

Understanding the Bible: 1 & 2 Chronicles



1 & 2 Chronicles

A Look Back

LAW P	PROPHETS	WRITINGS
Genesis Exodus Former Leviticus Prophets Numbers Deuteronomy Latter Prophets	oshua udges -2 Samuel -2 Kings Pre- Exilic saiah Writings eremiah Zekiel The Twelve Post- Exilic Writings	Psalms Job Proverbs Ruth Song of Songs Ecclesiastes Lamentations Esther Daniel Ezra-Nehemiah 1-2 Chronicles





2 Chronicles 9:29 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, *are* they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

2 Chronicles 12:15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, *are* they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? And *there were* wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

2 Chronicles 13:22 And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, *are* written in the story of the prophet Iddo.

2 Chronicles 20:34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, **they** *are* **written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani**, who *is* mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.

2 Chronicles 25:26 Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, *are* they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel?

2 Chronicles 26:22 Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.

2 Chronicles 27:7 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways, lo, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

2 Chronicles 28:26 Now the rest of his [Ahaz] acts and of all his ways, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

2 Chronicles 32:32 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

2 Chronicles 33:18 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God, and the words of the seers that spake to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel.

2 Chronicles 35:26-27 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his goodness, according to *that which was* written in the law of the LORD, And his deeds, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

2 Chronicles 36:8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, **they** *are* **written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah**: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

Key Verses

1 Chronicles 17:11-12 And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go *to be* with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build Me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever.

2 Chronicles 7:14 If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 15:2 ... The LORD *is* with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you.

1-9 Genealogies

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13:1-22:19 David's Accomplishments23:1-29:20 David's Legacy To Solomon29:21-30 Solomon's Ascension To TheThrone

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10-36 The Kingdom Of Judah

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43-50. The kings of Edom
51-54. The dukes of Edom

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3-12. The posterity of Judah by Tamar

13-17. The children of Jesse

18-20. The posterity of Caleb the son of Hezron

21-24. Hezron's posterity by the daughter of Machir

25-33. Jerahmeel's posterity

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42-49. Another branch of Caleb's posterity

50-55. The posterity of Caleb the son of Hur

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1-4. The posterity of Judah by Caleb, the son of Hur
5-8. Of Ashur, the posthumous son Hezron
9-10. Of Jabez, and his prayer
11-20. The other families of the same stock
21-23. The sons of Shelah
24-38. The posterity and cities of Simeon
39-43. Their conquest of Gedor, and of the Amalekites in mount Seir

1-2. Judah and Joseph preferred before Reuben, who forfeited his birthright
3-10. Ruben's descendants; some of whom vanquish the Hagarites
11-17. The chief men of Gad, and their habitations
18-22. Ruben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, obtain a victory over the Hagarites
23-24. The habitations and chief men of that half of Manasseh
25-26. The captivity of the two tribes and half, for their sins

1-3. The sons of Levi4-15. The line of Eleazar unto the captivity16-48. The families of Gershom, Kohath, and Merari49-53. The office of Aaron, and his line unto Ahimaaz54-81. The cities of the priests and Levites

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1 Chronicles 1:1-4 Adam, Sheth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered, Henoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah...

Adam = man Seth = appointed Enosh = mortal Cainan/Kenan = dwelling

"Adam" is appointed a mortal dwelling

1 Chronicles 1:1-4 Adam, Sheth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered, Henoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah...

Mahalalel = Blessed God / the Praise of God Jered = descend Enoch = initiate / teaching

The blessed God shall descend teaching.

alternative: The praise of God shall come down upon the initiated. 1 Chronicles 1:1-4 Adam, Sheth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered, Henoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah...

Methuselah = When he is dead, it shall be sent Lamech = powerful (Jones' Dictionary of OT Proper Names) Noah = Comforter

When He is dead, it shall be sent powerfully--the Comforter.

1 Chronicles 1:1-4 Adam, Sheth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered, Henoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah...

Man is appointed a mortal dwelling. The blessed God shall descend teaching. When He is dead, it shall be sent powerfully--the Comforter.

2 Samuel 7:8-17 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto My servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel: And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that He will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for My name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be My son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But My mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

1 Chronicles 17:7-15 Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto My servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, even from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be ruler over My people Israel: And I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that are in the earth. Also I will ordain a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the beginning, And since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel. Moreover I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee that the LORD will build thee an house. And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build Me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be My son: and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee: But I will settle him in Mine house and in My kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

1 Chronicles 17:11-14 And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go *to be* with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build Me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be My son: and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took *it* from *him* that was before thee: But I will settle him in Mine house and in My kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.

Jeremiah 23:5-6 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Isaiah 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counseller, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Luke 1:31-33 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

2 Chronicles 15:16-17 And also *concerning* Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from *being* queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped *it*, and burnt *it* at the brook Kidron. **But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days**.

2 Chronicles 19:1-3 And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore *is* wrath upon thee from before the LORD. Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God.

1 Chronicles 22:19 Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD.

2 Chronicles 6:38 If they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and *toward* the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name:

2 Chronicles 15:12 And they entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul;

1 Chronicles 16:34 O give thanks unto the LORD; for *He is* good; for His mercy *endureth* for ever.

2 Chronicles 5:13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up *their* voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, *saying*, **For** *He is* good; for His mercy *endureth* for ever: that *then* the house was filled with a cloud, *even* the house of the LORD;

2 Chronicles 7:3 And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, *saying*, For *He is* **good**; for His mercy *endureth* for ever.

