

1 & 2 Chronicles

These books are perhaps some of the most overlooked of the OT. After all, what's so interesting about *nine* genealogical chapters of “the sons of...”? And why bother reading about all the kings *again*? After all, did we just read about them in 1–2 Kings?

The key to profitably reading 1–2 Chronicles (remember 2 Tim 3:16—“all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is *profitable* for...”) is to understand why they were written. If these books were written as dry history, then one perhaps could be justified in just skipping over them. But that isn't the case!

Strive to read these books knowing *why* they were written!

1. Introduction to 1 & 2 Chronicles

1) Title and Authorship

- a. 1–2 Chronicles was originally one book.
- b. The Hebrew title means “the events of the days,” referring to Israel’s history from Adam to the Babylonian Captivity and Cyrus’s decree allowing Jews in exile to return.
- c. Our Protestant Bibles get the name “Chronicles” from Jerome (4th century AD) who suggested the title, “The chronicle of the whole divine history.”
- d. Though not named as the author, [Ezra](#) is thought to be the author of 1–2 Chronicles. Because the author is not identified, he is often called “the Chronicler.”
- e. Like 1–2 Kings, the Chronicler used a variety of sources (see page 55 for discussion of this in relation to inspiration).

2) Purpose and Theme

- a. The **purpose** of 1–2 Chronicles is to [encourage](#) the returning exiles to be faithful to God by remembering God’s promises and provisions.
 - (1) The returning exiles needed encouragement to be faithful to the Lord, particularly in regard to the temple and the Levites. They literally had to rebuild everything, faced great opposition, and struggled with faithfulness to God.
 - (2) God made promises to Abraham (1 Chron 16:16; 2 Chron 20:7; 30:6) and David and He will keep them (1 Chron 17). God will be faithful, and so the people must be. When they are faithful, God will bless them.
 - (3) Israel must worship the LORD at the right place and in the right way. God gave them the temple to worship in and the Levites to provide instruction and guidance.

b. The **theme** of 1–2 Chronicles is [faithfulness](#) to a [faithful](#) God

c. The **key verse** is 2 Chronicles 7:14

3) Content and Message

a. The events in these books stretch from the beginning of David’s reign (970 B.C.) to the decree of Cyrus, allowing the return of a remnant to Judah (538 B.C.)

b. 1–2 Chronicles compared with 1–2 Samuel and 1–2 Kings

(1) 1–2 Samuel is covered by 1 Chronicles, focusing on David

(2) 1–2 Kings is covered by 2 Chronicles, with this difference: only the kings of Judah are mentioned—none of the kings of Israel (N. Kingdom).

(3) Kings compared with Chronicles—

(a) 1–2 Kings tells Israel, “Our unfaithfulness brought God’s judgment”

(b) 1–2 Chronicles tells Israel, “Our faithfulness will bring God’s blessing”

(c) Kings is from the standpoint of the prophets

(d) Chronicles is from the standpoint of the priests

c. **Chronicles focuses on the kingdom of [David](#)**

(1) The genealogies emphasize the tribe of [Judah](#), the line of David, and the worship of God at the temple in Jerusalem.

(a) The object of these genealogies is to show God’s faithfulness at all times. God’s people continue on despite deserved punishment and exile.

(b) Something else to remember about genealogies in the Bible—they don’t always tell everyone who existed in that particular line. Who is mentioned depends on the purpose of the genealogy (cf. Exod 6:14–26, which covers a period of 430 years but only covers four generations)

(c) When God’s people read this genealogy it would remind them that God has always been with them, faithfully directing, caring, providing, and when necessary disciplining them.

(2) The rest of 1 Chronicles focuses on David

(3) 2 Chronicles begins with Solomon and then continues the Davidic focus on the kings of Judah, the [heirs](#) of the Davidic covenant

- (4) The history of the idolatrous northern kingdom (“Israel”) is not covered in the Chronicles because there is no hope in apostasy. 1–2 Chronicles was written to encourage God’s people to faithfulness.

d. Chronicles focuses on the [temple](#)

- (1) God said that He “dwelt” in the temple—it was a symbol that He was with His people (2 Chron 17:1–3)
- (2) The Temple was constructed according to God’s plans (2 Chron 28:11–21, note especially v. 19)
- (3) God put His name at the Temple (2 Chron 6:10–11, 20). *That* was the place where He should be worshiped (2 Chron 6:6; 33:7). Jerusalem was the capital and center of all Israel and Judah.
- (4) Though God is greater than and not restricted to the Temple (2 Chron 6:18), God’s people must pray toward it and God would hear from heaven (2 Chron 6:22–39)
- (5) The importance of the Temple explains why so much space in 2 Chronicles is given to describing its construction and why kings are evaluated by their attention to it (note especially 2 Chron 13:10–12)
- (6) Essentially connected with the worship of God at the temple are the Levites, who have a prominent role throughout 1–2 Chronicles.

