



Getting started with 1&2 Chronicles

Written to God's people after their return from exile, the books of 1 & 2 Chronicles (originally one book) cover a lot of what we've heard before. In fact, in the Hebrew OT, Chronicles is the last book – it's a fitting summary of the OT.

The author looks back on Israel's history, hoping to learn lessons from the past. He carefully selects the material to include, cleverly making a particular point, and bringing out particular emphases.

Hope of a King, hope of a temple

These stories from the past provide hope for the future as the shape of the story highlights the hope of a coming King in the line of David, and the restoration of a temple where God would dwell with His people.

Other themes include God's sovereign power, His covenant keeping, the temple and unity among God's people

Structure

1 Chronicles 1-9 : Genealogies

These long lists of names have a purpose and a focus – they highlight David's kingly line, and Aaron's priestly line. This links in with the two main themes as above.

1 Chronicles 10-29: King David

These chapters are full of stories about David. Some of them are repeated stories from elsewhere in the Bible, some is new material. It's important to note that David is painted in a very positive light – his errors and failures are left out as we see David put forward as the "ideal" king – pointing us forward to the Lord Jesus, the better King.

2 Chronicles 1-9: King Solomon

David's son Solomon is a key figure in Israel's history. His story is told largely in relation to the building of the temple – the place where a holy God would dwell with His people.

2 Chronicles 10-36: Kings of Judah

The focus here is only on the kings who ruled from Jerusalem. Some are obedient, some are unfaithful; painting a stark contrast between the people who follow God's ways and those who reject Him.

Jesus in Chronicles

- Bad kings leave us with no doubt that, in Chronicles, we're still waiting for the true Messiah King to arrive... they contrast with King Jesus, teaching us about how awesome He is!
- Good kings (particularly David) tell us something of what we can expect when Jesus finally arrives on the scene – the King of kings.
- A holy God dwelling with His people was tasted in the temple, but even more glorious in Jesus, the Word made flesh.
- Remember, "the LORD" = Father, Son & Spirit. Everything that we discover about "the LORD" in Chronicles is just as true for Jesus and the Holy Spirit, as it is for God the Father.
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Reading lists

There are loads of lists & historical details in Chronicles. What are we supposed to do? Here are some tips:

- Some stuff is repeated – ask "Why?"
- Some stuff is different – occasionally there is a break from a repeated pattern, a verse that stands out. Take notice – often this verse has an important lesson.
- Put yourself in their shoes – what was the significance for the first readers, having returned from exile? How would these lists make them feel?
- Cling to a verse – if you find yourself baffled by your reading that day, try to at least find one verse which teaches you something about God and use that to fuel your prayer and praise.

Some RBT reading ideas:

- Meet up once a week to read it with a friend.
- Listen online at Biblegateway.com
- Write down a verse that struck you that day.
- Encourage someone by texting them a thought from what you've read.

Grow 1:1 questions to unlock the passage:

What does this teach me about God?

How does this point me to the Lord Jesus and His cross?

What does this teach me about myself?

How does this help me to pray?

What difference will this make to my week?



Here are some questions the Bible wants you to ask of itself. Use these to help you as you read your way through this month's book: (please don't feel like you have to fill in every question in loads of detail. These are a guide to help you learn from what you are reading.)

- What did you learn about Jesus and what it means to trust him? (Luke 24:45-47)
- What did you learn about yourself? (James 1:23 & 2 Tim 3:16-17)
- How were you corrected or rebuked or equipped for every good work? (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- What did you learn from the book that will help you keep going as a follower of Jesus? (Romans 15:4)
- What did you learn that will help you serve and build up the church? (Eph 4:11-16)
- What have you learnt that helps you love the Lord your God with all your heart & with all your soul & with all your mind? (Matt 22:37-40)
- What has helped you love your neighbour as yourself? (Matt 22:37-40)