**Survey Old Testament**

**1 Chronicles**

1. The books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles record the history of the Jews from the last judge (Samuel) and the establishment of the first king (Saul), to the exile of the nation to Babylon. The books of 1 and 2 Kings were written from the viewpoint of the prophets, while 1 and 2 Chronicles present the priestly viewpoint of Jewish history. There is an emphasis in Chronicles on the Levites, the building of the temple, God’s covenant as recorded in Deuteronomy, and the holy city of Jerusalem. You might say that 1 and 2 Kings give us the political record and 1 and 2 Chronicles the religious record. Second Chronicles records at least five “revivals” in the history of Judah (chaps. 15, 20, 23, 24, 25, and 29, 31).
2. The writer of 1 Chronicles picks up the royal record at the death of Saul (1 Chron. 10). It is interesting to note what he omits from the record: David’s long conflict with Saul; the rivalry with Ish-bosheth (2 Sam. 2–4); David’s sin with Bathsheba; David’s family problems with Amnon and Absalom; Adonijah’s attempt to get the throne from Solomon; the sins of Solomon; and much of the history of the kings of Israel (the Northern Kingdom). The record focuses on the kings of Judah and emphasizes God’s choice of David and his descendants to reign from Jerusalem. If you studied only the record in 1 and 2 Chronicles, you would never know that David and Solomon had ever sinned! According to the writer of 2 Chronicles, it was not Solomon’s sin that caused the division of the kingdom, but Jeroboam’s political scheming. Both are true, but it is interesting to see the priestly viewpoint that almost idealized both David and Solomon. After all, David provided the wealth for the building of the temple, as well as the songs, musical instruments, and organization for the Levites; and Solomon built the temple. The book shows that God blesses His people when they obey His will and disciplines them when they disobey. God is true to His covenant even if His people prove false to Him. When God’s longsuffering ended, He turned the people of Judah over to the Babylonians and permitted the enemy to destroy the temple and the city of Jerusalem. Second Chronicles ends with a copy of the decree of Cyrus allowing the Jews to return to their land, and thus parallels the beginning of Ezra. The writer sees continuity in the history of the people, because God is guiding them and accomplishing His purposes through them, in spite of their sins.

**1 Chronicles 1–9 Genealogies**

1. Genealogies make boring reading for most people today, but they were essential to the Jews who had to keep accurate records of their family ties for many reasons. You had to know your tribe, clan, and family relationships because property ownership was supposed to stay within the tribe. In situations where a kinsman redeemer would rescue a poor person, he had to prove that he was indeed a near relative. (See the Book of Ruth.) The firstborn son received twice as much inheritance as did the other sons. Of course, the priests and Levites had to prove that they were from the tribe of Levi or they were not permitted to serve.
2. These hundreds of names, some of them difficult to pronounce, represent people whom God used to maintain the “living link” with the promises and covenants of the past. The Jews were chosen by God and given promises that would ultimately affect all the world. Had there been a break in this chain of “living links,” the Savior could not have been born into this world.
3. Most of these people are unknown while a few of them are very famous, but God used all of them to accomplish His purposes. When you read your Bible, you remember people like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and David, but were it not for a great many lesser-known people, these men would not have been on the scene. Let’s thank God for the “forgotten people” who helped the “famous people” get there!

**1 Chronicles 1:10–7:23 Nimrod, the Mighty Hunter**

1. The reference is to Gen. 10:8–10. The word “hunter” carries the meaning of hunting people, not hunting animals. He was a rebel who defied God and set up the infamous kingdom of Babylon. After the sons of Noah began to replenish the earth, it didn’t take long for their descendants to turn against the Lord. The lesson of the flood didn’t penetrate very deep.

**1 Chronicles 2:3 Er, the Wicked Son**

1. See Genesis 38. We don’t know the nature of Er’s sin, but it was something serious enough for God to slay him. His brother Onan refused to marry the widow and carry on the brother’s name and family, so he was also killed. See Deut. 25:5–10. It was important to God that the Jewish people continue to multiply, for He had some special tasks for them to fulfill. The whole story about Judah and Tamar seems repulsive to us, yet Tamar is listed in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:3).

**1 Chronicles 2:7 Achan, the Troubler of Israel**

1. Read Joshua 6–7. His sin was in violating a ban that Joshua had put on all the spoil of Jericho because it was dedicated to the Lord. Achan thought he had gotten away with stealing the loot, but the defeat of Israel’s army at Ai led to his discovery and execution. Had Achan waited a few days, he could have had all the loot he wanted at Ai! One sinner can bring trouble to a whole nation.

**1 Chronicles 3:1 Amnon, the Unclean**

1. He violated his half-sister Tamar and was eventually slain by Absalom (2 Sam. 13–14). Some of the firstborn sons listed in these chapters are not models of virtue. Er was killed by the Lord (2:3); Amnon was killed by his brother (3:1); and Reuben lost the birthright because he violated his father’s concubine (5:1–2). In Israel, the firstborn had special privileges, but these three men threw away their privileges for the “pleasures of sin for a season.”

