



# 1 & 2 Chronicles

*2 Chronicles 1-16*

# The Bible Challenge

A daily guide to reading the Bible in a year

## Blessings and Judgment

The overarching 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
<b>Establishment of the Davidic Monarchy</b>	c. 1010 - 931 BC	1 Chronicles 10 - 2 Chronicles 9
<b>History of Judah from the division of the Kingdom until its fall</b>	931-586	2 Chronicles 10 - 36:21
<b>Exile in Babylonian Captivity</b>	586 - 538	2 Chronicles 36:17-21
<b>Cyrus decree</b>	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.



# The Bible Challenge

A daily guide to reading the Bible in a year

## Structure

The Structure of 1 & 2 Chronicles can be divided into four 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 Divided Kingdom: Focus on Judah	2 Chronicles 10-28
The Reunited Kingdom	2 Chronicles 29-36

The United Kingdom section focuses on the building of the Temple under David and Solomon. The Divided Kingdom reveals the Blessings and Judgments of God for the southern Kingdom.

### A United Kingdom under Solomon (2 Chron. 1-9)

The focus of 2 Chronicles is first on the construction of the Temple under Solomon. The Chronicler then focuses on the Blessings and Judgments of the Kings of Judah during the Divided Kingdom.

Whereas 1 Kings, tells the story of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms. 2 Chronicles focuses almost exclusively on the Kings of Judah and expands on the stories of their reign.

Section	2 Chronicles	1 Kings
Solomon builds the Temple	2 Chron 1-9	1 Kings 3-11
Rehoboam's Reign	10-12	1 Kings 14
Abijah's Reign	13	1 Ki. 15
Asa's Reign	14-16	1 Ki. 15
Jehoshaphat's Reign	17-21	1 Ki. 22



# The Bible Challenge

A daily guide to reading the Bible in a year

## The Reign of Solomon: The Temple Builder (1-9)

The focus for the Chronicler is on Solomon's role as the master builder of the Temple. 1 Kings presents a more detailed look at his reign including evidence of his wisdom, (the story of the two prostitutes) and his downfall into idolatry due to his many foreign wives. The Chronicler expands on the significance of the Temple. For example, his letter to Hiram the King of Tyre is expanded:

*The house that I am to build will be great, for our God is greater than all gods.<sup>6</sup> But who is able to build him a house, since heaven, even highest heaven, cannot contain him? Who am I to build a house for him, except as a place to make offerings before him? 2 Chron. 2:5-6*

Yet he also leaves off many of the architectural details of 1 Kings 6:4-20 and 1 Kings 6:29-36 and chooses to focus in on the Most Holy Place. (3) The Chronicler is more interested in the purpose and use of the Temple, than its building. So while his section on the construction is more condensed than 1 Kings, his section on the dedication is expanded. The readers of 2 Chronicles should be encouraged that when they lift instrument and voice to the praise of the Lord, his divine presence will manifest in Glory.

*[I]t was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the LORD), and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the LORD,*

*"For he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever,"*

*the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud,<sup>14</sup> so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.*

--2 Chr. 5:13-14



# The Bible Challenge

A daily guide to reading the Bible in a year

The recounting of the Dedication of the Temple follows quite closely the version in 1 Kings with a noticeable difference at the end (cf. 1 Ki. 8:50b-53). Instead of appealing to God's mercy to Moses and the Israelites in the Exodus, the Chronicler quotes a portion of Psalm 132:8-10. Clearly his concern is with the "steadfast love for David". The emphasis is on the Davidic Covenant and the Hope that the restored community should have in the Messianic promises.

*<sup>41</sup> “And now arise, O LORD God, and go to your resting place,*

*you and the ark of your might.*

*Let your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation,*

*and let your saints rejoice in your goodness.*

*<sup>42</sup> O LORD God, do not turn away the face of your anointed one!*

*Remember your steadfast love for David your servant.” --2 Chron. 6:41-42*

---

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. --John 1:14*

The Lord responds to Solomon's prayer of dedication with another divine manifestation of fire and glory! (7:1-3) God is faithful to his people when they repent and seek his face. His covenant love endures forever. Ultimately the hope for Divine glory and presence is revealed in fullness in the Temple of God in the flesh. (John 1:14; 2:19-21)

In the Lord's address to Solomon, the Chronicler includes an additional sentence not included in the divine word recorded in 1 Kings. This lies at the heart of the central message of the Book of 2 Chronicles for the restoration generation:

*When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people,<sup>14</sup> if 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 and will forgive their sin and heal their land. --2 Chronicles 7:13-14*

---



# The Bible Challenge

A daily guide to reading the Bible in a year

2 Chronicles 8 and 9 summarize the conclusion of Solomon's reign. Interestingly, they do not tell the story of his down fall into idolatry. The Chronicler intends to hold up the reigns of David and Solomon for the positive blessings of a United Monarchy.

## The Divided Kingdom: Rehoboam to Asa (10-16)

The Division of the Kingdom was brought about by the folly of Solomon's son Rehoboam who alienated the Northern tribes by rejecting their plea for relief from the heavy labor in his father Solomon's building projects. It is also noted that this is a "turn of affairs brought about by God" (10:15). Human responsibility and divine sovereignty are weaved through the pages of Holy Scripture.

Of significance to the Chronicler is that the rebellion and idolatry of the Northern Tribes led to the exodus and migration of the Levitical priesthood from the North. (11:14-17) For a season, the Levites brought blessing and strength to the Southern Kingdom and Rehoboam. In spite of God's Blessings, he rebelled.

*When the rule of Rehoboam was established and he was strong, he abandoned the law of the LORD, and all Israel with him.<sup>2</sup> In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. --2 Chr. 12:1-2*

---

"Unfaithfulness" is a key word. Rebellion brings disaster, faithfulness and repentance leads to relief and strength. Rehoboam "did not set his heart to seek the LORD." (12:14)

His son, Abijah, is used as a foil for the rebellious Jeroboam in the North. His words condemn the rejection of the Levites for idolatry. (13:8-12). Judah prevails over Israel because "they relied on the Lord, the God of their fathers." (13:18)

King Asa is a mixed ruler. At the beginning of his reign he prevails because he calls out to the Lord for help. (14:11ff) However, toward the end of his reign he forsakes the Lord's help and makes an alliance with the King of Syria--and he is rebuked! (16)