel** and **1 and 2 Kings**, but the emphasis of the book of **Chronicles** is different. **Chronicles** also relates the historical narrative but does so from a **spiritual, theological** perspective often answering the question of the “why” of many events recorded in **2 Samuel** and the books of **Kings**. **Chronicles** amounts to a “divine commentary” on the reigns of David and Solomon.

Remember: What was the over-arching theological purpose of Samuel? Establishment of the monarchy in the Nation of Israel. Specifically marking the establishment of the Davidic Covenant 1 & 2 Kings? This is the historical record of why the Nation of Israel went into exile: idolatry.

The material included in **Chronicles** is selective and certain things are omitted under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Several significant purposes were served by the books of **Chronicles**. They were designed to demonstrate to post-exilic Jews returning from the Babylonian captivity—

- the pure and clear messianic line through King David
- the fact that on the whole, David and Solomon kept God’s covenant
- the need to focus on worship in the temple and obedience to God.
 - i.e. Fellowship with God.
 - Opposite of exile
 - Temple = presence of God
 - obedience is required for holiness which is required for fellowship

The book of **Chronicles** should have been a real source of encouragement to the Jewish remnant returning from the Babylonian exile.

Chapters 1-9 Roots of Israel

Ezra was the likely human author of **1 Chronicles** and includes the most extensive genealogies in the Old Testament to trace and establish the line of David as the promised messianic/kingly line.

The focus is on—

- Judah David's tribe and the one from whom Christ would come
- Levi The tribe from which the priesthood came; would be prominent in temple worship and teaching upon return to the land
- Benjamin The tribe from Israel's first king, Saul, came and which supported King David

Reminder: What do these three have in common related to the nation of Israel following Solomon's reign? They are the tribes that made up the Southern Kingdom. Why would this be significant in light of the historical background and purpose of this book?

Chapters 10-29 Rule of King David

This section highlights certain aspects of the reign of David, emphasizing the positive aspects and omitting many, but not all of the negative aspects of David's rule.

Why do you think this is done?

- Is it merely trying to whitewash the story of David as propaganda? No
- What does it leave out of David's story? Most of his sinful failures and the fallout from his sin.
- What does it emphasize? The proper way a monarch is to act.
- How does the theological focus and purpose of the book help us answer this question? It is showing how a proper monarchy leads the people into the proper worship. It is ultimately setting up for the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant: Jesus Christ.

Very little material is devoted to Saul since his rule did not bring much glory to Israel. Saul's sins are mentioned and his death is seen as having occurred as a direct result of God's judgment. David and Saul's long conflict is omitted.

David's successful reign in Jerusalem is mentioned but the long 7-1/2 year bitter civil war with the house of Saul is not. David's mighty men are praised and his army is called the "army of God." Prosperity and success under David as he kept God's covenant are prominently mentioned. But no mention is made of Absalom's revolt.

David's victories over the Philistines are also highlighted as well as the details of David obeying God's specific instructions for bringing the Ark to Jerusalem the second time after the death of Uzzah.

David's desire to build the temple is shown in a very positive light and furnishes a backdrop for the emphasis on the temple in **2 Chronicles**.

Again, the returning remnant needed to see the temple, worship of God and obedience to the law as the focal point of the nation.

Why was that important to the immediate audience of this book? It provided the framework for the people trying to re-establish themselves in the land in a proper, God-honoring way.

Why is that important to us? Jesus is the fulfillment of the monarchy and the temple. Further through his sacrifice, we are made righteous and obedient and therefore able to worship God properly.

1 Chron 17:8-14 – God’s Covenant and Two Houses established

1. God’s House – The Temple
2. The King’s House – The Davidic Monarchy

David’s sin with Bathsheba is omitted but the sinful census is detailed although Satan is blamed for inciting David to sin. The sinful census would continue to remind Judah of the consequences of sin and breaking the covenant.

