

LECTURE 29: 1–2 CHRONICLES
“The God who elects, chastens, & restores”
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I. Orienting Data

- A. Synthesis:** The last book in Jesus’s Bible was 1–2 Chronicles, which ends where Ezra-Nehemiah begins, recalling Cyrus’s decree that the Israelites could return to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Of all the books in the historical-narrative portion, Chronicles alone is out of chronological order, and this is likely to highlight that the restoration described in Ezra-Nehemiah was not the ultimate restoration. The Messiah and his kingdom were still to come, and when one reads the story beginning with Adam and continuing through David, Solomon, and this history the Judean kings, one can track a line of kingdom hope that needed to be awakened.

- B. Focus:** God's purposes to establish a global people through Israel are still moving ahead, and the kingdom restoration is near; how to view the past.
- C. Content:** The story of Judah's history, written with the intent of giving the present generation a sense of continuity with its great past and a hope for the future. The key provided for maintaining the past connection and future anticipation is focus on the temple, proper worship, and the promises to David.
- D. Key Questions:** Is God still interested in us and is God still intent on consummating his kingdom plan?
- E. Historical Coverage:** An opening genealogy goes back to Adam; the narrative itself covers the kingdom of Judah from David (ca. 1010 B.C.) to the decree of Cyrus that Israel could return to their land (538 B.C.).
- F. Emphases:**
 1. The continuity of the people of Judah (and others) through the exile and beyond.
 2. David and Solomon's covenant loyalty as models for the time of restoration.
 3. The central role of the temple and worship for restoration.
 4. True worship as a matter of the heart, full of joy and song.
 5. Divine blessing and rest for obedience, and retribution for disobedience.
 6. The sustained hope of consummate kingdom restoration.
- G. Content Outline**
 1. The Preservation of Kingdom Hope: Genealogies from Adam to the Decree of Cyrus (1 Chr 1–9)—Focus is on Judah and the Levites and on Israel's connection to what God started with Adam.
 2. Foundational Portraits of Kingdom Hope: The United Monarchy and the Building of the Temple (1 Chr 10–2 Chr 9)—Focus is on David, the temple, and correct worship.
 - a. David's Reign and the Preparations for the Temple (1 Chr 10–29)
 - b. Solomon's Reign and the Construction of the Temple (2 Chr 1–9)
 3. The Passing Away and Rebirth of Kingdom Hope: The Demise and Destruction of the Davidic Kingdom and Temple and the Anticipation of Something Better (2 Chr 10–36)

II. Overview of the Message

- A. The Preservation of Kingdom Hope: Genealogies from Adam to the Decree of Cyrus (1 Chr. 1:1–9:34)**—Focus is on Judah and the Levites and on Israel's connection to what God started with Adam.
 1. The book opens with a series of genealogies that begin with Adam and run through the decree of Cyrus. Extended space is given to highlight the direct line from Adam to David (1:1–3:24), and then special focus is given to the tribe of Levi (leaders of temple worship, ch. 6), the tribe of Benjamin and the genealogy of Saul (as a foil for David, ch. 8), and the returned exiles (to mark preservation, 9:1–34).
 2. Purpose:
 - a. To stress that the restored remnant has continuity with a divinely ordained past that ultimately goes back to the creation of the world. As such, God's purposes since Adam still stand—God will use his kingdom people, represented by a king in the line of David, to overcome curse and establish global blessing.
 - b. Judah and Levi are the surviving tribes of the southern kingdom that represent the Davidic dynasty, Jerusalem, and proper worship in the temple.
- B. Foundational Portraits of Kingdom Hope: United Monarchy (1 Chr. 9:35–2 Chr. 9)**—Focus is on David, the temple, and correct worship.
 1. David's Reign and the Preparations for the Temple (1 Chr. 10–29):

- a. Saul gets a genealogy (9:35–44) plus fourteen verses of narrative (10:1–14). His life is solely a prelude to David.
 - 1 Chr 10:14. He did not seek guidance from the LORD. Therefore the LORD put him death and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.
- b. The fact that the narrative of David begins directly after nine chapters of genealogy suggests that all history since Adam was a prelude to him and ultimately the Messiah that comes from him.
 - Gen. 49:8, 10. Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you....¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
- c. So much of the narrative of David is focused on his temple building preparations, portraying King David as leading the way in proper worship of Yahweh.
 - i. David's anointing and power (chs. 11–12)
 - 1 Chr 11:2. In times past, even when Saul was king, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD your God said to you, "You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over my people Israel."
 - 1 Chr 11:9. And David became greater and greater, for the LORD of hosts was with him.
 - 1 Chr 12:18, 22. Then the Spirit clothed Amasai, chief of the thirty, and he said, "We are yours, O David, and with you, O son of Jesse! Peace, peace to you, and peace to your helpers! For your God helps you." ... For from day to day men came to David to help him, until there was a great army, like an army of God.
 - ii. David's commitment to see God exalted at the center of the kingdom by bringing the ark and tabernacle to Jerusalem (chs. 13–16)
 - 1 Chr 13:2–3. And David said to all the assembly of Israel, "If it seems good to you and from the LORD our God, let us send abroad to our brothers who remain in all the lands of Israel, as well as to the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasturelands, that they may be gathered to us."³ Then let us bring again the ark of our God to us, for we did not seek it in the days of Saul."
 - 1 Chr 14:17. And the fame of David went out into all lands, and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations.
 - 1 Chr 16:1, 4, 31. And they brought in the ark of God and set it inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God....⁴ Then he appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the LORD, to invoke, to thank, and to praise the LORD, the God of Israel....³¹ "Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, and let them say among the nations, 'The LORD reigns!'"
 - iii. David's commitment to build a "house" for God results in God's promising to build a "house" for David (ch. 17, see 17:12–14, 27).
 - 1 Chr 17:12–14. He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever.¹³ I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you,¹⁴ but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever.
 - 1 Chr 17:27. Now you have been pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever before you, for it is you, O LORD, who have blessed, and it is blessed forever.
 - iv. David's loyalty to God brings great military success (chs. 18–20, see 18:6, 13; 19:13)
 - 1 Chr 18:6, 13. Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus, and the Syrians became servants to David and brought tribute. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went....¹³ Then he put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.
 - 1 Chr 19:13. Be strong, and let us use our strength for our people and for the cities of our God, and may the LORD do what seems good to him.

