

2 CHRONICLES - A STUDY GUIDE

THE CENTRAL QUESTION:

What does this book/story say to us about God?

This question may be broken down further as follows:

- a. Why did God do it/allow it?
 - b. Why did He record it for our study?
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1. Who do you think wrote 1 & 2 Chronicles? (1 Chronicles 29:29; compare 2 Chronicles 32:32; 33:18-20) Do these books have a significantly different perspective than 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings? Do 1 & 2 Chronicles look like a “biased” report? Does God “inspire” people to “compile” books to put in Scripture?
2. There are many other books or letters mentioned in the Bible, especially in Kings and Chronicles: See Numbers 21:14; Joshua 10:13; 1 Kings 11:41; 14:19,29; 15:7,23,31; 16:5,14,20,27; 22:39,45; 2 Kings 1:18; 8:23; 10:34; 12:19; 13:8,12; 14:15,17,28; 15:6,11,15,21,26,31,36; 16:19; 20:20; 21:17,25; 23:21,28; 24:5; 1 Chronicles 9:1; 2 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 17:9; 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 32:32; 33:18,19; 35:26; 36:8; 1 Corinthians 5:9; 3 John 9. Do we have any of these books: *The Book of the Lord's Battles; The Book of Jashar; The Acts of Solomon; The Annals of the Kings of Israel; The Annals of the Kings of Judah; The Book of the Covenant; The Book of Samuel the Seer; The Book of Nathan the Prophet; The Book of Gad the Prophet; The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite; The Visions of Iddo the Prophet Concerning Jeroboam the Son of Nebat; The Book of Shemaiah the Prophet; The Genealogical Register; Iddo's History of Judah; The Annals of the Kings of Israel and Judah; The Book of the Law of The Lord; The Annals of the Kings; The Annals of the Kings of Judah and Israel; The Annals of the Prophets; The Collection of Laments*. Were these books inspired? Were some of them used to compose Chronicles? If we found a copy of one of them today, would you add it to the Bible?
3. Solomon's Temple was probably the most impressive house of worship ever built. Do you think God wanted them to go to that degree of expense in decorating His house with gold and silver and precious stones? We seem to discourage the use of these things today. Why did Solomon think everything needed to be done on such a grandiose scale? Why were so many sheep and cattle sacrificed? (2 Chronicles 5:6) Why did God fill the temple with “the dazzling light of the Lord's presence?” (2 Chronicles 5:13,14, *GNB*) What do you think the universe looking on thought of this building? After the Babylonian captivity, when the temple was rebuilt on a much smaller scale by Haggai, Zechariah, Zerubbabel, Joshua the High Priest, the Levites and the people (see Ezra 3:7-9), God told them that this new temple would be much more glorious than the old one (Haggai 2:3-9)! How could this be true?
4. Notice the details of Solomon's prayer (2 Chronicles 6:12-42; compare 1 Kings 8:14-61). Did

David always obey the law? (2 Chronicles 6:16; 7:17; 1 Kings 11:38; 15:5) Does God hold back the rain? (2 Chronicles 6:26; compare Matthew 5:45) Does God send famine, or epidemics? (2 Chronicles 6:28) Does God send scorching winds or locusts? (2 Chronicles 6:28) Can you forgive someone, and still deal with him as he deserves? (2 Chronicles 6:30) Why didn't Solomon follow his own suggestion in the treatment of foreigners (2 Chronicles 6:32,33) instead of building all those heathen temples for his many wives? (1 Kings 11:1-11) Solomon seemed to show a clear understanding of our sinful condition—"there is no one who does not sin." (2 Chronicles 6:36; Ecclesiastes 7:20; 1 Kings 8:46; compare Romans 3:23) Didn't he recognize that he was a sinner also and was free to sin even more?