Compare the accounts in 1 Chronicles 21: 1 and 2 Samuel 24:1

- What is the key differences? Who incited David? Why?
first Chronicles – Satan stood against Israel,
Second Samuel – God, Angry at Israel due to sin, incites David
- What events immediately follow the Census?
 - o 21:7, 14 God is displeased, God Judges the sin.
 - o 21:16 David sees the Angel of the Lord, judgment
 - o 21:17 David offers to receive punishment rather than people. God does not accept the offer.
 - o 21:18, 26-27 Angel of the Lord commands an alter to be built. David makes offerings on behalf of his sin and the people’s sin.
 - o 22:1ff. Temple is built on the place where that alter was erected.
- See study note on Job 1:6 [page 874] Satan is our Accuser / Adversary
- Rev 12:4-5, 10; 19:11ff. Jesus as king bringing judgment upon the enemy of His people.
 - o in the same action the King:
 - judges those who are not justified by Jesus
 - protects those who are justified
- Romans 8:28 – 34 Jesus as priest interceding on behalf of his people
 - o to whom is Jesus justifying his chosen? To God.

Chapter 23-25 We see the King performing the role intended – guiding his people to fellowship with God.

In the story of David’s census, the focus of the story is that in the same event, God and Satan had different goals. In the same act, Satan sought to oppose Israel while God sought to justly judge them. It culminated on the

mountain in which God's just judgment meets God's mercy. Satan sought to destroy Israel, but God saved them through mercy. This parallels the cross in which Satan sought to destroy Jesus. However, his action proved to be the victory not only for Jesus, but for his chosen people as well. Satan may have bruised his heel, but Jesus crushed the accuser's head.

Great detail is provided regarding David's careful preparations for building the temple, including the raising of funds and selecting building materials. David's organizational and administrative skills are praised, especially in relationship to the Levitical priesthood and civil government.

1 Chronicles ends with David's last charge to Solomon, the offerings raised for the temple, a eulogy for David and Solomon's ascension to the throne. **Second Chronicles** will pick up with Solomon's reign.

1 Chron. 28:20

1 Chron 29:17-18

5. Theme/purpose/applicational message

Theme/purpose

In order to encourage the returning remnant of Judah to refocus on worshipping and obeying God, Ezra recorded in **1 Chronicles** how God blessed and prospered Israel under the covenant as King David was obedient to God.

Applicational Message

God blesses those who seek to know and serve Him with a whole heart.

2 Chronicles

Summary of content

Introduction

2 Chronicles covers the same essential material as **1** and **2 Kings** but does so selectively and for a different purpose. **2 Chronicles** is a theological commentary on the historical events recorded in **1** and **2 Kings**.

With the remnant of Judah having returned from the Babylonian captivity and having been resettled in the land, it was critical for the focal point of the nation to again be on God, centered around His temple, thus the heavy emphasis of **2 Chronicles** on the temple. The book opens with the building and dedication of the temple, records the decline and destruction of the temple under the reigns of the Kings of Judah, and ends with the decree of

Cyrus in 538 BC to rebuild the temple. Over 400 years of Judah's history is recorded.

Chapters 1-9

Solomon's reign over the United Kingdom Dedication of the temple

Just as **1 Chronicles** highlighted the positive aspects of the 40-year reign of David, **2 Chronicles 1–9** does the same for Solomon. Significant emphasis is placed on his worship, wisdom and wealth, along with his critical role in building the magnificent first temple. The preparation for building and dedication of the temple are recorded in great detail. God's favor toward the temple and the choosing of Jerusalem as the central place of worship for the nation are also dealt with extensively.

As God's glory filled the temple, however, Solomon was sternly warned of the consequences of disobedience to God under the covenant, but God also advised Solomon of what to do if he and the people sinned.

2 Chronicles 7:11-16; 19-22 The promises regarding the Two Houses

No negative comments are made about Solomon and significantly, no mention is made that his foreign wives turned his heart away from God!

Chapters 10-36 Succeeding reigns of the Kings of Judah Decline and destruction of the temple

This section starts with the split of the Kingdom after the death of Solomon, making it clear that it was the northern tribes (Israel) under Jeroboam which were apostate. However, the division itself is clearly shown to be a result of divine judgment by God for Solomon's sin.

