



1 & 2 Chronicles

1 Chronicles 10-29

The Bible Challenge

A daily guide to reading the Bible in a year

Restoration

The over arching concern of the Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles is restoration. The northern kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah had fallen to exile because of rebellion. With the sacking of Jerusalem in 586 BC, the temple was destroyed and the Davidic monarchy was taken into captivity in Babylon.

The Babylonian Empire fell to the Persian Empire in 538 BC. Under the Persian king Cyrus, many of the captive peoples were allowed to return to their homelands and rebuild their cities. Many of the people of Judah and Israel were allowed to return home.

The writer of Chronicles (who some believe to be the scribe Ezra) was careful to document not only the causes of exile, but also hold out tremendous hope for Israel with the reestablishment of the Davidic covenant. The Davidic monarchy and the temple are the institutional representations of Yahweh's kingdom in Israel. For this reason, the focus in the book is primarily on the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

Events and Dates covered in 1 & 2 Chronicles:

Events	Dates	Passages
Establishment of the Davidic Monarchy	c. 1010 - 931 BC	1 Chronicles 10 - 2 Chronicles 9
History of Judah from the division of the Kingdom until its fall	931-586	2 Chronicles 10 - 36:21
Exile in Babylonian Captivity	586 - 538	2 Chronicles 36:17-21
Cyrus decree	538	2 Chronicles 36:22-23

The focus in 1 & 2 Chronicles is on reestablishing the genealogical and institutional ties of a restored people in the land. The original blessings and blueprint from God in the land of promise can be traced back to Noah, Abraham, Israel (Jacob), Moses and David. If the people of God will learn the lessons of the past they will build a better future. Reestablishing the temple worship and the Davidic monarchy is priority one for a restored people of God.



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Structure

The Structure of 1 & 2 Chronicles can be divided into three main parts:

Section	Passages
Genealogy of the Tribes of Israel	1 Chronicles 1-9
United Kingdom: David and Solomon	1 Chronicles 10 - 2 Chronicles 9
The Kingdom of Judah to the Exile	2 Chronicles 10-36

The United Kingdom section focuses on the Davidic monarchy and the building of the Temple.

A United Kingdom under David (1 Chronicles 10-29)

The focus of 1 Chronicles is clearly on David's role in laying the groundwork for the building of the House of the Lord. He was told in 2 Samuel that he would not be the one to build the temple, rather his heir would. However, David has a considerable role to play in its building. The structure of the section reveals this emphasis. While some parts of this section are quoted directly from or allude to 2 Samuel, there is a considerable expansion of the narrative related to the planning for and building of the Temple in Chapters 21-29.

Section	1 Chronicles	2 Samuel
David is made King over All Israel	1 Chr. 10-12	2 Sam. 1-5
The Ark is Transferred to Jerusalem	13-16	2 Sam 5-6
The Dynastic Promise of a House	17	2 Sam. 7
David's Wars	18-20	2 Sam 8-12
David's Satanic Census	21:1-27	2 Sam 24
Preparation for the Temple	22-29	New Material



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David is made King over All Israel (10-12)

Chapter 10 serves to summarize the reign of Saul in brief particularly its ignoble end. The key point from the Chronicler is v. 13 and 14:

So Saul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with the LORD in that he did not keep the command of the LORD, and also consulted a medium, seeking guidance. He did not seek guidance from the LORD. Therefore the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse. 1 Chron. 10:13-14

For from day to day men came to David to help him, until there was a great army, like an army of God.

--1 Chronicles 12:22

Chapters 11 and 12 then focus on David's anointing to be King and his rise to the throne. The emphasis is on his growing military strength through the Lord's provision of "mighty and experienced warriors". This is important to the Chronicler for two reasons. First, the provision of the army is the LORD's doing as it is the Lord's Army. David will later try to assert control over the Army of the LORD with a Satanic Census (1 Chr. 21:1). Second, David's career of war will mean that he is not the one to build the Temple (1 Chr. 22:8).

The Ark of the Covenant is Transferred to Jerusalem (13-16)

The focus of the Chronicler is clearly on the relationship between the Davidic Monarchy and the building of the Temple at Jerusalem. Up to this point the Ark of the Covenant had been a symbol of YHWH's leading the Army of the Lord in the conquest of the Land. The rise of David's throne over all of Israel corresponds with the ascendancy of YHWH over the world. The chariot throne is moving from war to rest.

Saul's neglect of the Ark and the LORD's leading led to his downfall (13:3) David is the opposite. He wants the LORD's presence near him, and he inquires of the LORD and listens to his counsel (14:8-16). For this reason David prevailed over his enemies.

And the fame of David went out into all lands, and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations. 1 Chronicles 14:17



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The Dynastic Promise of a House (17)

The Chronicler quotes almost verbatim 2 Samuel 7, where David receives the covenant promises of a throne which "shall be established forever" (17:14). Interestingly, the Chronicler omits the promise of discipline of David's son from 2 Sam. 7:14: "When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men." The New Testament sees the fulfillment of this promise to David in the Messiah, Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 1:5)

God says of the Davidic house is and Kingdom that it is "my house...my kingdom." Indeed, the close connection between the reign of the Davidic Messiah and the reign of YHWH is precisely the point.

David's Wars (18-20)

This section in 1 Chronicles related to David's conquest is notable more for what it omits from 2 Samuel 8-21. The Chronicler primarily focuses on the military victories. He leaves out the Bathsheba affair, the struggles between his heirs. The purpose for the Chronicler is not to whitewash the history, but rather to narrow the story for his own purposes.

The Chronicler is interested in the building of the Temple and he is crafting his narrative toward that end. The military campaigns of David will provide the productive peace and the human and material resources to build the temple and kingdom. They will also mean that David is not the one to build the Temple. (1 Chr. 22:8)

David's Satanic Census (21)

The low point in the narrative is where David calls for a census of all of the fighting men of Israel. This is not of the Lord:

"Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel." --1 Chron. 21:1

The census "displeased" God and importantly, David responded with repentance. God redeemed the situation, and this is the point. The sin of David led to the purchase of the land for the Temple. (21:22)



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Preparation for the Temple (22-29)

The final section of 1 Chronicles is material that is completely unique to the Chronicler. This is the climactic purpose for which his redaction of the material from 2 Samuel has been building.

It begins with the identification of the location of the House of the Lord. "Here shall be the house of the LORD God and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel." (22:1) David is told why he would not be the one to build the house of the LORD despite his zeal to do so. The charge from David to his son Solomon reveals the answer:

Then he called for Solomon his son and charged him to build a house for the LORD, the God of Israel. David said to Solomon, "My son, I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of the LORD my God. ⁸ But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have waged great wars. You shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood before me on the earth. ⁹ Behold, a son shall be born to you who shall be a man of rest. I will give him rest from all his surrounding enemies. For his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days.

-- 1 Chronicles 22:6-9

"Is not the LORD your God with you? And has he not given you peace on every side? For he has delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand, and the land is subdued before the LORD and his people. Now set your mind and heart to seek the LORD your God. Arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, so that the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of the LORD."

--1 Chron. 22:18-19

The contrast between David and his Son Solomon is a contrast between war and peace. Indeed, even Solomon's name is a play on the Hebrew word for peace: Shalom.

The rest of the book is given to the tremendous groundwork David provides to his son in terms of organization and collection of resources. This will be inspirational to the restoration of the temple in Ezra and Nehemiah's day. It will also provide important genealogical information for reorganizing the reconstituted Jerusalem.

David calls all Israel to the task of freely sacrificing for the building up of the temple of the Lord out of the abundance of blessing: "For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you." (29:14)