

## ARRANGEMENT OF THE BOOK OF CHRONICLES

- A. **The Beginning:** genealogies from Adam to the *exile and return* (1 Chronicles 1-9)  
 · References to the Babylonian *exile and return*
- B. **The establishment of David's kingdom** (1 Chr 10:1-22:1)  
 · *Promise to David* that his dynasty would continue forever (chap 17)  
 · David's defeat of *Syria, Ammon, Moab, Edom* (in the Valley of Salt), and the *Philistines* (on numerous occasions)  
 · David's *intrusion into the priestly/Levitical sphere of duty* (with the ark) (13:5-14; 15:12-15)
- C. **David assembles all Israel** to make preparations for Solomon's building of the Temple (1 Chr 22:2-29:30)  
 · *Theme of unity* of "all Israel"; sense of happy cooperation
- D. **CENTER: SOLOMON, THE TEMPLE BUILDER;**  
 The Lord's Temple is completed (2 Chronicles 1-9)
- C'. **Division of Israel; Judean kings from Rehoboam to good king Jehoshaphat** (2 Chronicles 10-20)  
 · *Theme of disunity* of "all Israel"; strife
- B'. **Judah's seven kings between good kings Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah** (2 Chronicles 21-28)  
 · Three crises threatening the *promise to David* of an eternal dynasty (cf. 21:7; 21:16-22:1; 22:10-11; 23:3)  
 · Warfare with the neighboring nations: *Syria, Ammon, Moab, Edom* (in the Valley of Salt), and the *Philistines* (on numerous occasions)  
 · Theme of *intrusion into the priestly/Levitical sphere of duty* (23:6; 26:16-21; 27:2)
- A'. **The End:** Judah's final kings, from good king Hezekiah to the Babylonian *exile*, and a note about the *return* (2 Chronicles 29-36)  
 · Judah's *exile and a reference to the return*

## REIGN OF SOLOMON, THE TEMPLE BUILDER (2 Chron 1-9)

### 1. Solomon's wisdom and wealth (chap 1)

- "The king made *silver . . . as common in Jerusalem as stone*, and he made cedar as plentiful as the *sycamore of the Shephelah*"
- "He had . . . 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem"; *trade in horses*

### 2. Solomon's foreign relations with Hiram of Tyre (chap 2)

- Hiram's *admiration of Solomon's wisdom*; Solomon's use of foreigners in his building projects
- Hiram: "*Because Yahweh loves his people he has made you king over them. . . . Blessed be Yahweh God of Israel*"

### 3. Solomon builds the Temple (3:1-5:1)

Begins: "Then Solomon began to build Yahweh's Temple"

#### 4. CLIMAX: Dedication of the Temple (5:2-7:10)

a. *People assembled; ark dedicated with sacrifices* (5:2-10)

b. *Glory of God fills Temple* ("for he is good; his love is forever") (5:11-14)

c. Solomon's *prayer* (6:1-2)

d. **CENTER:** Solomon's dedicatory speech (6:3-11)

c'. Solomon's *prayer* (6:12-42)

b'. *Glory of God fills Temple* ("for he is good; his love is forever") (7:1-3)

a'. Temple, court, altar, *dedicated with sacrifices; people dismissed* (7:4-10)

### 3'. God accepts the Temple (7:11-22)

Begins: "Thus Solomon finished the Temple of the Lord"

### 2'. Solomon's foreign relations with Hiram of Tyre, Queen of Sheba, etc. (8:1-9:12)

- Queen of Sheba's *admiration of Solomon's wisdom*; Solomon's use of foreigners in his building projects
- Queen of Sheba: "*Because your God loves Israel . . . he has made you king over them*"; "*Blessed be Yahweh your God*"

### 1'. Solomon's wisdom and wealth (9:13-28)

- "The king made *silver as common in Jerusalem as stone*, and cedar as plentiful as the *sycamore of the Shephelah*"
- "He had . . . 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem"; *trade in horses*

## ENCOURAGING, INSPIRING STORIES IN CHRONICLES That Are Not Found in Kings

### David

1. David's extensive preparations for the building of the Temple, his reorganization of the divisions and responsibilities of the Levites and priests, his provision for singing and music at the Temple by the Levites, and his organization of the Levitical gatekeepers and treasurers (1 Chronicles 22-26, 28-29).

