



2 CHRONICLES

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Welcome to the book of 2 Chronicles!

To begin your study of II Chronicles, meditate upon the content of the book reflected in the overview chart below. As you consider each section and title, we have chosen, decide how each one relates to either the theme of "reverence for the temple" or the "division of the kingdom and kings". 2 Chronicles is a continuation of I Chronicles which is similar to both the books of Samuel and of the Kings. Once again, it is time to evaluate our lives by the example of Solomon as well as the examples of both good and evil kings in Judah.

2 CHRONICLES Temple Revered

SOLOMON'S REIGN	DIVIDED KINGDOM	JUDAH
1:12-22; 2:5,6	11:16; 12:1,2	<i>Kings...13:18</i> <i>Captivity...36:11-21</i>
1-9	10	11-36

"Behold, heaven and highest heaven cannot contain Thee."

- 6:18

Also note the Scripture references listed in the overview chart above. Take this opportunity to investigate each one, looking for the relationship between the section titles and key verses. Use these verses as "guideposts" to unlock the message of the book. What have you learned thus far about 2 Chronicles?

1 Kings opens with Solomon's splendor and closes with a split in the kingdom. 2 Kings opens with the subjectivity of Ahaziah (is there no God in Israel?), and closes with the exile and scattering of Israel. I Chronicles opens with a historical statement of genealogy and closes with specifics of David's reign (new perspective!). II Chronicles again repeats a statement of Solomon's splendor (I Kings) and closes with the split and scattering of God's chosen people. As you read this book, observe differences and similarities in the reporting of the authors of many identical accounts.

Open your heart as you read!

Sin has consequences of captivity as an instrument of the grace and justice of God. Notice the progression of the book's sections..when we are drawn away in prosperity (1-9), a divided heart results (10), confusion reigns (11-36) and captivity results (36).

NAME, AUTHOR, DATE-- See I Chronicles for this information.

OTHER BACKGROUND

The book of 2 Chronicles scans the history of Judah from Solomon to the Babylonia Captivity. One fourth of the book (chapters 1-9) is devoted to the reign of Solomon. After his death, the nation forsakes the temple and the true worship of God. The remainder of this book (chapters 10-36) describes the turmoil and unrest which destroy the nation due to its forsaking of the Lord. The godly reforms of four kings only temporarily stem the tide of impending doom at the hands of the Babylonians. Eventually defeated and dragged off into captivity by the Babylonians, the nation appears forgotten by God. But 70 years later, God brings His people back to the land and hope lives again in Israel.

If there is one key lesson which stands out in this book, it is that the nation's response to God is the decisive factor in its history and destiny. This is seen throughout the book but note particularly 26:5 where we read, "Uzziah set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God; and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him prosper".

It is also interesting to compare and contrast the books around Chronicles in order to see how these two books fit into the canon of Scripture:

<u>Kings</u>	<u>Chronicles</u>
Begins with the death of David	Begins with the genealogy of Adam
Closes with captivity in Babylon	Closes with order to return
Covers both kingdoms	Concentrates on Judah
Contains a message of judgment	Contains a message of hope
Emphasizes man's failures	Emphasizes God's faithfulness
Emphasis is upon the throne	Emphasis is upon the temple
Chronicles -- Emphasizes <u>Retrospection</u>	Nehemiah -- Emphasizes <u>Reconstruction</u>
Ezra -- Emphasizes <u>Restoration</u>	Esther -- Emphasizes <u>Preservation</u>

Why Study the book of 2 Chronicles?

1. In this book, we discover there were two persistent perils to the temple and true worship -- it was either neglected or corrupted. According to I Corinthians 6:19, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and we are to glorify God in them. In what ways might you be neglecting or corrupting the Spirit's temple (diet, sleep, exercise)? Learn the consequences of Israel's neglecting and corrupting the Temple and apply it to your body, God's temple.

2. Israel also neglected or corrupted the true worship of God in this book, with devastating consequences. Consider whether you or your local church may be guilty of the same sin as Israel in this matter of true worship. Use the following as checklist:

- Do we frequently come to meet each other and miss meeting God?
- Do we substitute attendance at a "performance" for true worship?
- Do we encourage all to be involved in corporate worship or just a few formally educated leaders or pastors?
- Do we limit our worship of God to a certain religious building or locality?