e. Chronicles emphasizes the [Heart](#)

- (1) “Heart” occurs [63](#) times in the Chronicles
- (2) God’s people must obey willingly and joyfully from the heart, rather than just mechanically keeping the Law (“with a perfect heart” or “with all the heart” occur 21 times).
- (3) The heart is especially emphasized in the account of King Hezekiah. In 2 Kings “heart” in connection with Hezekiah is mentioned [0](#) times; in 2 Chronicles 29–32 it is mentioned [11](#) times!
- (4) Chronicles emphasizes that God hates a proud heart but is pleased with a humble, willing, and whole heart.
- (5) God’s people must [direct](#) their hearts so that exclusive love and loyalty is given to God alone (2 Chron 15:17; [16:9](#); 17:6; 19:3, 9; [20:33](#); [30:12](#); 32:31; 34:27; 36:13)

f. Chronicles demonstrates God's blessing on [obedience](#) and punishment of [sin](#)

2 Chron 7:13–14 “¹³If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, ¹⁴and My people who are called by My name **humble** themselves and **pray** and **seek** My face and **turn** from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

(1) This theme is especially seen after the divided kingdom, 2 Chronicles 10–36

(2) Emphasized:

1 Chron 28:9 “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with **a whole heart** and **a willing mind**; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you **seek Him**, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.”

2 Chron 12:5 *to Rehoboam* “You have forsaken Me, so I also have forsaken you”

2 Chron 15:2 *to Asa* “the Lord is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you”

2 Chron 20:20 *Jehoshaphat to the people* “put your trust in the Lord your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed”

2 Chron 24:20 *Zechariah the priest to the people* “Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord and do not prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, He has also forsaken you”

(3) Examples:

(a) Saul's death, 1 Chron 10:13

(b) Rebuke of Jehoshaphat's compromising alliance with Ahab, 2 Chron 19:2

(c) Uzziah's leprosy, 2 Chron 26:16

(d) Josiah's death, 2 Chron 35:22

(e) Rehoboam, 2 Chron 12:5–12

(4) The continual emphasis on this theme (God's blessing on obedience and punishment of sin) would encourage—and warn!—God's people to obey Him!

g. Chronicles provides encouraging examples of [prayer](#)

(1) Five major prayers are mentioned in the Chronicles, all by good kings

(a) David's prayer response to the covenant God made with him, 1 Chron 17:16–27

(b) David's prayer dedicating gifts to the temple, 1 Chron 29:10–19

(c) Solomon's prayer dedicating the temple, 2 Chron 6:12–42

(d) Jehoshaphat's prayer of trust before a great enemy, 2 Chron 20:5–12 (note v. 12!)

(e) Hezekiah's prayer for pardon, 2 Chron 30:18–19

- (2) Additionally, four other occasions of prayer are mentioned (but not the prayers themselves)
- (a) The people's prayer during Hezekiah's reign, 2 Chron 30:27
 - (b) Hezekiah's prayer for deliverance from the Assyrians, 2 Chron 32:20
 - (c) Hezekiah's prayer for healing, 2 Chron 32:24
 - (d) Manasseh's prayer of repentance, 2 Chron 32:12–13
- (3) These examples of prayer would show God's people that the God in heaven hears prayer. Because of this, God's people are encouraged to seek the Lord in prayer!

☞ *God's people should be faithful to Him because He has been continually faithful to them.*

2. Outline of 1–2 Chronicles

Basic Outline

- 1) Genealogies from Adam to David, 1 Chronicles 1–9
- 2) The Reign of David, 1 Chronicles 10–29
- 3) The Reign of Solomon, 2 Chronicles 1–9
- 4) The Kingdom of Judah, 2 Chronicles 10–36

More Detailed Outline

1. Genealogies from Adam to David, 1 Chronicles 1–9
 - 1) Patriarchs, 1:1–54
 - 2) Genealogy of Judah from beginning to the exile, 2:1–4:23
 - 3) Genealogies of the twelve tribes, 4–8
 - 4) Jews living in Jerusalem after the exile, 9:1–34
 - 5) Saul's family, 9:35–44
2. The Reign of David, 1 Chronicles 10–29
 - 1) Saul's death, 10
 - 2) David's rise, 11–20
 - 3) David's latter days, 21–29
3. The Reign of Solomon, 2 Chronicles 1–9
 - 1) Solomon's rise, 1
 - 2) Solomon's temple, 2–7
 - 3) Solomon's kingdom, 8–9
4. The Kingdom of Judah, 2 Chronicles 10–36
 - 1) Division of the Kingdom, 10
 - 2) The twenty Davidic kings of Judah, 11:1–36:14
 - 3) Exile to Babylon, 36:11–21
 - 4) Cyrus's proclamation to return, 36:22–23