2. David's inspiring charge to Solomon, to be a ruler of integrity, devotion to God, and to build God's Temple according to God's directions that he had given to David, with the cooperation of the priests and Levites (1 Chr. 28:8-21).

3. Account of the gifts that David and the people of Israel voluntarily gave for the building of the Temple (1 Chr. 29:1-9).

4. David's inspiring prayer dedicating to God the gifts he and the people have given for the building of the Temple (1 Chr. 29:10-20).

### Rehoboam

5. The story of how Levites, priests, and godly people left the rebellious northern kingdom of Israel to join with the faithful tribe of Judah and worship at the Lord's Temple, at the beginning of the divided monarchy (2 Chr. 11:13-17).

6. Repentance of Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah at the encouragement of the prophet Shemaiah, and the shields of the Temple treasury (2 Chr. 12:5-12) *(no positive stories about Rehoboam in Kings)*.

### Abijah

7. Abijah's inspiring speech on Mt. Zemariam, encouraging the people of the northern kingdom to follow the good example of the priests, Levites, and people of Judah, who have remained faithful to God's covenant and his Temple (2 Chr. 13:4-12).

8. God's rescue of Abijah and the Judean army, when they cried out to God for help, and the priests blew their trumpets (2 Chr. 13:13-19) *(no positive stories about Abijah in Kings)*.

### Asa

9. Asa's religious reforms and repair of the Temple's altar, in response to the inspiring challenge of the prophet Azariah son of Oded, and the resulting blessing from God upon Judah (2 Chr. 15:1-15).

10. The challenge of Hanani the prophet, reprimanding Asa for not relying on the Lord, who "strengthens those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (2 Chr. 16:7-9).

### Jehoshaphat

11. The story of Jehoshaphat's early prosperity because of his faithfulness to God, and his sending priests out to teach the Law to the people of Judah (2 Chr. 17:3-12).

12. Jehoshaphat's legal reforms, involving the priests and the Levites (2 Chr. 19:4-11).

13. The wonderful story of how God delivered Jehoshaphat and Judah from invading Transjordanian armies, defeating the enemy armies without Judah's involvement, and the key role played by the Levites (2 Chr. 20:1-30) *(no positive stories about Jehoshaphat's reign in Kings)*.

### Joash

14. The courageous stand of the priest Zechariah, son of Jehoida, against King Joash (2 Chr. 24:15-22) *(no positive stories in the Kings account of Joash)*.

### **Amaziah**

15. The story of how God gave Amaziah victory without the mercenaries from the rebellious northern kingdom (2 Chr. 25:5-12) *(no positive stories about Amaziah in Kings)*.

### **Uzziah**

16. The account of how God blessed Uzziah during his early years when he was obedient and faithful to God ("as long as he sought the Lord, God gave him success"; 26:5), and how God honored the sanctity of his Temple and priests when Uzziah tried to usurp the priestly duties (2 Chr. 26:5-21) *(no positive stories about Uzziah in Kings)*.

### **Jotham**

17. The brief account of how God gave Jotham, who was careful to respect the sanctity of the Temple, prosperity and a military victory against the Ammonites ("Jotham grew powerful because he walked steadfastly before the LORD his God" (2 Chr. 27:2, 5-6) *(no positive stories about Jotham in Kings)*.

### **Hezekiah**

18. The inspiring, detailed story of Hezekiah's happy purification and rededication of the Temple, with the willing help of the priests and Levites (2 Chronicles 29)

19. The story of the great and joyful celebration of Passover at the Temple, with the participation of the priests and the Levites; and the purging of all Judah's pagan installations (2 Chr. 30:1-31:1).