- v. NOTE: At this point in the Samuel narrative, we read of the Bathsheba episode. However, the narrator of Chronicles chooses not to address this in order to leave the focus on David's hopeful acts and God-dependence.
- vi. David's sin with the census retains the focus on the need for proper worship in Jerusalem (ch. 21).
- (1) Satan incites David to take the census (21:1). With respect to the destructive forces that stand in hostility to God's kingdom building endeavors, the Chronicler shifts focus from Yahweh and David (see 2 Sam 24:1) to the demonic. Followers of God must not give in to them.
 - (2) David recognizes his sin (1 Chr 21:8).
 - (3) David affirms the mercy of God: "I am in great distress. Let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is very great" (21:13).
 - (4) David builds an altar for worship and declares, "Here shall be the house of the LORD God and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel" (22:1).
- vii. David begins preparing for the temple and commissions Solomon to build it (chs. 22–29, see 22:5–6, 11–13; 29:16–19).
- 1 Chr 22:5–6. For David said, "Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, of fame and glory throughout all lands. I will therefore make preparation for it." So David provided materials in great quantity before his death. ⁶ Then he called for Solomon his son and charged him to build a house for the LORD, the God of Israel.
 - 1 Chr 22:11–13, 16, 19. Now, my son, the LORD be with you, so that you may succeed in building the house of the LORD your God, as he has spoken concerning you. ¹² Only, may the LORD grant you discretion and understanding, that when he gives you charge over Israel you may keep the law of the LORD your God. ¹³ Then you will prosper if you are careful to observe the statutes and the rules that the LORD commanded Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous. Fear not; do not be dismayed.... ¹⁶ The LORD be with you! ... ¹⁹ Now set your mind and heart to seek the LORD your God. Arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, so that the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of the LORD.
 - 1 Chr 28:5–12, 19. "And of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons) he has chosen Solomon my son to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. ⁶ He said to me, 'It is Solomon your son who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. ⁷ I will establish his kingdom forever if he continues strong in keeping my commandments and my rules, as he is today.' ⁸ Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever. ⁹ And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever. ¹⁰ Be careful now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong and do it."
- ¹¹ Then David gave Solomon his son the plan of the vestibule of the temple, and of its houses, its treasuries, its upper rooms, and its inner chambers, and of the room for the mercy seat; ¹² and the plan of all that he had in mind for the courts of the house of the LORD, all the surrounding chambers, the treasuries of the house of God, and the treasuries for dedicated gifts.... ¹⁹ All this he made clear to me in writing from the hand of the LORD, all the work to be done according to the plan.
- 1 Chr 29:1, 10–12, 16–19. And David the king said to all the assembly, "Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great, for the palace will not be for man but for the LORD God." ... ¹⁰ David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: "Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. ¹¹ Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the

earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all.¹² Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all....¹⁶ O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own.¹⁷ I know, my God, that you test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. In the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things, and now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering freely and joyously to you.¹⁸ O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts toward you.¹⁹ Grant to Solomon my son a whole heart that he may keep your commandments, your testimonies, and your statutes, performing all, and that he may build the palace for which I have made provision.

2. Solomon's Reign and the Construction of the Temple (2 Chr. 1–9):

- a. Focus is principally on Solomon's devotion to Yahweh in his faithfulness to the temple as the place of true worship (chs. 1–7).
 - i. Solomon prays for wisdom in central sanctuary (ch. 1).
 - ii. Solomon prepares and builds the temple and brings the ark (chs. 2–5).
 - 2 Chr 2:5. The house that I am to build will be great, for our God is greater than all gods.
 - iii. The temple dedication (chs. 6–7).
 - 2 Chr 6:14, 18. O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart....¹⁸ But will God indeed dwell with man on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this house that I have built!
 - 2 Chr 7:13–16. 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,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 Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place.¹⁶ For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that my name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time.
- b. After the temple's dedication, the text magnifies Solomon's kingdom success and the glories of the temple (chs. 8–9).
 - 2 Chr 8:7–8. All the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of Israel,⁸ from their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the people of Israel had not destroyed—these Solomon drafted as forced labor, and so they are to this day.
 - 2 Chr 8:12–14, 16. Then Solomon offered up burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD that he had built before the vestibule,¹³ as the duty of each day required, offering according to the commandment of Moses for the Sabbaths, the new moons, and the three annual feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths.¹⁴ According to the ruling of David his father, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, and the Levites for their offices of praise and ministry before the priests as the duty of each day required, and the gatekeepers in their divisions at each gate, for so David the man of God had commanded....¹⁶ Thus was accomplished all the work of Solomon from the day the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed.
 - 2 Chr 9:3–4, 8. And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built,⁴ the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, and their clothing, his cupbearers, and their clothing, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more breath in her....⁸ [She said,] "Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on his throne as king for the LORD your God! Because your God loved Israel and would establish them forever, he has made you king over them, that you may execute justice and righteousness."
 - 2 Chr 9:22–23. Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.

²³ And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind.

- c. **NOTE:** The Chronicler allows Solomon to die in dignity, honor, and esteem—a point that may also suggest he returned to Yahweh at the end of his life (as seems to be implied if he is the author of Song of Songs [Song 1:1] and the voice of Qoheleth in Ecclesiastes [see esp. Eccl 1:1, 12; 2:1–12]).
- 2 Chr 9:30–31. Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. ³¹ And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father, and Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

C. The Passing Away and Rebirth of Kingdom Hope: Divided Monarchy (2 Chr. 10–36)

1. The Demise of the Davidic Kingdom (2 Chr 10:1–36:19)

a. Structure:

- i. Rehoboam (2 Chr 10–12)
- ii. Abijah (13:1–14:1)
- iii. Asa (14:2–16:14)
- iv. Jehoshaphat (17:1–21:3)
- v. Jehoram (21:4–20)
- vi. Ahaziah (22:1–9)
- vii. Athaliah (22:10–23:21)
- viii. Joash (ch. 24)
- ix. Amaziah (ch. 25)
- x. Uzziah (ch. 26)
- xi. Jotham (ch. 27)
- xii. Ahaz (ch. 28)
- xiii. Hezekiah (chs. 29–32)
- xiv. Manasseh (33:1–20)
- xv. Amon (33:21–25)
- xvi. Josiah (chs. 34–35)
- xvii. Jehoahaz (36:1–3)
- xviii. Jehoiakim (36:4–8)
- xix. Jehoiachin (36:9–10)
- xx. Zedekiah and the Fall of Jerusalem (36:11–19)

- b. Focus is almost exclusively on Judah's kings; the northern kings are only mentioned as they are important to Judah's history. With this, Elijah, prophet to the northern kingdom, is only mentioned once (2 Chr. 21:12), and Elisha is never mentioned.
- c. As in Kings, Hezekiah (2 Chr. 29–32) and Josiah (chs. 34–35) are great figures in light of their loyalty to God and concern for temple worship. Nevertheless, the book also treats positively other less righteous kings. For example, a point not present in 1–2 Kings is that, while Manasseh commits horrible sins (2 Chr. 33:1–9), he repents after exile in Babylon (33:10–17), thus showing God can redeem even the worst of sinners.
- d. The faults of kings are not glossed over: Rehoboam acts unwisely (10:1–19); Ahaz remains rebellious until his death (28:22–25); Jeroboam (13:1–12) and Ahab (18:1–34) are still wicked. The negative assessments demonstrate the Chronicler's honesty; he does not invent a happy story where there is not one.
- #### 2. The Exile and Cyrus' Temple Decree (2 Chr 36:20–23)
- a. Jerusalem's destruction is dealt with only briefly (36:11–21); readers are not allowed to dwell on the catastrophe.

