

Studying 2nd Chronicles

Why study 2nd Chronicles? The book of 2nd Chronicles is about the decline of true devotion to God amongst the royal leadership of Judah beginning with Solomon. The book is also about the benefits of seeking the Lord in all things and the consequences of forsaking Him. Those who seek the Lord are to do so and to obey and worship Him with wholeheartedness. 2nd Chronicles emphasizes the need for worshipping God with attitudes and actions that represent true repentance and belief in Him. Repetitious empty religious rituals are of no worth to God and lead to God's judgment.

The "books" of 1st and 2nd Chronicles were originally one book with the title of "the words of the days" and were also known as "the things omitted (left behind)." In c. 400 A.D. Jerome issued his Latin Vulgate translation and split the book into two with the title of "The Chronicles of the Entire Sacred History" which has been shortened since that time to first and second Chronicles. History does not record who wrote these records, but Jewish tradition has identified Ezra and Nehemiah as successive authors. It is best to understand that under God's superintendence, Ezra, Nehemiah or others compiled the records that in their finished form are what we now have as the final books of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Outline of 2nd Chronicles

History of Solomon's Life and Reign: Chapters 1-9

History of Judah's Kings leading to captivity: Chapters 10-36

Themes of 2nd Chronicles: (1) Blessings for Faithfulness to the LORD. (2) Judgment for Forsaking the LORD

Summary of 2nd Chronicles

The first nine chapters of 2nd Chronicles records the history of Solomon's life and reign in a positive portrayal including the building of the temple, and an account of his great wealth. It does not reveal the gradual fall of Solomon into idolatry and the consequences of marrying foreign wives which is described in 1 Kings chapter 11. The remaining chapters of 2nd Chronicles, 10-36 recounts the lives of the successors of Solomon, the events leading to the splitting of the kingdom into two nations, Judah and Israel, and the eventual demise of Judah resulting in the Babylonian captivity. Chapter 10-11 describes the beginning of Rehoboam's evil reign and the revolt of Jeroboam and the establishment of the nation of Israel. Chapter 12 recounts the campaign against Judah by Egypt and the plundering of the temple. The reign of Abijah is described in chapter 13. Chapters 14-16 recount the reign of Asa who was good in some things, yet he made an alliance with the king of Syria and failed to rely on the LORD and he did not seek the LORD when he became sick. Chapters 17-20 describe the reign of king Jehoshaphat who was faithful to the LORD in many things, but he made an alliance with Ahaziah king of Israel that was displeasing to the LORD. Chapter 21 recounts the evil reign of Jehoram and the judgment of the LORD upon him and the nation of Judah.

Chapters 22-24 describe the reigns of king Ahaziah and Queen Athaliah and Joash and how Joash became king when he was just seven years old. Chapter 25 recounts the reign of king Amaziah who followed the LORD in many things but fell into idolatry. Chapter 26 describes the fifty-two-year reign of king Uzziah (Azariah). Uzziah followed the LORD for most of his reign but in later life grew proud and was unfaithful to the LORD. Chapter 27 records the sixteen-year reign of king Jotham who followed the LORD but the people of Judah under his reign were unfaithful to the LORD. Chapter 28 describes the sixteen-year reign of evil king Ahaz. This chapter gives a brief account of his wicked alliance with the king of Assyria and his blatant worship of idols.

Chapters 29-32 describe the rule of king Hezekiah who was one of the most devout kings of Judah. These chapters recount Hezekiah's cleansing of the temple and the restoration of worship in the temple in accordance with God's commands and the restoration of the faithful celebration of Passover. In chapter 32, the account of the Assyrian attempted assault on Jerusalem is described. (See also the accounts of the reign of Hezekiah in 2nd Kings chapters 18-20 and Isaiah chapters 36-39).

Chapter 33 recounts the evil reign of king Manasseh. Chapters 34-35 describe the reign of king Josiah who was faithful to the LORD and how the prophet Jeremiah lamented the king's death. Chapter 36 briefly describes the reigns of the final kings of Judah, the seventy-year Babylonian captivity and the decree of Cyrus, king of Persian that ended the captivity. Note: For a chart of the Kings of Judah and Israel see Studying 1st Kings.

Verses to memorize from 2nd Chronicles (ESV).

7:14 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.

15:7 But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded.

20:15 Thus says the Lord to you, 'Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's.

20:17 You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the Lord will be with you.

Resources for studying the book of 2nd Chronicles.

See the article on how to study the Bible for suggestions on the method of Bible study and recommended resources to obtain. Suggested commentaries and studies are listed below for a more extensive study. Some are available on-line in a pdf format.

One Hour – One Book

Scroll down to video on 1st and 2nd Chronicles.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSrCJNW5eUWQMwVw_2VqW_w

Commentaries

Constable, Thomas. *Notes on 2 Chronicles*, latest edition. Online at Plano Bible Chapel.

Hill, Andrew E. *1 & 2 Chronicles*, NIV Application Commentary, Zondervan, 2003.

Merrill, Eugene, H. *2 Chronicles*, The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Victor, Cook Communications, 2004.

Payne, J. Barton, *1, 2 Chronicles*, The Expositors Bible Commentary, Vol. 4, Zondervan, 1988.

Sailhamer, John, *First and Second Chronicles*, Everyman's Bible Commentary, Moody, 1983.

Thompson, J. A. *1, 2 Chronicles*, New American Commentary, Broadman & Holman, 1994.

Zuber, Kevin D. *2 Chronicles*, The Moody Bible Commentary, Moody Publishers, 2014.

Studies

Studies in the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society can be found online in .pdf format.

Chisholm, Robert B., Jr. *Interpreting the Historical Books: An Exegetical Handbook*. Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis series. Kregel Publications, 2006.

Dillard, Raymond B. *The Reign of Asa (2 Chronicles 14—16): An Example of the Chronicler's Theological Method*. Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 23 (September 1980):207-18.

Dumbrell, William J. Dumbrell, *The purpose of the Books of Chronicles*, Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 27.3 (Sept. 1984): 257-266.

Dyer, Charles H., and Eugene H. Merrill. *2 Chronicles*, Nelson's Old Testament Survey. Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001.

Goswell, Gregory, *Putting the Book of Chronicles in its Place*. Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, 60/2 (2017): 283–99

Hanna, Kenneth G. *From Moses to Malachi: Exploring the Old Testament*. 2nd ed. CrossBooks, 2014.

Merrill, Eugene H. *A Theology of Chronicles, A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, Moody Publishers, 1991, pages 157-187.

Merrill, Eugene H. “*The Theology of the Chronicler: What Difference Does It Make?*” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 59:4 (2016):691-700.

Shields, Peter E. (2019) *Chronicles as the Intended Conclusion to the Hebrew Scriptures*, Channels: Where Disciplines Meet: Vol. 3: No. 2, Article 1 (DOI: 10.15385/jch.2019.3.2.1) Available online: <https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/channels/vol3/iss2/1>