1 Chronicles 16:7-36 Then on that day David delivered first *this psalm* to thank the LORD into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon His name, make known His deeds among the people. Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him, talk ye of all His wondrous works. Glory ye in His holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD. Seek the LORD and His strength, seek His face continually. Remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth; O ye seed of Israel His servant, ye children of Jacob, His chosen ones. He is the LORD our God; His judgments *are* in all the earth. Be ye mindful always of His covenant; the word *which* He commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which He made with Abraham, and of His oath unto Isaac; And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it. And *when* they went from nation to nation, and from *one* kingdom to another people; He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, He reproved kings for their sakes, Saying, Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm. Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; shew forth from day to day His salvation. Declare His glory among the heathen; His marvellous works among all nations. For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised: He also is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols: but the LORD made the heavens. Glory and honour are in His presence; strength and gladness *are* in His place. Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto His name: bring an offering, and come before Him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. Fear before Him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let *men* say among the nations, The LORD reigneth. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that *is* therein. Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because He cometh to judge the earth. O give thanks unto the LORD; for *He is* good; for His mercy *endureth* for ever. And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to Thy holy name, and glory in Thy praise. Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.

2 Chronicles 36:11-21 Zedekiah *was* one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD. And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel. Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till *there was* no remedy. Therefore He brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: He gave *them* all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all *these* he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

Jeremiah 25:9-11 Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

Leviticus 26:33-44 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. And upon them that are left *alive* of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth. And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them. If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against Me, and that also they have walked contrary unto Me; And *that* I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised My judgments, and because their soul abhorred My statutes. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break My covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.

Leviticus 26:33-44 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it **did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it**. And upon them that are left *alive* of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth. And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them. If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against Me, and that also they have walked contrary unto Me; And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised My judgments, and because their soul abhorred My statutes. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break My covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.

2 Chronicles 36:22-23 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and He hath charged me to build Him an house in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. Who *is there* among you of all His people? The LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up.

Isaiah 44:28 That saith of Cyrus, *He is* My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

To read Chronicles well, it will help you to have a sense of the times in which the Chronicler wrote. His era was that of the restoration, a period that began limply at the end of the sixth century B.C. with the repeatedly postponed, yet finally completed, temple project, which picked up real steam only with the systematic reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah in the middle of the fifth century. The Chronicler most likely wrote somewhere within this period--a time of identity crisis in the Persian province of Judah. The restoration thus far had been a far cry from the glorious "second exodus" envisioned by Isaiah (e.g., Isaiah 35:1-10; 40:1-1; 44:1-5). Cyrus had technically inaugurated the new era, which included the initial token rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple (Isaiah 44:28-45:5,13). But in fact only a relative handful of Jews had returned to their "promised land," and the second temple was neither of the grandeur of Solomon's (Haggai 2:3) nor had it yet attained its glory (Haggai 2:6-9) while Jerusalem itself lay in general decay with few inhabitants (Nehemiah 1; 11). So a time of general spiritual malaise had settled in, including, increasingly, a great deal of intermarriage (Ezra 9-10, a sure way to lose national identity). Into this context stepped Haggai and Zechariah to urge on the work of a priest (Jeshua) and a governor (Zerubbabel). A generation later it was a priest (Ezra) and a governor (Nehemiah) who themselves stepped in with their reform movement—and with greater results. Into the same overall context also steps the Chronicler, with a brilliant retelling of the story of Judah intended to give the present generation a sense of continuity with its great past and to focus on the temple and its worship as the place where that continuity can now be maintained.

Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart How To Read The Bible Book By Book

Isaiah 35:1-10 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompence; He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame *man* leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*. No lion shall be there, nor *any* ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk *there*: And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Isaiah 40:1-11 Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift *it* up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong *hand*, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward *is* with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry *them* in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

To read Chronicles well, it will help you to have a sense of the times in which the Chronicler wrote. His era was that of the restoration, a period that began limply at the end of the sixth century B.C. with the repeatedly postponed, yet finally completed, temple project, which picked up real steam only with the systematic reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah in the middle of the fifth century. The Chronicler most likely wrote somewhere within this period--a time of identity crisis in the Persian province of Judah. The restoration thus far had been a far cry from the glorious "second exodus" envisioned by Isaiah (e.g., Isaiah 35:1-10; 40:1-1; 44:1-5). Cyrus had technically inaugurated the new era, which included the initial token rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple (Isaiah 44:28-45:5,13). But in fact only a relative handful of Jews had returned to their "promised land," and the second temple was neither of the grandeur of Solomon's (Haggai 2:3) nor had it yet attained its glory (Haggai 2:6-9) while Jerusalem itself lay in general decay with few inhabitants (Nehemiah 1; 11). So a time of general spiritual malaise had settled in, including, increasingly, a great deal of intermarriage (Ezra 9-10, a sure way to lose national identity). Into this context stepped Haggai and Zechariah to urge on the work of a priest (Jeshua) and a governor (Zerubbabel). A generation later it was a priest (Ezra) and a governor (Nehemiah) who themselves stepped in with their reform movement—and with greater results. Into the same overall context also steps the Chronicler, with a brilliant retelling of the story of Judah intended to give the present generation a sense of continuity with its great past and to focus on the temple and its worship as the place where that continuity can now be maintained.

Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart How To Read The Bible Book By Book