- b. The book closes with Cyrus' decree that Israel could return home and rebuild the temple (36:22–23), and the last verses are nearly identical to the first verses of Ezra-Nehemiah but shorter, giving laser focus to the hope of kingdom restoration. Chronicles ends where Ezra-Nehemiah begins, so the books are out of chronological order, probably in order to highlight that Israel should look ahead to a new and better restoration that would include reconstituted worship around God's presence being led by the greater Davidic king. Because someone living during the initial restoration (after Cyrus' decree) put this history together, ending the story with an eye toward Jerusalem suggests that the author was looking for a greater restoration than had already been experienced.

III. Purpose (some of this material is adapted from M. J. Selman, "Chronicles," *NDBT*, 193–94):

- A. **A Vision of Restoration and Kingdom Hope.** The Chronicler wrote to a people bearing the weight of exile whose cumulative unfaithfulness over the generations had left them in a position before God where there was "no remedy (lit. healing/health)" (2 Chr 36:16). In response, the Chronicler wrote to set forth the principle of restoration and to heighten hope for kingdom consummation. The extensive speeches, whether by kings, prophets, or priests, are strongly hortatory, allowing the book to bear a sermonic feel.
- B. **A Vision of Surrender and Praise.** The Chronicler's distinctive vocabulary emphasizes the value of seeking God, humility and repentance, and the attention given to praise and prayer in the temple. The kings' lives portray how atonement is enjoyed or denied.
 1. David recognizes that he and Israel were already in spiritual exile, in need of a savior. This anticipates Cyrus' decree at the end of the book in 2 Chr 36:23.
 - 1 Chr 16:35–36. Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather and deliver us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name, and glory in your praise. ³⁶ Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting.
 - 2 Chr 36:23. Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, "The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him. Let him go up."
 2. God's response to Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple expresses in detail the restorative principle, grounded in God's promise to forgive the people's sin and to heal their land (2 Chr 7:14).
 - 2 Chr 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.
 3. The temple stands at the center of Israel at the place where David sinned (1 Chr 21:26–22:1); it represents the principle means for forgiveness (2 Chr 29:20–36).
 - 1 Chr 21:26–22:1. And David built there an altar to the LORD and presented burnt offerings and peace offerings and called on the LORD, and the LORD answered him with fire from heaven upon the altar of burnt offering. ²⁷ Then the LORD commanded the angel, and he put his sword back into its sheath. ²⁸ At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. ²⁹ For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon, ³⁰ but David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD. ^{22:1} Then David said, "Here shall be the house of the LORD God and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel."
 - 2 Chr 29:23–24, 35–36. Then the goats for the sin offering were brought to the king and the assembly, and they laid their hands on them, ²⁴ and the priests slaughtered them and made a sin offering with their blood on the altar, to make atonement for all Israel. For the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.... ³⁵ Besides the great number of burnt offerings, there was the fat of the peace offerings, and there were the drink offerings for the burnt offerings. Thus the service of the house of the LORD was restored. ³⁶ And Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced because God had provided for the people, for the thing came about suddenly.

4. In contrast to Kings, the Chronicler's account of the divided monarchy is dotted with examples of repentant kings enjoying restoration: Rehoboam (2 Chr 12:5–6, 12), Hezekiah (32:25–26), and even Manasseh (33:12–13).

- 2 Chr. 12:5–6, 12. Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and to the princes of Judah, who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, “Thus says the LORD, ‘You abandoned me, so I have abandoned you to the hand of Shishak.’”⁶ Then the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, “The LORD is righteous.” ...¹² And when he humbled himself the wrath of the LORD turned from him, so as not to make a complete destruction. Moreover, conditions were good in Judah.
- 2 Chr. 32:25–26. But Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him, for his heart was proud. Therefore wrath came upon him and Judah and Jerusalem.²⁶ But Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah.
- 2 Chr. 33:12–13. And when he was in distress, he entreated the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.¹³ He prayed to him, and God was moved by his entreaty and heard his plea and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.

C. A Vision of Corporate Worship and Calling. The book ends with an invitation to the reader to be among those who return to the Promised Land and to rebuild the house of Yahweh (2 Chr. 36:23: “Let him go up”), which meant not simply to construct a building but to see the temple worship function as it was intended to function so that Israel might complete its calling to stand as examples to the nations.¹

1. The vision was for repentant sinners from a united Israel to draw near to God in Jerusalem through substitutionary atonement (see 2 Chr. 30:1, 5–11) and thus to worship God in his temple, to experience great joy in community, and to live before God throughout the Land in accordance with his Word.

a. On a unified nation from all 12 tribes:

