

In the History of Redemption, Chronicles was written to show God's action in the history of his people from Adam to the end of the Exile. No other book of Scripture has such a broad scope. Yet despite this panoramic view of history, the lives of only two men, David and Solomon, take up 29 of the 65 chapters.

The Chronicler was concerned to demonstrate God's election of Israel, David and Jerusalem (then, finally, the Temple in Jerusalem). David appears as a descendant of Adam and a type of the messianic king to come. His sins are not mentioned, therefore, not to whitewash him (the Chronicler assumes that his readers are familiar with Samuel and Kings), but to show Israel its hope for the future.

These purposes show up in his omissions from and additions to the material of Samuel-Kings. Generally speaking the omissions are concerned with the lives and development of the David dynasty (for example, only Saul's death is mentioned: Saul's sin is ignored, as is David's sin with Bathsheba and his household problems). The additions deal with the temple services and religious events, and serve to emphasize Israel as a religious community.

Other major themes in Chronicles are God's grace in election, his covenant with Israel (mentioned 34 times), divine holiness, justice and retribution (as in 2 Chronicles 15:2; 36:15-16), and the historical working out of God's plan for the nation.

Question areas include these: Does the Chronicler's method of historiography lessen his historical accuracy? How can the differences in the numbers between Chronicles and Samuel-Kings be reconciled? Why does the Chronicler omit mention of most of the sins of David and Solomon? Does the Chronicler's use of non-canonical sources render them canonical (i.e. if we found "The Acts of the Kings of Israel," mentioned in 2 Chronicles 33:18, would it then be added to the canon)?

Help on matters that seem to disagree between the accounts historically is available in Archer: ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BIBLE DIFFICULTIES.

Archaeology and Chronicles. Shishak's invasion of Judah (and Israel), mentioned in 2 Chronicles 12:2-16, is also mentioned in his inscriptions which describe his reign over Egypt. David helped break the Philistine monopoly on iron when he assumed the rule over Israel. This is illustrated by the discovery of iron nails at Gibeah, Saul's former capital. The word "daric" as a coin (1 Chronicles 29:7) was used as a proof of the late date of writing because this was known as a Greek coin which would, therefore, have appeared after Alexander's invasion of Persia in 326 BC. A Persian coin from the time of Darius (522-486 BC) and later called the "daric" has been found which proves that the Jews would have been accustomed to the daric as a monetary unit for some time before Ezra.

The discovery in 1940 of the Ben-hadad stele confirmed the chronology found in 2 Chronicles 16:1-10, which in turn considerably amplifies that of 2 Kings 15:17.

Some Keys for the study of Chronicles. The central theme of Chronicles is stated in 2 Chronicles 15:2. Other key passages include: David's establishment as king and the capture of Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 11:1-9); the move of the ark to Jerusalem and subsequent establishment of the Levitical service (1 Chronicles 15:11--16:6); the Davidic covenant (1 Chronicles 17); the dedication of the Temple (2 Chronicles 6); the Chronicler's view of history (2 Chronicles 36:15-23).