

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

1 & 2 Chronicles

The Hebrew name for Chronicles translates to “events of the days.” Jerome, one of the early church fathers, called it “the chronicle of the whole of sacred history” when he translated the Bible into Latin. The name Chronicles was then adopted by Luther, among others, in his German translation of the Bible.

Like Kings and Samuel, Chronicles was originally written as one book but was split into two in the Septuagint. The identity of the Chronicler who assembled the historical accounts is unknown but some have suggested it to be Ezra. The book was put together during the postexilic period, after the people returned to Jerusalem, during the latter half of the fifth century B.C.

Outline of Chronicles

I. Genealogies: the Roots of the Postexilic Community (1 Chronicles 1:1-9:44)

II. The United Monarchy (1 Chronicles 10:1-2 Chronicles 9:31)

- A. The Reign of David (1 Chr. 10:1-29:30)
- B. The Reign of Solomon (2 Chr. 1:1-9:31)

III. The Schism and the History of the Kings of Judah (2 Chronicles 10:1-36:23)

- A. Rehoboam (2 Chr. 10:1-12:16) [1 Kings 12:1-24; 14:21-31]
- B. Abijah (2 Chr. 13:1-14:1) [1 Kings 15:1-8]
- C. Asa (2 Chr. 14:2-16:14) [1 Kings 15:9-24]
- D. Jehoshaphat (2 Chr. 17:1-21:3) [1 Kings 22:41-50]
- E. Jehoram (2 Chr. 21:4-20) [2 Kings 8:16-24]
- F. Ahaziah (2 Chr. 22:1-9) [2 Kings 8:25-29; 9:11-29]
- G. Joash (2 Chr. 22:10-24:27) [2 Kings 11:1-12:21]
- H. Amaziah (2 Chr. 25:1-28) [2 Kings 14:1-22]
- I. Uzziah (2 Chr. 26:1-23) [2 Kings 15:1-7 (Azariah)]
- J. Jotham (2 Chr. 27:1-9) [2 Kings 15:32-38]
- K. Ahaz (2 Chr. 28:1-27) [2 Kings 16:1-20]
- L. Hezekiah (2 Chr. 29:1-32:33) [2 Kings 18:1-20:21]
- M. Manasseh (2 Chr. 33:1-20) [2 Kings 21:1-18]
- N. Amon (2 Chr. 33:21-25) [2 Kings 21:19-26]
- O. Josiah (2 Chr. 34:1-36:1) [2 Kings 22:1-23:30]
- P. Jehoahaz (2 Chr. 36:2-4) [2 Kings 23:31-35]
- Q. Jehoiakim (2 Chr. 36:5-8) [2 Kings 23:36-24:7]
- R. Jehoiachin (2 Chr. 36:9-10) [2 Kings 24:8-17]
- S. Zedekiah (2 Chr. 36:11-14) [2 Kings 24:18-25:7]
- T. Exile and Restoration (2 Chr. 36:15-23)

Chronicles vs. Samuel & Kings

- Chronicles has a different perspective from Samuel and Kings even though they contain parallel historical accounts.
- The reigns of both David and Solomon are idealized in Chronicles.
- Additional details found in Chronicles can be generally classified as: disobedience of a good king and its consequences, obedience/repentance of a bad king and its consequences, an account explaining an act of judgment, or a moral perspective on a previously neutral account.

Major Themes

Importance of Obedience to God

- The author warns against complacency and presumption on God's forbearance and His delaying of judgment by highlighting God's immediate responses to both obedience and disobedience.
- Emphasis is placed on living in accordance with God's ways and the need for personal responsibility in dealing with sin.

Importance of Right Worship

- Disregard for the right worship of God was what led to the exile of the previous generation.
- The greatest threats to the kingdom came from the religious practices of the king and his people rather than foreign armies.
- The emphasis on the temple building and those who served in it is another reference to worship found in Chronicles. The reigns of David and Solomon are also presented primarily in terms of their involvement with the temple.

Christ the Promised Davidic King

- A vision of a future Messianic king is seen in the author's emphasis of the positive attributes of David and Solomon.
- The genealogies in Chronicles specifically trace down through Seth and then Judah, from which all of Israel's kings would come. David's line is presented through the kings of Judah and shown to emerge unbroken through the exile (1 Chr. 3:17-24).
- God's covenant with David is the basis on which the author looks forward to the coming king who will sit on David's throne (1 Chr. 17:11-14).

Conclusion

- We can look forward in hope to the returning son of David who will rule in perfect righteousness and justice.
- As we wait, we must continue to follow God in what He has revealed and live upright and obedient lives, maintaining the focus of our worship on Him so as not to be drawn away by the philosophies and desires of the world.