20. Hezekiah's provisions for the financial support of the priests, Levites, and Temple services (2 Chr. 31:2-19).

### **Manasseh**

21. The inspiring story of Manasseh's repentance, while imprisoned in Babylon (2 Chr. 33:11-13).

22. Manasseh's religious reforms, including the cleansing of the Temple (2 Chr. 33:15-16) *(no positive stories about Manasseh in Kings)*.

### **Josiah**

23. The grand celebration of the Passover at the Temple, with a detailed account of how the priests and Levites carefully followed all God's laws regarding the celebration and the Temple (2 Chr. 35:2-17).

### **End of Judah's Exile**

24. Brief account of how Cyrus, in fulfillment of God's words through Jeremiah, proclaimed that the Jews could return to Judah and rebuild the Lord's Temple (2 Chr. 36:21-23).

## THEMES IN CHRONICLES

1. **Instructive, inspiring lessons from Israel's history** (*examples from Israel's history illustrating how obeying God resulted in blessing*)
2. **Important role of individuals in God's kingdom** (*genealogies; private citizens; individual palace personnel and Levites*)
3. **Key role of leaders** (*priests, Levites, kings*)
4. **Importance of trusting, depending on God** (e.g., *Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah*)
5. **Importance of honoring, obeying God's laws** (e.g., *Uzziah; Hezekiah; Josiah*)
6. **Importance of respecting God's Temple** (*David and Solomon; Jehoiada; Josiah*)
7. **Omnipotence of God** (e.g., *Jehoshaphat; Hezekiah*)
8. **Patience, tenaciousness of God for his people** (*2 Chr. 36:15-16*)
9. **Forgiving nature and love of God** ("*His mercy endureth forever*"; *2 Chr. 33:10-13*)
10. **Repentance as the way back to God** (*humbling oneself, turning from evil, turning to God; e.g., 2 Chr. 12:6-7; 34:27-28; 7:14*)

## THE THREE RETURNS FROM BABYLONIAN EXILE

### 1. FIRST RETURN

- a. *Date:* **538 B.C.**
- b. *Leaders:* **Zerubbabel, Jeshua**
- c. *Persian king:* **Cyrus**
- d. *Number returning:* **49, 697**
- e. *Main accomplishment:* **Temple rebuilt** (516 B.C.)
- f. *Biblical reference:* **Ezra 1-6**

### 2. SECOND RETURN

- a. *Date:* **458 B.C.**
- b. *Leader:* **Ezra**
- c. *Persian king:* **Artaxerxes Longimanus**
- d. *Number returning:* **1,758**
- e. *Main accomplishments:* **Purification of mixed marriages**
- f. *Biblical reference:* **Ezra 7-10**

### 3. THIRD RETURN

- a. *Date:* **444 B.C.**
- b. *Leader:* **Nehemiah**
- c. *Persian king:* **Artaxerxes Longimanus**
- d. *Number returning:* **Not known**
- e. *Main accomplishment:* **Walls of Jerusalem rebuilt**
- f. *Biblical reference:* **Nehemiah 1-13**

## PERSIAN KINGS DURING THE BIBLICAL PERIOD

<i>KING</i>	<i>DATES</i>	<i>BIBLICAL EVENTS (and historical developments with Greeks)</i>
<b>Cyrus</b>	539-530	<b>Return of Zerubbabel and Jeshua</b> (Ezra 1-3)
<b>Cambyses</b>	530-522	<b>Rebuilding of Temple stopped</b> (Ezra 4)
<b>Darius I</b>	522-486	<b>Ministry of Haggai and Zechariah</b> (520); <b>Temple completed</b> (516) (Ezra 5-6) <i>Greeks defeat Persians at Marathon (490)</i>
<b>Xerxes</b>	486-464	<b>Story of Esther</b> <i>Greeks defeat Persians at Thermopolae (480) and Salamis (479); Herodotus (485-425)</i>
<b>Artaxerxes I</b>	464-423	<b>Return of Ezra and Nehemiah</b> (458, 445) (Ezra 7-Nehemiah 1-13); <b>Malachi</b> (ca. 450-430) <i>Athenian Golden Age (461-431); Pericles (460-429)</i>
<b>Darius II</b>	423-404	Biblical Silence

