

Intro to the Books of Chronicles

The third-longest book in the Bible (after Psalms & Isaiah), covering the longest historical period of any book. Originally one book in Hebrew Bible, but divided in LXX into two to accommodate the inclusion of vowels in the Greek version. The present name of the books comes from the Vulgate (5th century).

I. Purpose of the Books of Chronicles:

As the books of Samuel and Kings told the story of Israel's monarchy from the standpoint of the prophets, placing the primary emphasis on the royal families, the books of Chronicles retell the story from a priest's perspective, placing the emphasis upon the religious or spiritual heritage. Samuel and Kings were written at the time of, or prior to, the exile. Chronicles was written at the time of the restoration from exile, with a concern to inculcate in the new Jewish community an awareness of the central place a relationship with God plays in the life and fortunes of the nation.

II. Authorship:

Author was a scholar, drawing upon 16 different source documents, writing after the return of the Jewish exiles from Babylon.

Traditionally, Ezra. The books of Chronicles and Ezra seem to form a continuous history, with Ezra picking up exactly where Chronicles leaves off.

The author of both, Chronicles and Ezra, seems to have been a Levite or priest, fascinated with the details of the temple and its rituals.

Vocabulary is similar in Chronicles and Ezra (both speak of the Persian coin, the *daric*; both speak of things "prescribed" in the Law), containing occasional Chaldaisms.

Their style of the two works is also demonstrably similar.

III. General Contents of Chronicles:

Contains the most extensive genealogies to be found in scripture (chs.1-9)

1 Chronicles (after nine chapters of genealogies) covers the reign of David, from Saul's death to David's (approx. 40 years [29:27]—roughly parallel to 2 Samuel).

2 Chronicles covers the remaining history of the Judean kingdom, from Solomon to the exile (approx. 430 years — roughly parallel to the Books of Kings), and closes with the decree of Cyrus that ended the captivity (539 BC).

Though more than half of the material is repeated from the books of Samuel (especially in 1 Chronicles) and Kings (especially in 2 Chronicles), yet by one count, there are 27 unique narratives in Chronicles, which are found nowhere else.

Chronicles omits the history of the northern kingdom after the division, and thus also omits the stories of Elijah and Elisha, which are so prominent in 1 & 2 Kings.

In telling the history of the southern kingdom, it focuses especially on the few godly kings (e.g. Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah and Josiah). David's sin with Bathsheba, which is very significant to his later history (in 2 Samuel) is not mentioned.

Six out of the nine chapters devoted to Solomon's reign pertain to the temple.

While 2 Kings devotes three verses to Hezekiah's reforms, Chronicles devotes three whole chapters.

Much greater focus on the temple and priestly functions than in Samuel or Kings.

IV. Outline of the Books

1 Chronicles

- I. The Genealogies (ch.1-4)
 - A. Adam to David (chs.1-2)
 - B. David to the Captivity (ch.3)
 - C. The twelve tribes (ch.4-8)
 - D. Dwellers in Jerusalem (9:2-34)
 - E. Saul's family (9:35-44)
- II. The ascent of David (ch.10-12)
 - A. The end of Saul's reign (ch.10)
 - B. David's anointing and conquest of Jerusalem (11:1-9)
 - C. David's mighty men (11:10-ch.12)
- III. David's reign
 - A. The Ark of the Covenant (chs.13-16)
 - B. The Davidic Covenant (ch.17)
 - C. Military history (chs.18-21); the ill-fated census (ch.21)
 - D. Preparations to build the temple (ch.22-29:20)
 - E. Passing the baton to Solomon (29:21-30)

2 Chronicles

- I. The reign of Solomon (chs.1-9)
 - A. Coronation and early reign (ch.1)
 - B. Building the Temple (chs.2-7)
 - C. Wealth, achievements and death (chs.8-9)
- II. The reigns of Judean Kings to the captivity (chs.10-36:21)

Rehoboam (chs.10-12); **Abijah** (ch.13); **Asa** (chs.14-16);
Jehoshaphat (chs.17-21:3); **Jehoram** (ch.21); **Ahaziah & Athaliah** (chs.22-23);
Joash (ch.24); **Amaziah** (ch.25); **Uzziah** (ch.26); **Jotham** (ch.27); **Ahaz** (ch.28);
Hezekiah (chs.29-32); **Manasseh & Amon** (ch.33); **Josiah** (chs.34-35);
Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin. Zedekiah (ch.36:1-21)
- III. Cyrus 's proclamation at end of exile (36:22-23)