



# Chronicles of Israel

A study on Israel, her kings, and truth versus consequence

High Meadow Ranch Men's Bible Study | Lesson #17 – Wednesday, June 21, 2023

The Door Remains Open (2 Chronicles 36:1 – 23)

Provided in the table below is a high level overview of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles. As we go through this series it will be useful to keep this overview in mind in relation to the overall framework of this study.

| Chapters             | Content   | Significance  |
|----------------------|---|---|
| 1 Chronicles 1 – 9   | Genealogies, emphasis on tribes of Judah and Levi | Preparing the stage for the Kingdom of Judah and the priestly tribe   |
| 1 Chronicles 10      | Reign of Saul                                     | Transition to David's Kingdom; declaration that the throne belonged to the tribe of Judah                                     |
| 1 Chronicles 11 – 29 | Reign of David                                    | Phase 1 of the ideal Kingdom; detailed preparation for the Temple   |
| 2 Chronicles 1 – 9   | Reign of Solomon                                  | Phase 2 of the ideal Kingdom; construction and installation of the Temple   |
| 2 Chronicles 10 – 26 | Kings of Judah                                    | Succession of kings, all of whom were descended from David; implemented the standards of David and Solomon to varying degrees |

This is the last of nine lessons dealing with the kings of Judah after Solomon. I've really enjoyed this study, although it's been a long one since we started this journey together nine months ago (I'm not sure we're going to do such a long series again!). This week we'll be discussing four kings of whom we can say that **their lack of devotion to God was only exceeded by their incompetence as leaders.** Jehoahaz, the first of these kings, was taken by hostage to Egypt, while the other three were part of a successive deportation to Babylon.

This series has reminded me of three things. First, leadership matters. The direction taken by each king had a direct impact on the nation. Secondly, righteousness matters., God is always watching us. As stated in Proverbs 14:34, **"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."** There is no middle ground, we are either pursuing God or we are not. It's not about perfection, it's about having a trend towards Christ likeness of our lives. Finally, there is a consequence for sin. The sin in our lives impacts others. While we might never rule a nation, we all have leadership positions in our families, churches, neighborhoods, and some of us in business. How we lead impacts those we lead and possibly their opinion of Jesus. **Let's do it right!**

As we do each week, let's ask ourselves the following questions:

1. Was the king good or bad?
2. For the bad kings, what factors contributed to their downfall?
3. For the good kings, what factors contributed to their success?
4. What lessons can we learn from these kings that apply to our own lives?



### Questions

1. Read 2 Chronicles 36 and complete the following table in relation to the king's age when they started ruling, how long they ruled, and anything noteworthy about their reign.

| Name of King          | Start of Rule (Age) | Length of Rule | Noteworthy Events |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Jehoahaz (vs. 1-3)    |                     |                |                   |
| Jehoiakim (vs. 4-8)   |                     |                |                   |
| Jehoiachin (vs. 9-10) |                     |                |                   |
| Zedekiah (vs. 11-21)  |                     |                |                   |

2. Read 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 and Ezra 1:1-3 regarding Cyrus' Decree. What was contained in the decree and how was it a fulfillment of Jeremiah 29:10-12? Also, read the background commentary provided below from biblegateway.com.

Cyrus, a heathen ruler of a heathen empire (Persia), was "twice named [before his birth] in the book of Isaiah as anointed of God and predestined to conquer kings and fortified places and to set the Jews free from captivity (Isa. 44:28; 45:1-14). Daniel... records that during the night that followed a great feast, Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was slain, and Darius the Mede received the kingdom (Dan. 5:30, 31). Darius was the predecessor of Cyrus, or his regent, in Babylonia (Dan. 6:28)" (John D. Davis, *A Dictionary of the Bible*). God gave Cyrus the resolution and the desire to execute His intention. That the Lord at this time chose a heathen as His instrument was in accordance with the new position that the empires of the world were henceforth to assume toward the kingdom of God (J.P. Lange, *A Commentary*).

3. Have you experienced a time or failure in your life that you thought might render you useless for God's work? How does the message of God's redemption for Judah under the rule of Cyrus bring encouragement for either you or others you might counsel?
4. Considering most of us have been doing this study for nine months, answer the following questions.
  - a. What did you learn in studying 1 and 2 Chronicles that you did not know previously? Think in terms of our study sub-title: **A study on Israel, her kings, and truth versus consequence.**
  - b. If you were to counsel a son or grandson (or maybe a younger version of yourself), what would tell them in relation to the answer in "a" above?

**Next Meeting (Tuesday, August 22):** We'll be starting our new series in the fall based on Tim Keller's book, *The Prodigal God*. It is a book that will profoundly impact your view of God and His love for us.