

The Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles

Listed Scriptures

2 Chronicles 2, 3, 19

Lesson Aim

- 1) That the students would get an overview of what is covered in the two books
- 2) That the students can learn from the good examples mentioned and take the examples of evil doers as reminders not to walk the same path

Memory Verse

“The Lord is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.” (2 Chron 15:2)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

2 Chronicles 2, 3, 19

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



As with the books of Samuel and Kings, the two books of Chronicles are originally in one volume. The first division was made in the Septuagint (the first translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek) and then later the Latin Vulgate (Latin translation of the Bible). The division was adopted in subsequent translations and versions. The Hebrew title of Chronicles is “book of the acts/events of the days,” that is, annals, a phrase used to describe royal acts or records. The books can be seen as consisting of four sections: genealogies and lists that trace the story from Adam to the community after the exile (1 Chron 1–9); the reign of David (1 Chron 10–29); the reign of Solomon (2 Chron 1–9); and the history of the Davidic monarchy (later the Southern Kingdom) up to the Babylonian captivity (2 Chron 10–36). Please also refer to the Bible Background sections in Lessons 7 & 8 on 1 and 2 Kings.



Are there books in the Bible that seem hard to read through from beginning to end because the accounts seem so repetitive and even boring? Let students respond.

It is easy to dismiss a book as boring if we do not know what to focus on when we read it. That is why Bible studies are helpful because we get to discuss specific questions based on certain themes or areas of interest. This is a good way to make our Bible reading fruitful, instead of simply going through the sentences without making sense of how the events relate to one another or without finding relevance in our lives.

The two books we are covering today may seem like a repetition of events already covered in earlier books like 1 and 2 Kings. But if we were to focus on specific characters and see how they were or were not blessed by God, we will find teachings from their lives that are relevant to our relationship with God. So today, we will study two books of the Bible, by highlighting some of the important characters and events.

Teaching Tips

Many people find that it is not easy to read through these two books without finding the records tedious and repetitive. So, it is useful, when studying these two books, to take down notes of important events/people/details and categorize the information in various ways.

The information presented in the next section (Bible Study) is merely an overview. It would be boring for your students to simply go through the list. You may want to expand on some of the details in the next section and concentrate on the information you want your students to remember, instead of skimming through the two books as an overview.

Another possibility is to have different groups of students taking charge of reading a few selected chapters and then summarizing their findings to the class. This way, the whole class will get to have the highlights of some selected chapters.



1 and 2 Chronicles

As with the books of Samuel and Kings, the two books of Chronicles are originally in one volume. The records were probably compiled into one volume around the year 450 B.C. It is likely that the compiler/chronicler was Ezra. He could have done it during the time he led the Israelites back to the land of Judah, for the purpose of reviving their religious faith. These historical records of the acts of the kings would have been a good piece of teaching material for Ezra, who was both a scribe and a priest for God.

A. Genealogy

The genealogy of the Israelite nation is summed up in about ten chapters. The contents can be categorized as follows, according to the chapter breakdown:

- a. Adam to Abraham: This list gives us information on who the close relatives of the Israelites are (1)
- b. The descendants of Jacob:
 1. The tribe of Judah (2) and David's descendants (3)
 2. The tribe of Simeon (4:24-43)
 3. The tribes of Reuben, Gad and half tribe of Manasseh (5)
 4. The tribe of Levi, temple musicians and descendants of Aaron (6)
 5. The tribes of Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Ephraim and Asher (7)
 6. The tribe of Benjamin mentioned again, and the life of Saul (8)
- c. Those who returned from exile (9)

B. The Reign of David

- a. Fall of Saul and why (10): His failure to obey God's teachings and dabbling with sorcery
- b. David's early years as king/leader and a list of heroes who served him (11, 12, 14)

- c. David arranged to have the ark of the covenant transported back to Jerusalem. The incident with Uzza, however, instilled fear in David and the people. Thus, the ark was left in the house of Obed-Edom (13)
- d. The Levites were assigned to take charge of the ark (14, 15)
- e. David's prayer of thanksgiving and desire to build a temple for God (16, 17)
- f. David's further conquests (18–20)
- g. David sinned when he took a census of the people (21)
- h. David instructed Solomon to build the holy temple (22)
- i. Further records about the duties of the Levites and the various governing divisions in the kingdom (23–27)
- j. Details of David's plan for the temple-building project (28, 29)

C. The Reign of Solomon (2 Chronicles)

- a. Solomon offered sacrifices to God and also asked for wisdom (1)
- b. Preparations for the temple/Help from the king of Tyre (2)
- c. Architecture of the temple (3–5)
- d. Completion and dedication of the temple to God (6)
- e. God accepted the offerings of the people and the dedication of the temple (7)
- f. Solomon's many building projects for his own pleasure (8)
- g. Visit of the Queen of Sheba/Solomon's great wealth and wisdom (9)

D. The Davidic Monarchy

In the eyes of God, the Northern Kingdom were a stiff-necked and rebellious people. All the kings of Israel (Northern Kingdom) did evil in the sight of God, and the

people also turned away from God. In 2 Chronicles, only the kings of the Southern Kingdom are mentioned. Here is a brief outline of some of the well-known kings and the events in their lives.