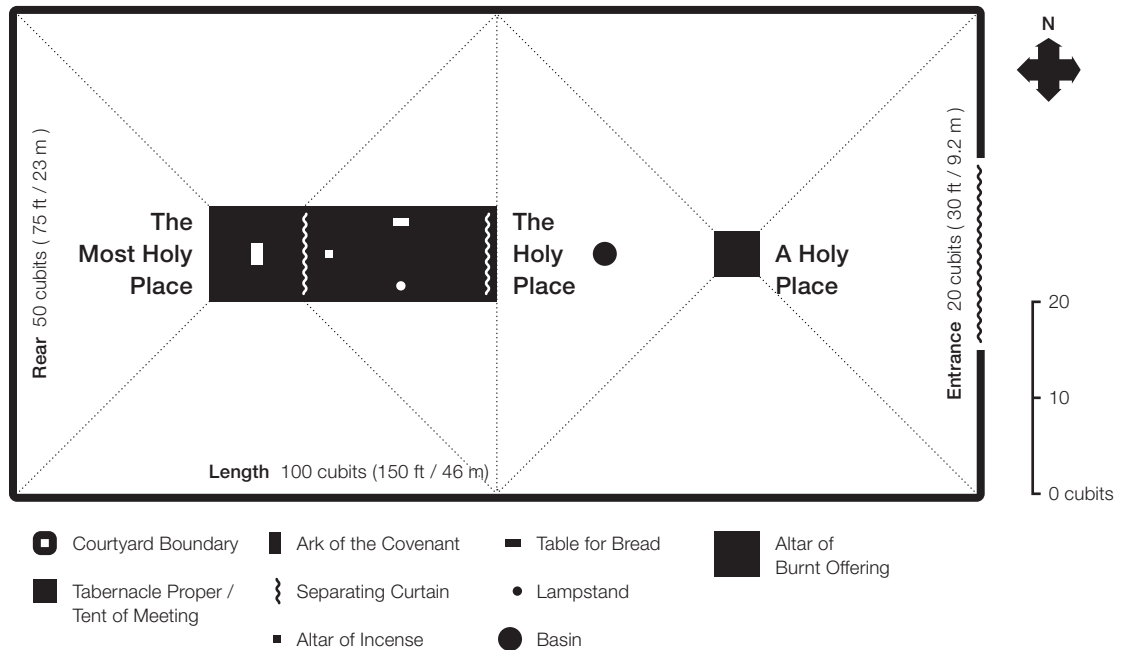
- i. The book opens with genealogies that span the northern and southern kingdoms (all of the twelve tribes except Zebulun and Dan), which suggests the importance of all. With this, a number from the northern kingdom returned after exile.
 - 1 Chr. 9:1–3. So all Israel was recorded in genealogies, and these are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel. And Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their breach of faith.² Now the first to dwell again in their possessions in their cities were Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the temple servants.³ And some of the people of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh lived in Jerusalem.
- ii. When David originally returned the ark of YHWH to Jerusalem, he assembled “all Israel” from the broader reaches to Kiriath-jearim in Judah.
 - 1 Chr. 13:2–7. And David said to all the assembly of Israel, “If it seems good to you and from the LORD our God, let us send abroad to our brothers who remain in all the lands of Israel, as well as to the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasturelands, that they may be gathered to us.”³ Then let us bring again the ark of our God to us, for we did not seek it in the days of Saul.”⁴ All the assembly agreed to do so, for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.⁵ So David assembled all Israel from the Nile of Egypt to Lebo-hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim.⁶ And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-jearim that belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD who sits enthroned above the cherubim.⁷ And they carried the ark of God on a new cart, from the house of Abinadab, and Uzzah and Ahio were driving the cart.

¹ Note how Solomon's temple dedication was not complete until the full pattern of worship commanded by Moses and David was established (2 Chr. 7:1–10; 8:12–16).

- iii. Many faithful followers of Yahweh deserted the north and went to Jerusalem after Jeroboam I established his pagan worship shrines and also during the reforms of Judah's King Asa.
- 2 Chr. 11:13–17. And the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel presented themselves to him from all places where they lived. ¹⁴For the Levites left their common lands and their holdings and came to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons cast them out from serving as priests of Yahweh, ¹⁵and he appointed his own priests for the high places and for the goat idols and for the calves that he had made. ¹⁶And those who had set their hearts to seek Yahweh God of Israel came after them from all the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem to sacrifice to Yahweh, the God of their fathers. ¹⁷They strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and for three years they made Rehoboam the son of Solomon secure, for they walked for three years in the way of David and Solomon.
 - 2 Chr. 15:9. And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who were residing with them, for great numbers had deserted to him from Israel when they saw that Yahweh his God was with him.
- iv. During Hezekiah's reforms, the king petitioned people all through the northern and southern kingdoms to celebrate the Passover and to pursue Yahweh in Jerusalem. While some scoffed, others came.
- 2 Chr. 30:1, 5, 10–11, 25. Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of Yahweh at Jerusalem to keep the Passover to Yahweh, the God of Israel.... ⁵So they decreed to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that the people should come and keep the Passover to Yahweh, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem, for they had not kept it as often as prescribed.... ¹⁰ So the curriers went from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun, but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them. ¹¹However, some men of Asher, of Manasseh, and of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem.... ²⁵The whole assembly of Judah, and the priests and the Levites, and the whole assembly that came out of Israel, and the sojourners who came out of the land of Israel, and the sojourners who lived in Judah, rejoiced.
- v. Similarly, Josiah's religious reforms included a remnant from the northern kingdom.
- 2 Chr. 34:6–9. And in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as far as Naphtali, in their ruins all around, ⁷he broke down the altars and beat the Asherim and the images into powder and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem. ⁸Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had cleansed the land and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the house of Yahweh his God. ⁹They came to Hilkiah the high priest and gave him the money that had been brought into the house of God, which the Levites, the keepers of the threshold, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim and from all the remnant of Israel and from all Judah and Benjamin and from the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
- b. On finding joy in the presence of God:
- i. David's song after he brought the ark to Jerusalem.
 - 1 Chr. 16:10–11. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek Yahweh rejoice! ¹¹Seek Yahweh and his strength; seek his presence continually!
 - ii. At David's coronation of Solomon as king.
 - 1 Chr. 29:21–22. And they offered sacrifices to Yahweh, and on the next day offered burnt offerings to Yahweh, 1,000 bulls, 1,000 rams, and 1,000 lambs, with their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. ²²And they ate and drank before Yahweh on that day with great gladness.
 - iii. Solomon's prayer of temple dedication.
 - 2 Chr. 6:41. And now arise, O Yahweh God, and go to your resting place, you and the ark of your might. Let your priests, O Yahweh God, be clothed with salvation, and let your saints rejoice in your goodness.
 - iv. After Solomon's temple dedication.