Solomon's Reign

Read Chapters 1-9

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
5		
6		
8		
9		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. 3:3 is indicative of the tone of this section and the magnificence of the feat is reflected in 4:18.
2. What happened at the temple's completion (5:13-14)?
3. What do we learn in chapter 6 about captivity?
4. What was Solomon's sin, and what contradiction is revealed in 8:11?
5. Note the natural and acquired splendor of Solomon (9:22, 23).

What about today?

Are there any areas of worldly prosperity that are drawing your heart away from the living God? Evaluate your thoughts and lifestyle. Favor in worldly things becomes a curse when they dilute our relationship with God. Read Proverbs 30:7-9.

Division of Judah

Read Chapters 10-13

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
10		
11		
12		
13		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Note the ignoring of Jeroboam's becoming King of Israel. Israel was considered apostate from the beginning. Why?
2. Judah's apostasy came slower but eventually consumed the southern kingdom. What was the result of humbling and repenting by Rehoboam?
3. Again review the contrast of 13:18.

What about today?

Israel's immediate apostasy resulted from her denial of David's household. Though Judah held to her heritage, she still eventually fell to apostasy because of her lukewarm heart. Again, we reflect upon the heart. Do you see your present state as one of whole heart (David), half heart (Solomon), or no heart (Saul)? Note 2 Corinthians 11:2,3.

Asa, Jehoshaphat, Invasion

Read Chapters 14-20

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Again review the character of Asa's reign. What were his reforms? What was the root of his failure?
2. What alliance resulted in Jehoshaphat's downfall? (Note the second alliance of 20:35-37).
3. What did these alliances show us about Jehoshaphat's heart and faith?
4. How was the Ammonite invasion deterred?
5. How would you summarize the reigns and works of these kings in a brief phrase?

What about today?

Reread 16:7-9. Are there "alliances" of this world that can become cheap imitations of reliance upon the person of God? Reflect upon your own lifestyle! Note James 4:4 and context.

Jehoram, Ahazariah, Joash

Read Chapters 21-24

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
21		
22		
23		
24		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What tone characterized the reigns of each of these three kings?
2. What was the reason for Judah's invasion by the Arabs and Philistines?
3. How does Elijah's prophecy relate to this invasion (21:12-15)?
4. Notice the account of 22:10-12. Compare it with II Kings 11:1-3.
5. What do we learn about God and His plan from Jehoida and Joash?

What about today?

Restoration is a difficult work. More so than new construction itself. The church today is in need of restoration. What principles can be gleaned to help us in the work as we consider the examples before us? Note Ezekiel 22:30.

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
25		
26		
27		
28		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What tone characterized the reigns of each of these three kings?
2. What were the two judgments on Judah at this time and how were they accomplished? ac-

What about today?

The whole heart requires obedience. The half-heart results in apostasy. The no-heart reverts into wickedness. The consequences of our motives may be born in this world or the next. Check your heart! Note I Timothy 5:24.

Hezekiah's Reign

Read Chapters 29-32

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
29		
30		
31		
32		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What was the character of Hezekiah's reign?
2. What specific things were accomplished to bring reformation to Judah?
3. What do we learn about God, Israel and Gentiles from the invasion of Sennacherib?
4. From the lesson revealed in the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah?

What about today?

In what ways do you need to experience similar or related purification? Restoration? Observances? Reforms? Note Jeremiah 6:16.

Last Kings & Captivity

Read Chapters 33-36

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
33		
34		
35		
36		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Contrast the reigns of Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah.
2. Notice the reformation of Josiah. What was removed? Repaired? Recovered? Reported? Re-covenanted? Re-celebrated?
3. Reread the sad account of the destruction of Jerusalem (36:17-21). Also note the decree of Cyrus (36:22-23).

What about today?

Once again we see the consequences of sin, the restoration of reformation, and the faithfulness of God. Despite our desperate need in our nature, God reigns supreme! Is there any doubt in your mind about the fact or need of a sovereign God over His creation? Note Hebrews 12:25-29.