



Overview for 1 Chronicles

Purpose: To trace the lineage from Adam to David as an encouragement to God’s people, to emphasize their heritage and remind them of doctrinal and moral truths, and to provide a record of David’s reign.

Author: No author is cited, but Jewish tradition holds that the priest and scribe Ezra was the author.

Name: The Hebrew name of this book, *Dibre Hayamim*, literally means “the words of the days,” or “daily matters.” In the Greek version of the Old Testament, the name of the book is *Paralipomena*, which means “omissions” (referring to matter not included in the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings). *Chronicles*, the English name given to the book in about the fifth century, refers to a chronological account of events. While all of these titles reflect portions of the book, none of them fully describe it.

Time Period Covered: Much of the material in 1 and 2 Chronicles repeats and adds to the historical record found in the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings, and spans several centuries of the history of God’s chosen people. The historical section of 1 Chronicles begins with the death of Saul around 1010 B.C. The last event noted is the death of David and the onset of Solomon’s reign forty years later in 970 B.C.

Date Written: If the author is Ezra, he probably wrote 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah sometime after he came to Jerusalem around 457 B.C., likely between 450 to 425 B.C.

Key People: David and his son Solomon

Setting: 1 and 2 Chronicles were written in the post-exile era, after the Jews returned from Babylonian captivity. The remnant of God’s people

needed constant encouragement to keep their faith and traditions alive. They needed to have hope that the God of David had not forsaken them, and that a king from his royal line would some day rule once more. Following the example of prophets such as Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the author of Chronicles endeavored to help the people see that God had not forsaken them.

Unique Features: The Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles were originally one (as were Samuel and Kings); it was divided into two books in the fifteenth century. Whereas the Books of Samuel and Kings include the history of both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, Chronicles is concerned primarily with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which made up the Southern Kingdom.

In 1 Chronicles, there is an emphasis upon the Ark of the Covenant, the Temple, the participants in Temple service, and other aspects of worship, thus providing history from a priestly viewpoint. Both 1 and 2 Chronicles were written with a selective rather than comprehensive historical framework. The author highlighted spiritual lessons and taught moral truths by focusing primarily on positive aspects of the nation’s history and leaders. For example, in 1 Chronicles no mention is made of David’s sin, Absalom’s rebellion, or Adonijah’s usurping of the throne.

Summary: The Book of 1 Chronicles has two main sections. The first nine chapters are genealogies, or family histories, that trace the descendants of Adam down to David. Chapters ten through twenty-nine provide a record of the reign of David from his coronation and capture of Jerusalem to his final words and death.

Timeline

Some dates are approximate, as reference materials differ.

See “The Divided Kingdom” four-page timeline included in this unit.

Outline

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A complete amplified outline of this book is available on our website at www.apostolicfaith.org.*

- I. The genealogies (1:1 — 9:44)
 - A. From Adam to Noah's descendants (1:1-27)
 - B. From Abraham to Isaac's descendants (1:28 — 8:40)
 - C. The record of the returning remnant (9:1-44)
- II. The reign of David (10:1 — 29:30)
 - A. Background: Saul's death (10:1-14)
 - B. The establishment of his kingdom (11:1 — 22:1)
 - C. The organization of the Temple ritual (22:1 — 26:32)
 - D. The organization of the civil affairs (27:1-34)
 - E. The final acts of David (28:1 — 29:30)