- 2 Chr. 7:10. On the twenty-third day of the seventh month [Solomon] sent the people away to their homes, joyful and glad of heart for the prosperity that Yahweh had granted to David and to Solomon and to Israel his people.
- v. **During Jehoiada's reforms.**
 - 2 Chr. 23:18. And Jehoiada posted watchmen for the house of Yahweh under the direction of the Levitical priests and the Levites whom David had organized to be in charge of the house of Yahweh, to offer burnt offerings to Yahweh, as it is written in the Law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, according to the order of David.
- vi. **When Hezekiah led a celebration of the Passover.**
 - 2 Chr. 30:25. The whole assembly of Judah, and the priests and the Levites, and the whole assembly that came out of Israel, and the sojourners who came out of the land of Israel, and the sojourners who lived in Judah, rejoiced.
- c. **On both unity and joy around the themes of atonement and God's Word:**
 - 2 Chr. 30:1, 5–11, 25–27; 31:1, 21. Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of Yahweh at Jerusalem to keep the Passover to Yahweh, the God of Israel....⁵So they decreed to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that the people should come and keep the Passover to Yahweh, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem, for they had not kept it as often as prescribed.⁶So couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his princes, as the king had commanded, saying, "O people of Israel, return to Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that he may turn again to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria.⁷Do not be like your fathers and your brothers, who were faithless to Yahweh God of their fathers, so that he made them a desolation, as you see.⁸Do not now be stiff-necked as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to Yahweh and come to his sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever, and serve Yahweh your God, that his fierce anger may turn away from you.⁹For if you return to Yahweh, your brothers and your children will find compassion with their captors and return to this land. For Yahweh your God is gracious and merciful and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him."¹⁰So the couriers went from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun, but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them.¹¹However, some men of Asher, of Manasseh, and of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem....²⁵The whole assembly of Judah, and the priests and the Levites, and the whole assembly that came out of Israel, and the sojourners who came out of the land of Israel, and the sojourners who lived in Judah, rejoiced.²⁶So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem.²⁷Then the priests and the Levites arose and blessed the people, and their voice was heard, and their prayer came to his holy habitation in heaven.^{31:1}Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah and broke in pieces the pillars and cut down the Asherim and broke down the high places and the altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin, and in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the people of Israel returned to their cities, every man to his possession....²¹And every work that [Hezekiah] undertook in the service of the house of God and in accordance with the law and the commandments, seeking his God, he did with all his heart, and prospered.

Israel's Tabernacle: The Centrality of Yahweh's Ark-Throne and the Bronze Altar of Sacrifice²



Prepared by Jason S. DeRouchie; adapted from Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus*, CC (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 19.

2. Only when Israel was unified around the temple would they experience their ultimate purpose of generating the realization of God's global kingdom among the nations (1 Chr. 16:24, 31; 2 Chr. 6:32–33; 20:6).
 - a. David's song after he brought the ark to Jerusalem.
 - 1 Chr. 16:24, 31. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! ... ³¹Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, and let them say among the nations, "Yahweh reigns!"
 - b. Solomon's temple dedication prayer.
 - 2 Chr. 6:32–33. Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for the sake of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm, when he comes and prays toward this house, ³³hear from heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name.
 - c. Jehoshaphat's prayer for deliverance from the Moabites, Ammonites, and some from the Meunites.
 - 2 Chr. 20:6. O Yahweh, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you.
3. David envisioned Israel in exile, and pled for God to save (1 Chr 16:35–36); Yahweh's response was the Davidic covenant promises (17:11–15), which, being in this post-exilic book, heighten hope all the more in the coming Davidic king.
4. The charge of Cyrus, "May the LORD his God be with him; let him go up," at the end of Chronicles (2 Chr 36:23) recalls Isaiah's two-stage restoration: stage 1—physical return to the land under Cyrus; stage 2—spiritual reconciliation with God through the new covenant under the royal Servant.

² All the dimensions of the tabernacle were doubled in Solomon's temple.

- a. Highlighting Cyrus’ decree reminds the reader that Yahweh would still fulfill the latter stage and that they must continue to long for the consummated kingdom.
- b. In a book so focused on the centrality of David at preserving proper worship of Yahweh, Cyrus’ call to rebuild readies the reader for a new David who will lead the building of a new temple (i.e., the church). *So much more* was still to come: King David in a restored garden of Eden enjoying the presence of God among a reunified people in perfect—all features realized in the person of Jesus.
 - Matt. 1:1. The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.
 - Matt. 1:23. “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).
 - Matt. 2:6. “And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”
 - Matt. 28:18–20. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
- c. Matthew appears to intentionally parallel Jesus’ great commission with Cyrus’ in order to emphasize the inauguration of the fulfillment of stage 2 (2 Chr 36:23 and Matt 28:18–20). The church, therefore, becomes the ultimate “temple” being restored (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; Eph 2:21; cf. John 2:19–21).

<p><u>2 Chr 36:23</u>. Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, “The LORD, the God of <u>heaven</u>, <u>has given me all the kingdoms of the earth</u>, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may <u>the LORD his God be with him</u>. Let him <u>go up</u>.”</p>	<p><u>Matt 28:18–20</u>. And Jesus came and said to them, “<u>All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me</u>. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, <u>I am with you always</u>, to the end of the age.”</p>
<p>1. <i>The God of heaven has given me all the kingdom of the earth.....</i> 2. <i>Let him go up.....</i> 3. <i>The LORD his God be with him.....</i></p>	<p><i>All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me (v. 18)</i> <i>Go (v. 19)</i> <i>I am with you always (v. 20)</i></p>

On this parallel, G. K. Beale writes (*The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 176): *This passage [2 Chr 36:23] has three things in common with Matthew 28:18–20: (1) both Cyrus and Jesus assert authority over all the earth; (2) the commission to ‘go’; and (3) the assurance of the divine presence to fulfil the commission. Jesus’ commission, however, escalates that of Cyrus’ in that Jesus also has authority over ‘heaven’ as well as ‘earth’, and he speaks of his own presence going with the people being addressed. In addition, Jesus’ commission is not aimed at old Jerusalem but ‘nations’ throughout the whole earth. Furthermore, if the temple construction of 2 Chronicles is in mind, then this is an implicit commission for the disciples to fulfil the Genesis 1:26–28 mandate by rebuilding the new temple, composed of worshippers throughout the whole earth.*

- d. The rest of the NT celebrates Christ’s temple-building work (cf. Zech 6:12–13, 15).
 - John 2:19–21. Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” ²⁰ The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” ²¹ But he was speaking about the temple of his body.
 - 2 Cor 6:19. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own.
 - Eph 2:19–22. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with

the saints and members of the household of God,²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

- Rev 21:2, 22. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband....²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.
- Rev 22:3–5. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.⁵ And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.
- Zech 6:12–13, 15. Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD.¹³ It is he who shall build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both....¹⁵ And those who are far off shall come and help to build the temple of the LORD. And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. And this shall come to pass, if you will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

IV. The Relationship of Chronicles to Other Scripture (some of what follows is adapted from M. J. Selman, "Chronicles," *NDBT*, 189–92):

