

Chronicles

Title and Purpose

Like *Samuel* and *Kings*, this book was originally written as one book and later divided into two books by the translators of the Septuagint. The original Hebrew title has the meaning of “day-book” or “journal,” but it was Jerome (died 420 A.D.) who introduced the title of *Chronicles* with which we are familiar today.

Chronicles is also similar to *Samuel* and *Kings* in content. It discusses about the same period of time, but with a very different purpose. While *Samuel* and *Kings* are written from a prophetic standpoint, *Chronicles* focuses on the worship of the Jews, and covers the events from a spiritual perspective. It focuses on the temple - its destruction, reconstruction, etc. It begins with David’s preparations for the building of the temple, and ends with Cyrus’ decree to have the temple rebuilt.

Chronicles also speaks about the history of the public form of worship among the people. Emphasis is given to genealogies which go back to Adam, to the tribes faithful to the Davidic throne and to those kings who were faithful to the true worship of the LORD at Jerusalem. David and Solomon are emphasized because of their role in establishing worship in the temple. Other faithful kings are mentioned in some detail, while the reigns of evil kings are passed over as quickly as possible. Using the history of the people, the book points out that whenever the covenant with God was kept, blessings followed, while punishment followed when the people broke that covenant.

The Holy Writer & Time of Writing

Since Ezra was the leading figure of this time period it is probable that he may have been the individual the Holy Spirit used to record these accounts. Supporting this argument is the fact that the closing words of *Chronicles* and the opening words of *Ezra* are almost identical. The writing in the two books is also very similar (for example, the Law is referred to by the same combination of

words – translated “*ordinance*” in 1 Chronicles 23:31 and Ezra 3:4), and both *Ezra* and *Chronicles* contain similar yet unusual Hebrew phrases.

Chronicles closes with the decree of Cyrus which permitted the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild the temple. Thus the writing would have occurred following this decree. We also know that it could not have been much later than this, because of the use of the term darics (1 Chronicles 29:7 - a daric was a coin bearing the image of Darius and was only used by the Jews while the Persians were in control).

Authenticity

No other book in the Old Testament (with the exception of the books of Moses) has suffered so many attacks against its truth, accuracy and age. The basis for much of this is due to the fact that *Chronicles* contain statements which seem to contradict those made in other books of the Bible. Part of this is because the author of *Chronicles* tends to round the numbers used in other books. Many of these apparent contradictions disappear when the text is looked at closely and when one understands the purpose for which differing books and accounts were written. Other difficulties are due to the fact that the information we have is insufficient. Surely the people living in Ezra’s day did not see any of these things as discrepancies, because for them they didn’t exist.

Many have also attacked the holy writer of these books as a “careless historian” because of numerical and other so-called discrepancies. But more than any other book in the Old Testament, the holy writer knows and makes extensive use of many different source documents as he records the events of this book. In fact, there are sixteen different source books mentioned in *Chronicles* which the author makes use of (see sheet on Source Books used in *Chronicles*). The careful way in which he wrote down where he found his information disproves the attacks that he was a careless historian.

In addition to the above, the canonicity of the book is established by various passages in the New Testament (compare Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38 with 1 Chronicles 1-3; also

Matthew 23:35 and Luke 11:51 with 2 Chronicles 24:20-21).

Outline

- I. Genealogies (1 Chronicles 1-9)**
 - A. From Adam to Jacob (1:1-54)
 - B. The Descendants of Jacob (2:1-9:44)
- II. The History of David (1 Chronicles 10-29)**
 - A. The Death of Saul (10:1-14)
 - B. David made King (11:1-12:40)
 - C. David and the Ark of the Covenant (13:1-16:43)
 - D. David's Preparation for the Temple (17:1-27:34)
 - E. David's Death (28:1-29:30)
- III. The History of Solomon (2 Chronicles 1-9)**
 - A. Solomon's Wisdom (1:1-17)
 - B. Solomon Builds and Dedicates the Temple (2:1-7:22)
 - C. Solomon's Prosperity and Fame (8:1-9:31)
- IV. The History of the Kings of Judah from the Division of the United Kingdom to the Babylonian Captivity (2 Chronicles 10-36)**
 - A. The Reign of Rehoboam (10:1-12:16)
 - B. The Reign of Abijah (13:1-14:15)
 - C. The Reign of Asa (15:1-16:14)
 - D. The Reign of Jehoshaphat (17:1-20:37)
 - E. The Reign of Jehoram (21:1-20)
 - F. The Reign of Ahaziah (22:1-9)
 - G. The Reign of Athaliah (22:10-23:21)
 - H. The Reign of Joash (24:1-27)
 - I. The Reign of Amaziah (25:1-28)
 - J. The Reign of Uzziah (26:1-23)
 - K. The Reign of Jotham (27:1-9)
 - L. The Reign of Ahaz (28:1-27)
 - M. The Reign of Hezekiah (29:1-32:33)
 - N. The Reign of Manasseh (33:1-20)
 - O. The Reign of Amon (33:21-25)
 - P. The Reign of Josiah (34:1-35:27)
 - Q. Josiah's Death to the Babylonian Captivity (36:1-23)

Chronological Table of the Prophets

Year B.C.	To Israel	To Judah	To Foreign Nations
400		Malachi	
450		Haggai	
500		Ezekiel	
550		Zephaniah	
600		Jeremiah	
650		Habakkuk	
700		Isaiah	
750	Amos	Micah	
800	Hosea	Joel	
850		Obadiah	
900			
			Nahum
			Daniel