5. Doesn't the list of blessings and curses in 2 Chronicles 7:11-22 make it clear that God's promises and threatenings are alike conditional? How is God involved? (2 Chronicles 7:19-22; 15:2; compare Deuteronomy 8:18-20; 27:11-26; 28:1-68; Job 1&2) Who really was responsible for what happened? Was God acting in an arbitrary way?
6. Why did Jeroboam and his army of 800,000 take their golden calf "gods" to war with them? (2 Chronicles 13:1-18) Why do you think the Philistines started carrying their "gods" into battle? (1 Chronicles 14:8-12; compare Numbers 31:6,48,49; 1 Samuel 4:1-11; 2 Chronicles 25:14,15; 28:22,23) Doesn't it appear that these "gods" were carried along as "good luck charms"? Did they **ever** help?
7. Could God have been responsible for helping Asa kill 1,000,000 Sudanese? (2 Chronicles 14:9-15) Who actually did the killing? (2 Chronicles 14:12) Was it right for Judah's army to do all that looting? (2 Chronicles 14:13-15)
8. Asa removed all the detestable idols from Judah and Benjamin and the captured territory of Ephraim. (2 Chronicles 14:2,3; 15:8,16 but see verse 17) Why were they there in the first place? What do you think was the attraction of these "idols"?
9. Why would they say, "All who would not seek the Lord, the God of Israel, were to be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman?" (2 Chronicles 15:13) Has the attitude and understanding of the people significantly improved or changed since the time of Joshua? (see Joshua 1:18; Deuteronomy 17:2-13; cf. Ex. 22:20; Deut. 13:6-10, 12-15)
10. We have studied at least two stories (1 Kings 13 & 2 Chronicles 18; compare 1 Kings 22) where "prophets" have lied. Why doesn't God communicate directly with each one of us and thus eliminate this risk? Why does He pick out a prophet here and a prophet there and then tell the kings of Israel to inquire of them? What if Ahab had not questioned Micaiah, being left with Micaiah's first message and going off to battle and getting slaughtered? What kind of prophets were these who were prophesying for Ahab? Were they recognized as bringing words from Jehovah, Baal, Ashtoreth or who? Wasn't it pretty clear that Ahab already knew what he wanted to do, and probably wouldn't have changed his plans no matter what Micaiah said? Does God ever convene the heavenly council to try to decide how to tempt someone to do something

wrong—even get themselves killed? Can you think of any other stories in the Bible that might compare in “incredibility” with this one? (What about the rich man and Lazarus—Luke 16:19-31?)

11. Notice the context of 2 Chronicles 20:20, our key text for believing the prophets. If God could so easily send a message through the prophet and then “miraculously” defeat the enemies of His people, why didn’t He do it many times before this? (Compare Joshua 6; 2 Kings 19:35; 2 Chronicles 32:21; Isaiah 37:36) If David was so close to God that he could ask detailed instructions about when and how to go to battle, why didn’t God just win the battles for him as God did in this story? Then David may have been able to build the Temple. (1 Chronicles 28:3)
12. Why was it that as long as Jehoiada was alive sacrifices were offered continuously at the temple? (2 Chronicles 24:14) Why did they so soon abandon this practice after he died? (2 Chronicles 24:15-18) What caused the tremendous reversal in the life history of Joash? (2 Chronicles 24)
13. Why did God strike Uzziah with leprosy because he tried to offer incense on the altar in the temple? (2 Chronicles 26:16-21) Compare Uzzah (2 Samuel 6:6,7); Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-11); Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Numbers 16:1-35).
14. Most of the time it seemed that when the king did what was right the people followed, and vice versa, but not always. Occasionally the people ignored the king. Look at Jotham, who did what was right, while the people worshiped other “gods”. (2 Chronicles 27:2) See **2 Kings Teacher’s Guide #9**.
15. What was the reason for the disastrous wars between Judah and Israel? (2 Chronicles 28:5,6; 2 Kings 16:5) What else was happening during this time? (Isaiah 7-9) Why do you think the Israelites returned the Judean prisoners in the times of Ahaz? (2 Chronicles 28:8-15) Who was more wicked at the time—Israel or Judah? Why did God allow Israel to win? King Ahaz offered sacrifices to the “gods” of Damascus because they had beaten him in war. (2 Chronicles 28:22,23) He went on to become very wicked. (vs. 24,25) What does this teach us?
16. Look at the incredible sins that Manasseh did (2 Chronicles 33)—offering his children in the fire, putting heathen idols and altars in the temple, consulting mediums and spiritists, rebuilding the high places, making altars to Baal and Asherah, bowing down to the starry host—Manasseh even put Isaiah in a hollow log and sawed him in two (Hebrews 11:37; PK 382; 4BC 1137; The Pseudepigraphical book of *the Martyrdom of Isaiah*). Could God take such a person to heaven after this history? See **2 Kings Teacher’s Guide #19**.
17. What is implied by God’s summary of why He had to let the people go off to Babylonian captivity? (2 Chronicles 36:15-16; compare 2 Kings 17:5-23) When God’s people are so bad that they hold God up to open shame, is God losing in the great controversy? That is the battlefield that really counts! Why do you suppose God decided at this point that He had to “let them go?” What is He waiting for in our day?