A. Introductory Comments:

1. 1–2 Kings mentions both "The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel" (1 Kgs 14:19; 15:31; 16:5, 14, 20, 27; 22:39; 2 Kgs 1:18; 10:34; 13:8, 12; 14:15, 28; 15:11, 15, 21, 26, 31) and "The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah" (1 Kgs 14:29; 15:7, 23; 22:45; 2 Kgs 8:23; 12:19; 14:18; 15:6, 36; 16:19; 20:20; 21:17, 25; 23:28; 24:5). These references do *not* refer to our biblical book of 1–2 Chronicles, for it wasn't written yet and because the single book itself refers to both the northern and southern kingdoms and mentions "The Chronicles of the Kings of Israel" as a source (2 Chr 33:18). Nevertheless, both books may have been drawn from to create what we know of as Chronicles.
2. Chronicles itself mentions "The Chronicles of King David" (1 Chr 27:24), "The Chronicles of Samuel the seer" (1 Chr 29:29), "The Chronicles of Nathan the prophet" (1 Chr 29:29), "The Chronicles of Gad the seer" (1 Chr 29:29), "The Chronicles of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer" (2 Chr 12:15), "The Chronicles of Jehu the son of Hanani" (2 Chr 20:34), "The Chronicles of the Kings of Israel" (2 Chr 33:18), "The Chronicles of the Seers" (2 Chr 33:19).
3. Significantly, Neh 12:23 may mention our present book, when it states, "As for the Levites, their heads of fathers' houses were written in the Book of the Chronicles until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib" (cf. 1 Chr 9:14–16).

B. The Law:

1. Drawing on themes of creation and election from Genesis, the Chronicler fit post-exilic Israel into the universal purposes for the whole world by tracing the origins of Israel and the nations back to Adam (1 Chr. 1:1–54) and by showing how the line of Abraham and Jacob grew out of the nations created by God and continued through the twelve tribes to the post-exilic community (1:1–9:34).
2. The law of Moses provided the means for Israel to obey God's will and to learn how to worship him (2 Chr. 17:7–10; 19:8–11; 35:26–27), but its neglect led to ignorance of the true God and communal distress (15:3–4).
 - 2 Chr. 17:7–10. In the third year of his reign, [Jehohaphat] sent his officials ...⁸to teach in the cities of Judah, and with them the Levites....⁹And they taught in Judah, having the Book of the Law of Yahweh with them. They went about through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

- ¹⁰And the fear of Yahweh fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah, and they made no war against Jehoshaphat.
- 2 Chr. 19:8–11. Moreover, in Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed certain Levites and priests and heads of families of Israel, to give judgment for Yahweh and to decide disputed cases. They had their seat at Jerusalem. ⁹And he charged them: “Thus you shall do in the fear of Yahweh, in faithfulness, and with your whole heart: ¹⁰whenever a case comes to you from your brothers who live in their cities, concerning bloodshed, law or commandment, statutes or rules, then you shall warn them, that they may not incur guilt before Yahweh and wrath may not come upon you and your brothers. Thus you shall do, and you will not incur guilt.... ¹¹Deal courageously, and may Yahweh be with the upright!
 - 2 Chr. 35:26–27. Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his good deeds according to what is written in the Law of Yahweh, ²⁷and his acts, first and last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.
 - 2 Chr. 15:3–4. For a long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest and without law, ⁴but when in their distress they turned to Yahweh, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found by them.
3. The Law also provided guidance for Israel’s forgiveness in the midst of exile. The great promise of 2 Chr. 7:13–14 closely parallels Lev. 26:40–42, and Lev. 26:43–45 is cited in 2 Chr. 36:21 in direct relation to the restoration.
- Lev. 26:40–45. But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery that they committed against me, and also in walking contrary to me, ⁴¹so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies—if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity, ⁴²then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. ⁴³But the land shall be abandoned by them and enjoy its Sabbaths while it lies desolate without them, and they shall make amends for their iniquity, because they spurned my rules and their soul abhorred my statutes. ⁴⁴Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them, for I am Yahweh their God. ⁴⁵But I will for their sake remember the covenant with their forefathers, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Yahweh.
 - 2 Chr. 7:13–14. 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, ¹⁴if 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 Chr. 36:21. ...to fulfill the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.
4. When comparing the account of the reigns of Judah’s kings in Kings and Chronicles, the unique material in Chronicles almost all shows how God blessed or judged *each generation* in terms of its response to his commands. That is, Chronicles is driven by a Deuteronomic theology of immediate retribution. Longman and Dillard provide the following comparisons (*An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed., 200):

Blessings for Obedience		Curses for Disobedience	
Success and prosperity	1 Chr. 22:11, 13; 29:23; 2 Chr. 14:7; 26:5; 31:21; 32:27–30—contrast 13:12	Military defeat	2 Chr. 12:1–9; 16:1–9; 21:8–11, 16–17; 24:23–24; 25:15–24; 28:4–8, 16–25; 33:11; 35:20–24; 36:15–20
Building programs	2 Chr. 11:5; 14:6–7; 16:6; 17:12; 24:13; 26:2, 6, 9–10; 27:3–4; 32:3–5, 29–30; 33:14; 34:10–13—contrast 16:5	Disaffection of the population	2 Chr. 16:10; 21:19; 24:25–26; 25:27–28; 28:27; 33:24–25
Victory in warfare	2 Chr. 13:13–18; 14:8–15; 20:2–30; 25:12; 26:11–15; 27:5–7; 32:20–22	Illness	2 Chr. 16:12; 21:16–20; 26:16–23; cf. 32:24
Progeny	1 Chr. 3:1–9; 14:2–7; 25:5; 26:4–5; 2 Chr. 11:18–22; 13:21; 21:1–3	“In Chronicles, wicked kings do not engage in building programs; they have no great number of wives and progeny, no great wealth, and command no great armies; these tokens of divine blessing are reserved to the pious” (Longman and Dillard, <i>An</i>	
Popular support	2 Chr. 11:13–17; 15:10–15; 17:5; 19:4–11; 20:27–30; 23:1–17; 30:1–26; 24:29–		

	32; 35:24–25	<i>Introduction to the Old Testament</i> , 200).
Large armies	2 Chr. 11:1; 14:8; 17:12–19; 25:5; 26:12–13	

5. The Chronicler takes great pains to highlight the intimate connection between Moses' tabernacle and Solomon's temple, both in its construction and in the worship that happened there.
 - a. The shape is similar (2 Chr. 3–4 with Exod. 36:1–39:32), as guided by a divinely-given blueprint (1 Chr. 28:11–19 with Exod. 25:9, 40).
 - b. In both instances the nation was very generous in making offerings for the construction (1 Chr. 29:6–9 with Exod. 35:20)
 - c. God's glory prevented the priests to enter the building at the dedication (2 Chr. 5:13–14 with Exod. 40:34–35).
 - d. The pattern of daily, weekly, monthly, and annual worship in the temple follows the "requirement for offerings commanded by Moses" (2 Chr. 8:13; cf. 1 Chr. 6:49; 2 Chr. 23:18; 31:3), and the role of the Levites, though substantially changed, still conformed to the basic requirements of the law (2 Chr. 8:12–15; 30:16–17).