**1 Chronicles 4:9-10 Jabez, the Undaunted**

1. In Hebrew, the name “Jabez” means “to grieve.” It certainly wasn’t the fault of Jabez that his mother had such a difficult delivery, but she gave him a name that would remind him and others of her pain. See Gen. 35:18–19. It would seem from the text that his brethren rejected him and were not “noble” men of character. Jabez overcame his name and his family problems by turning to God in prayer and asking for His blessing.

**1 Chronicles 5:1-2 Reuben, the Uncontrollable**

1. How strange that a man’s sins should get into an official genealogy! The deed is recorded in Gen. 35:22; and in Gen. 49:3–4, Jacob brought it up publicly at his deathbed and judged him for his lack of self-control. Reuben lost the birthright, which was given to Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48:15–22). One act of sin can be costly for the sinner and for his or her family!

**1 Chronicles 22:1–26:32 The Builder of the Temple**

1. David’s heart had always been set on building a temple for the Lord (see 2 Sam. 7), but since he had been fully occupied fighting wars, he was not able to do the work. The fact that he was a warrior and had shed blood was another reason.
2. So, David gave Solomon the wealth to build the temple, the plans, the workers, and the cooperation of the princes of the land (vv. 17–19). But the “heart” of the matter was the heart of Solomon (v. 19). If Solomon’s heart was right with God, then God would bless his endeavors.

**1 Chronicles 23:1-26:32 The Ministers in the Temple**

1. Second Chronicles 29:25 informs us that David’s plan for organizing the priests and Levites was given to him by the Lord through his two prophets, Gad and Nathan. Not only the plan for the temple itself, but also what went on in the temple and how it was organized, were commanded by the Lord. There were 38,000 Levites available and David divided them into four units: 24,000 to supervise the work in the temple; 4,000 as musicians; 4,000 as doorkeepers, which involved the temple treasuries and storerooms; and 6,000 to be scattered throughout the nation to minister as judges and teachers of the law. Note that David provided the instruments for the musicians to use (23:5), and he wrote many of the songs that they used to worship the Lord.
2. As we review these chapters and their many names, we are struck with the fact that God uses people to accomplish His work, people with different talents and different ministries. Some of the temple servants led in singing praises to God; others played the instruments; some guarded the treasures; some kept the inventory of the gifts brought to the temple. The priests offered the sacrifices to the Lord and cared for the daily service of worship.

**1 Chronicles 27:1–29:30 The Protectors of the Temple and the Land**

1. We move now from the temple organization to the civil government, for in the nation of Israel, both were ordered by God and governed by His divine law. There were twelve army units and each one served for one month of the year. Of course, when needed, the units could be called together quickly.
2. If you compare 1 Chron. 11:10 with the list of leaders in vs. 2–15, you will see that David’s “mighty men” were in charge of the army. He had proved these men in many places of testing, and he knew he could trust them.

**1 Chronicles 28:1-29:30 The Encouragement to Build the Temple**

1. The writer is giving us “the last words of David” (1 Chron. 23:27) as well as the last works of David as he prepared Solomon and the people for the building of the temple.
2. What a wonderful thing that David sought to build a temple to the glory of God and not a monument to his own glory. He could die knowing that future generations would have a beautiful house of prayer and praise where they could honor the Lord.

**1 Chronicles 28:1-7 God’s choices**

1. David emphasized the fact that it was God who chose the tribe of Judah to be the royal tribe (v. 4; Gen. 49:8–10); and from Judah, God chose David’s family to be the royal family (1 Sam. 16:6–13; 2 Sam. 7). Then God chose Solomon to be David’s successor and the one to build the temple.

**1 Chronicles 28:8-21 David’s charges**

1. First, David charged all the officers and people to obey all of God’s commands (v. 8). What good was a beautiful temple if the people were disobedient to their God? Then David charged Solomon (28:9–10, 20–21) to be faithful to his responsibility as king and builder of the temple. “Be strong and of good courage” (vv. 10, 20) reminds us of God’s words to Joshua (Josh. 1:6–7, 9, 18).
2. David knew that his people must have a share in the cost of the temple, so he asked the leaders of the nation to contribute, and they did so willingly. David had first set the example in giving, and he reminded the people that they were giving to the Lord (29:1). Their giving was an act of worship (29:5b), and they gave generously.

**1 Chronicles 29 David’s consecration**

1. David prayed and dedicated the offering, the new king, and the people to the Lord. He blessed the Lord for His wonderful attributes. He expressed his humility before God (29:14) and acknowledged that even the wealth that he and his people had brought originally cameuhhjo9l
2. Linm from the Lord! “Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand” (NIV).
3. In a great worship service where the youth oLord was glorified, David passed the scepter to his son Solomon, am nd the people rejoiced at God’s goodness. God was able to magnify Solomon because Solomon magnified the Lord (see Phil. 1:20; Josh. 3:7). David died but the throne of Israel continued. God buries His workmen but continues His work.