2 Chronicles 13:5-6, 8-11

- Here the Chronicler revisits the "Sin of Jeroboam" that negatively influenced the Northern Kingdom for its entire existence.
 - o Abijah points out that Jeroboam's sin violated two things (notice the echoes of the two houses):
 - v.5 Davidic Covenant
 - v.8-11 Mosaic Covenant

2 Chronicles 22-23 Reign of Joash

- Athalia (daughter of Ahab) seeks to wipe out the Davidic line.
- Jehoida the priest raises up Joash as King
 - o 23:2-5 The coup against Athalia is justified based upon the Davidic Covenant
 - o Again notice the connection between the Two Houses
 - The priest and the Levites protect the king
 - o This leads to priestly reforms 23: 16-18
 - o Joash repairs the temple
 - o Joash rebels and turns to idolatry 24:17-20

2 Chronicles 26 Reign of Uzziah

- 26:16 Pride, Unfaithful, he performs acts only priest should do. Enters temple when he is not worthy.
 - o What does “unfaithful” tell us [see study note on 778] affront to God’s holiness
- 26:17-18 Warns of his sin, that he is overstepping the bounds of the House of the King.
- 26:19 He gets leprosy. He is unclean. He is outcast.
- Isaiah 6:1ff. Note the reference to Uzziah and the stark contrast between Isaiah’s reaction to the presence of God to Uzziah’s contempt for it.

2 Chronicles 29-32 The Reign of Hezekiah

- Other than David and Solomon, Hezekiah receives the most attention in Chronicles.
- He leads the priests and Levites in the cleansing of the Temple and the restoration of Temple Worship
- He reinstates the Passover
 - o 30:2
 - o 30:5-6 Invitation to all of Israel
 - o 30:7-9 It’s not too late to repent, God will restore the repentant.
 - o 30:17-20 God makes a way for those who are not holy enough to worship him.

2 Chronicles 33 Manasseh’s Evil Reign and Repentance

- Manasseh’s Sin 33: 2-7, 9
- Manasseh’s Repentance 33:12-13
 - o He “knew that the LORD was God”.
 - o He makes reforms but they are limited in scope and short-lived

The reigns of the 20 Kings of Judah are then reviewed, focusing on those kings who followed the Lord. Of the 20 southern Kings, eight were clearly good, two were good and evil, and the other 10 were evil (see book chart). But note that **all** of the 19 northern Kings were evil. No wonder God judged His people!

One must logically ask why **2 Chronicles** makes no mention of the Kings of Israel. Several good reasons are apparent—

- The northern tribes’ separate identity as a nation (Israel) ceased with the fall to Assyria in 722 BC.
- The nation of Israel after 722 BC was essentially the tribe of Judah (which included some representatives from all the other tribes).

- The believing remnant that returned from the Babylonian captivity was essentially of the tribe of Judah, hence — “the Jews.”
- The northern tribe had no real tie to the temple after the death of Solomon, having established their own illegitimate rival worship system.
- The future of the Jews was with Judah from whom Messiah would come.

The bulk of the material in **2 Chronicles 10–36** relates to the few good kings of Judah like Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah and Josiah. Even though there were some revivals and reforms the nation never really turned from its sinful ways.

The last chapter is important for the reigns of the last four kings (22-1/2 years total) are summarized. All four were evil and contributed directly to the final fall of Jerusalem and Judah in 586 BC to Babylon.

The close of the book mentions the Babylonian captivity of 70 years as the Lord’s “forced Sabbath rest for the land” and ends on the note of hope sounded by the decree of Cyrus, King of Persia (who had conquered Babylon) allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. Continued, unrepentant disobedience led to Judah’s fall.

2 Chronicles 36:21 - The land’s Sabbath Rest
 - Leviticus 26:34-35, 40-45

The Decree of Cyrus
 Isaiah 44:24-28

5. Theme/purpose/applicational message

Theme/purpose

Ezra recorded in **2 Chronicles** the glory of the temple under Solomon and how the fall of Judah to Babylon resulted when the nation moved away from worship of God centered around the temple to idolatry and following after other things.

Applicational message

If worship of God is not the central focus of our lives, then disorder and chaos will result.