C. The Prophets:

1. The historical material in the Former Prophets provides the basic structure for the Chronicler's work—most specifically, the narrative from 2 Samuel through 2 Kings covering the period from David to exile. Nevertheless, Chronicles is clearly a distinct history, fulfilling a very different purpose in the OT canon.
2. The Chronicler asserts that acceptance of the words of God's prophets will bring success: "Believe in Yahweh your God, and you will be established; believe his prophets, and you will succeed" (2 Chr. 20:20; cf. Isa. 7:9). In contrast, rejection of the prophetic voice will result in God's judgment (2 Chr. 24:19; 36:16).
 - 2 Chr. 24:19. Yet [Yahweh] sent prophets among them to bring them back to Yahweh. These testified against them, but they would pay no attention.
 - 2 Chr. 36:15–16. Yahweh, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling.¹⁶ But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of Yahweh rose against his people, until there no remedy.
3. Prophecy is central in the replacement of Saul's kingdom by David's (1 Chr. 10:13–14; 11:3) and in establishing the foundations of the monarchy and the temple (1 Chr. 17:1–15; 2 Chr. 7:11–22; 29:25).

D. Excursus: Distinctions between Kings and Chronicles

	1–2 Kings	1–2 Chronicles
Theme	Covenant failure	Covenant continuity, theological stability
Focus	Doom	Hope
Emphases	Apostasy, idolatry, the role of king and prophet	Retribution theology and the role of the king to preserve right worship through the priests
Ending	Judgment and captivity with a hint of hope	Shift from monarchy to theocracy with dominant hope of full kingdom restoration
Audience & their Question	Exilic community question, "Why did the exile happen?"	Post-exilic community asking, "Will the kingdom be restored?"
Recurrent Motifs	Sins of Jeroboam and promises to David	Proper temple worship, the Davidic dynasty, Yahweh's kingship over all

Adapted from Walton, *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament*, 194.

1. Whereas Kings is written to prove to Israel that it was indeed their sin that brought about the exile, Chronicles is addressing different challenges—namely, Is God still interested in us and is God still intent on consummating his kingdom plan?
2. Whereas Kings is dominated by recounting events, Chronicles is predominantly filled with speeches, prophecies, and prayers. With this, whereas Kings calls people to read more about key characters by pointing them to royal annals, Chronicles directs readers to prophetic works:
 - a. For Solomon: Kings directs to “the Book of the Acts of Solomon” (1 Kgs. 11:41) but Chronicles points to “the history of Nathan the prophet, the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and the visions of Iddo the seer” (2 Chr. 9:29).
 - b. For Hezekiah: Kings directs to “The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah” (2 Kgs. 20:20) but Chronicles points to “the vision of Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz, in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel” (2 Chr. 32:32).
3. Whereas Kings addressed both the north and the south equally, Chronicles mentions the north only as it related to Jerusalem, the temple, and the kings of Judah; the Chronicler is principally interested in the Davidic kingdom, its relationship to the temple, and the restoration of the community around each.
4. In contrast to Kings, the Chronicler neglects to mention most of the leaders’ sins, choosing instead to focus on their best characteristics.
 - a. The lives of David, Solomon, and other kings are set forth as models of God-oriented living and serve as beacons of hope for the Messiah. The Chronicler’s history bears through and through an eschatological messianic thrust that climaxes in a restored and reunified people of God.
 - b. Chronicles still highlights some failures (e.g., 1 Chr. 13:9–13; 21:1–22:1; 2 Chr. 10:1–14), but even in these texts, the focus is to highlight God’s holiness, God’s sacred space, or God’s faithfulness.
 - i. 1 Chr. 13:9–13 – David’s failure to have the Levites carry the Ark of the Covenant resulted in the death of Uzzah, who “put out his hand to the ark, and he died there before God” (13:10). The king’s sin, however, only magnifies the holiness of God.
 - ii. 1 Chr. 21:1–22:1 – David’s taking of the census was a “great sin” that resulted in Yahweh’s bringing “pestilence on Israel, and 70,000 men of Israel fell” (21:14). Here the narrative is included to reinforce the need to seek God through repentance and for direction (30x in the book, e.g., 1 Chr. 28:9; 2 Chr. 1:5; 7:14) and to clarify the placement and significance of the temple (1 Chr. 22:1).
 - iii. 2 Chr. 10:1–14 – King Rehoboam refused to lighten the burden on the people, which resulted in the division of Solomon’s empire between northern and southern kingdoms. Here the purpose is to stress the faithfulness of God in fulfilling his promises to Solomon (10:15) and to highlight the rebellion of the northern peoples against the house of David “to this day” (10:19).

E. The Writings:

1. Chronicles includes a high focus on temple worship and appears to have a hymnal at its disposal.
 - a. In the days of Hezekiah, the Levites were commanded “to sing praises to Yahweh with the words of David and of Asaph the seer” (2 Chr. 29:30)—the two most dominant named voices in the Psalter. Only one psalm of Asaph is found in Books 1–2 of the Psalter (#2: Ps. 50), but these psalms dominate Book 3 (Pss. 73–83);

none are found in Books 4–5. In contrast, psalms of David shape Books 1 and 2, one is part of Book 3 (Ps. 86), two are in Book 4 (Pss. 101, 103), and then a number are sprinkled through Book 5. It was argued in the discussion of the Psalms that Books 1 and 2 may have been an early Psalter, seeing as they conclude with the statement, “The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended” (Ps. 72:20). In light of the inclusion of the songs of Asaph in the repertoire of the Levites, the layout of the Psalter suggests Hezekiah had at least Books 1–3, and in the days of the Chronicler (post-exile) there is every reason to think that he may have had a Psalter very much like our own. Furthermore, because the Psalm titles are most directly associated with the Samuel–Kings history and *not* Chronicles, it seems likely that the psalms already included titles in the Chronicler’s Psalter.

- b. With this, psalms are quoted at key points in the narrative as the ark is installed in Jerusalem and when the temple is built.
 - i. Pss. 96, 105, and 106 > 1 Chr. 16:8–36
 - ii. Ps. 132 > 2 Chr. 6:41–42
2. The refrain “for his steadfast love endures forever” echoes many psalms and highlights the focus on Israel’s praise of Yahweh that flows through the book (1 Chr. 16:41; 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3; 20:21).