## ARRANGEMENT OF EZRA-NEHEMIAH

David A. Dorsey

### Analysis A

- A. Zerubbabel's return (Ezra 1-4)
  - A'. Zerubbabel's rebuilding of the Temple (5-6)
    - B. Ezra's return (7-8)
      - B'. Ezra's treatment of the mixed marriages (9-10)
        - C. Nehemiah's return (Neh. 1:1-2:16)
          - C'. Nehemiah's rebuilding of the walls (2:17-6:19)
            - D. Final reforms and acts (7-13)

### Analysis B

- A. Return under Zerubbabel (Ezra 1-4)
  - B. Main accomplishment of Zerubbabel (5-6)
- A'. Return under Ezra (7-8)
  - B'. Main accomplishment of Ezra (9-10)
- A". Return under Nehemiah (Neh. 1:1-2:16)
  - B". Main accomplishment of Nehemiah (2:17-6:19)
    - C. Final reforms and accomplishments (7-13)

### Analysis C

1. *Zerubbabel's return; list of returnees* (Ezra 1-4)
2. Temple *rebuilt*, despite local opposition (5-6)
  3. Ezra's *return* with a *group* of Jews and *royal letter* (7-8)
    4. **CENTER: Purification of mixed marriages** (9-10)
  5. Nehemiah's *return* with a *group* of Jews and *royal letter* (Neh. 1:1-2:16)
6. Walls *rebuilt*, despite local opposition (2:17-6:19)
7. Final reforms and acts, including *list of returnees* under *Zerubbabel* (7-13)

## ESTHER: LITERARY STRUCTURE

A. **King's proud feast**; king deposes Queen Vashti; *letters sent* throughout empire (chap 1)

B. **Esther becomes queen**; King has *feast in her honor*; gives *gifts* (2:1-18)

C. **King's life is saved!** Those *plotting to kill* the king *are killed* (2:19-23)

D. **Haman's plot: convinces king to send *royal edict* to kill Jews on 13th of Adar** (3:1-4:3)

- Haman to king: "If it please the king, let it be written"
- "Destroy, kill, and annihilate" Jews; "plunder their goods"
- Edict in all languages, sealed with king's signet, sent by couriers
- Ends: Susa distressed at edict; Mordechai dresses in sackcloth

E. **Mordechai learns of Haman's plot, including the *money* Haman offered**; asks Esther to appeal to king (4:4-17)

F. **Esther invites king and Haman to her first banquet; Haman builds *gallows*** (chap 5)

- King asks Esther: "What is your petition?"
- "It will be given you, even up to half my kingdom"
- Haman builds gallows for hanging Mordechai

G. **TURNING POINT: Haman's fortunes turn; he honors Mordechai the Jew!** (chap 6)

F'. **Esther invites king and Haman to second banquet; Haman hanged on his *gallows*** (chap 7)

- King asks Esther: "What is your petition?"
- "It will be given you, even up to half my kingdom"
- Haman hung on gallows he built for Mordechai

E'. **Mordechai and Esther given Haman's estate (presumably including his *money*)** (8:1-2) (weak match of 4:4-17!)

D'. **Haman's plot foiled: Esther convinces king to send second *royal edict* to allow Jews to kill enemies on 13th of Adar** (8:3-17)

- Esther to king: "If it please the king, . . . let it be written"
- "Destroy, kill, and annihilate" enemies; "plunder their goods"
- Edict in all languages, sealed with king's signet, sent by couriers
- Ends: Susa rejoices at edict; Mordechai dresses royally; joy

C'. **Jews' lives are saved!** Those *plotting to kill* Jews *are killed* (9:1-10)

B'. **Esther wins second day for Jews in Susa**; another *feast day* instituted because of her (annual feast will perpetually honor Esther!); *giving of gifts* (9:11-19)

A'. **Jews' feast of Purim**; king promotes Mordechai; *letters sent* throughout empire (9:20-10:3)