- a. Asa (14–16)
He boldly removed the altars and wooden images of the foreign gods. He also defeated the Ethiopians through prayers. Unfortunately, in the battle against Israel, he sought the help of the Syrians. When the prophet admonished him, he locked him up. In the end, Asa died in his sickness, for he did not seek God's healing.
- b. Jehoshaphat (17–20)
The kingdom of Judah flourished at the beginning of his reign, for he obeyed God's laws. Later, he joined forces with Ahab of Israel to attack Gilead, much against the counsel of the prophet Imla. In that battle, he nearly lost his life. He ruled the kingdom well. In a later battle against the Ammonites and Moabites, he led the Levite musicians to sing praises to God at the forefront of the army, and with that, they had a great victory.
- c. Joash (23, 24)
Jehoiada the priest was courageous to destroy Athaliah, who murdered all in the line to the throne, except for Joash. Joash was made king. With the guidance of the priest, he made repairs to the temple. However, after the death of the priest, he turned to worship idols. Ultimately, he died in sickness.
- d. Uzziah (26)
He was a king who walked in the ways of God. Unfortunately, he was proud in his heart and entered the temple to burn incense on the altar of incense (which was a priestly duty). He was stricken with leprosy and died in isolation.
- e. Hezekiah (29–32)
He was among the most well-known kings, especially at the end of the Southern Kingdom. He cleansed the temple, and encouraged all Israelites (including those from Israel) to observe the festivals in Jerusalem. He re-established the paying of tithes and many other things pleasing in the eyes of God. When Sennacherib of Assyria fought against Judah, God delivered Hezekiah and his kingdom. Hezekiah ultimately died in peace and wealth.

E. Conclusion

When we look at the nineteen kings of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, we see a line of consistency: Those who obeyed God and did good things were blessed, while those who did evil in God's eyes had tragic endings. There were also some who started out doing good but did not persevere and ultimately turned away from God's laws; the story of their lives are regrettable.

From these stories, we should remember how the Israelites were the ones who insisted on having a king to rule them (1 Sam 8:6, 7, 19, 20). Yet, not one of their kings turned out to be a truly great king who could take care of them like God did. This shows that men are, after all, men. Human beings have weaknesses and strengths. It is the same with people and church members who hold certain positions in church work. No one can ever replace God.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1 What are the four main categories of events dealt with in 1 & 2 Chronicles?

2 List the twelve tribes of Israel from memory.

3 What are some of the key events in the life and reign of Solomon?

4 Name at least three kings of the Southern Kingdom and write down their good deeds.

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



Part A- Learning From Your Church Friends

One of the great ancient scholars, Confucius, said that we can find our teachers in the midst of friends; we emulate the good examples and search ourselves when we see undesirable ones. In the church, we have a community of people who can be our "teachers." For this activity, we are going to share with one another what we count as admirable characteristics. Here is the task:

1. Think of one or two church members that you know. Write down, on the piece of paper provided by your teacher, two admirable characteristics that you see in those church members. (Please keep identities of the church members anonymous. This is not a session of honoring any particular person(s).)
2. Elaborate on what these characteristics are, giving instances of how these characteristics were exhibited and what good effects they brought about.
3. Explain why or how you think such characteristics are pleasing in the sight of God, and how people with such characteristics will be able to be of good service to the Lord.
4. Then, share what you have written with the rest of the class.
5. Discuss how someone may be able to acquire or develop the various strengths that have been mentioned.

Part B- "The Touch of the Master's Hand"

It was battered and scarred, and the auctioneer thought it scarcely worth his while to auction off the old violin, but he held it up with a smile.

"What is the bid for the old violin? Who will start the bidding for me?"

"One dollar. One. Who'll make it two? Two dollars. Who'll make it three? Going for three." But, wait, from far back in the room, a gray-haired man came forward and picked up the bow.

Wiping the dust from the old violin, and tightening up its strings, he played a melody pure and sweet, as sweet as an angel sings. The auctioneer, with a voice that was quiet and low, said, "What is the bid for the old violin?" as he held it up with the bow.

"One thousand."

"Two thousand."

"Three thousand."

"Three thousand going once, twice, going, gone."

The people cheered, but some of them cried, "We don't quite understand what changed its worth."

Quick came the reply, "The touch of the Master's hand."

Many a man, with a life out of tune, battered and torn by sin, is auctioned off to a thoughtless crowd, much like that old violin. A mess of pottage, a glass of wine, a game, and he travels on. He's going once, he's going twice, he's going . . . he's almost gone. Then, the Master comes, and the thoughtless crowd can never quite understand. The worth of a soul and the miracle that's wrought by the touch of the Master's hand.

- Author unknown.

As we look at the lives of many kings in the history of the Israelites, we cannot help but marvel sometimes at how some kings could persist in doing so much evil. Yet, there are those whose good deeds are impressed upon us. To head for good, or dash down the path of evil? This often is separated by a thin line, a very thin line of whether we submit ourselves to the "touch of the Master's hand." The following are the lyrics of a very well-written Christian song. The message is similar to the one in the story that we have just read:

"Something beautiful, something good,
All my confusion, He understood,
All I had to offer Him, was brokenness and strife,
But He made something beautiful of my life."

Surely at one or more points in time, we have been like the old violin – battered, torn, almost worthless. But, when God came into our lives, with a touch of His hand, He made something beautiful of our lives. How often do we reflect on how great it is that we have God in our lives? Write down your experiences of how God has made something beautiful of your life, by giving you many beautiful things in your life! Be prepared to share your reflections with the class.

R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chron 7:14). God said this to Solomon right after he dedicated the holy temple. A similar message is being echoed in the memory verse for today's lesson: "The Lord is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you" (2 Chron 15:2).

Indeed, God is a God who wants to hear our prayers and give us His blessings. Unfortunately, we often fail to turn to Him. We simply try to keep to ourselves and neglect to involve Him in our lives. May these two verses be kept well in our memories, so that we know to seek God and be close to Him in all the things that we do.