F. Implication of the Chronicler’s Use of Scripture:

1. The Chronicler assumes that the Law of Moses, the Former Prophets, at least some books from the Latter Prophets, and the Psalms all exercise authority in the life of God’s people.
2. The written nature of this material and the assumption that it was familiar to the readers suggests it was already functioning as Scripture.
3. The evidence suggests that a recognized canon was already in place at the time of the Chronicler, even if not in its final form.
 - a. Samuel–Kings appear to have been an established canonical unit that could be drawn from; the same is true of at least Books 1–3 of the Psalms.
 - b. The words of Yahweh’s prophets were recognized as authoritative (2 Chr. 20:20), and Samuel’s prophecies concerning Saul were seen as “the word of Yahweh” (1 Chr. 10:13).
 - c. The Pentateuch is called “all that is written in the Law of Yahweh that he commanded Israel” (1 Chr. 16:40), “the Book of the Law of Yahweh” (2 Chr. 17:9), “the Law of Moses” (23:18; 30:16), “the Law, the Book of Moses” (25:4), “the Law of Yahweh” (31:3–4; 35:26), “the Book of the Law of Yahweh given through Moses” (34:14; cf. 33:8), “the Book of the Law” (34:15).
 - d. The Law and the prophets are understood to speak with one voice as “the word of Yahweh” (6x referring to the prophetic word and 6x to the Law; cf. 1 Chr. 10:13; 15:15; 2 Chr. 12:7; 35:6). With this, the prophetic word is seen to confirm the written law (2 Chr. 34:18–28), and prophets and the Law speak together on issues such as the priority of seeking God (1 Chr. 28:9; 2 Chr. 25:2; cf. Deut. 4:29; Jer. 29:13–14).
 - 1 Chr. 28:9. And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for Yahweh searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever.
 - 2 Chr. 25:2. And he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, yet not with a whole heart.
 - Deut. 4:29. But from there you will seek Yahweh your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.

- Jer. 28:13–14. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴I will be found by you, declares Yahweh, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares Yahweh, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.
- e. The written Scripture was able to be applied in fresh ways and even adapted for new situations.
 - i. Fresh applications:
 - (1) At the time of David, the Levites are called upon to carry the ark of the covenant to the new central sanctuary in Jerusalem (1 Chr. 15:12–15), just like they had been assigned to do en-route to the Promised Land (Num. 7:9; Deut. 10:8).
 - (2) The Pentateuchal guideline to allow the unclean a one-month delay for Passover (Num. 9:9–13) is applied to the king, princes, and Jerusalem assembly because neither the priests or people had consecrated themselves in sufficient number (2 Chr. 30:2–3).
 - ii. New adaptations:
 - (1) While the priests alone were commissioned to flay burnt offerings (Lev. 1:5–6), at the covenant renewal in the days of Hezekiah, the Levites who were already consecrated assisted the priests in the flaying “for the Levites were more upright in heart than the priests in consecrating themselves” (2 Chr. 29:34) and because “the thing came about suddenly” (29:36).
 - (2) Whereas the elders originally slaughtered the Passover animals (Exod. 12:21), at Hezekiah’s Passover the Levites carried out this task for the ceremonially unclean, and at Josiah’s Passover they did so for every worshipper (2 Chr. 30:17–20; 35:5–6).
 - (3) In light of the choice of Jerusalem as the established, lasting location of the central sanctuary, David is portrayed as having authority to establish a musical class among the Levites, thus updating Moses’ commands, which directly addressed the role of the Levites while the central sanctuary was still movable (2 Chr. 8:12–15; 29:25–30). We are told the command came from David but also from “Gad the king’s seer” and “Nathan the prophet, for the commandment was from Yahweh through his prophets” (29:25); thus David’s command is established in progressive revelation.

V. Canonical Significance of Chronicles at the End of the Hebrew Bible

- A. **The Past Gives Hope for the Future.** Standing at the end of the OT, Chronicles calls God’s people in the present to learn the best from the past and to always see God as one who is faithful, compassionate, and gracious. It calls people to look through punishment to renewal, through curse to restoration blessing, all grounded in the faithfulness of God to his purpose begun with Adam and his promises made to his people, and especially David.
- B. **An Eschatological Agenda with Demand for a Sequel.** Ezra-Nehemiah begins where Chronicles ends (Ezra 1:1–3; 2 Chr. 36:22–23), but Chronicles is placed after Ezra-Nehemiah in the Hebrew Old Testament (in reverse chronological order).
 1. This placement allows the TaNaK to end “on an eschatological note” (Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 224), suggesting that the initial restoration detailed in Ezra-Nehemiah was not the ultimate restoration but rather that God’s people must continue to look ahead, toward Jerusalem, in anticipation of the coming Son of David.

2. The placement also suggests that Israel is ultimately still in exile, even though the return has begun (1 Chr. 3:17–23; 9:1–44). This is stated explicitly several times in Ezra-Nehemiah, where the returnees perceived themselves still to be in slavery:
 - Ezra 8:35. “those who had come from captivity” were considered “returned *exiles*.”
 - Ezra 9:8–9. But now for a brief moment favor has been shown by Yahweh our God, to leave us a remnant and to give us a secure hold within his holy place, that our God may brighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving *in our slavery*. For we are slaves. Yet our God has not forsaken us in our slavery, but has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia, to grant us some reviving to set up the house of our God, to repair its ruins, and to give us protection in Judea and Jerusalem.
 - Neh. 9:36–37. Behold, *we are slaves* this day; in the land that you gave to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, behold, *we are slaves*. And its rich yield goes to the kings whom you have set over us because of our sins. They rule over our bodies and over our livestock as they please, and we are in great distress.
3. In the context of anticipation growing out of enslavement, we begin reading Matthew 1:1: “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” Furthermore, Paul observed: “When we were children, [we] were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under law, to redeem those who were under the law” (Gal. 4:3–5). In this context, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, . . . to that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles” (3:13–14).

VI. Summary: By starting with Adam and considering the brightest moments of Judah’s kings, Chronicles calls the reader to wait for God to fulfill his covenant with David by raising up the righteous son of God from Judah to reign over a united Israel, to build the eschatological temple, and to cause the people of God to flourish by worshiping God in his presence.

VII. Guided Reading for Chronicles

A. Key Chapters: 1 Chr. 17, 29; 2 Chr. 3–7; 16–17; 34–36

B. Questions:

1. About half of the Chronicler’s history appears to have been taken from what source?
2. To whom did the Chronicler write, and what main question did he seek to answer?
3. What signified the restored exiles’ continuity with the past?
4. In light of the message of Chronicles, what would you suggest was more decisive for Israel’s destiny than the reign of kings?
5. The Chronicler devoted his history to the reigns of which two kings? What is significant about his portrayal of these men, and whom does this portrayal typify?
6. “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, 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.” To whom did God speak these words, in what context were they spoken?