

2 CHRONICLES

Chapter 1-9 gives us the history of King Solomon.

Chapter 10 -36 gives us the history of the kings of Judah.

Solomon was about twenty years old when he became king. God offered Solomon a blessing if he would ask for it and Solomon asked for wisdom and knowledge.

To build the temple and a whole range of palaces seventy thousand men would bear the burden. Eighty thousand men would cut timber. Three thousand six hundred would oversee the work. One hundred fifty-three thousand six hundred men were subjected to task work.

These people were Palestinians removed by Israel and subjected to forced labor.

The temple was built on Mount Moriah on the eastern side of Jerusalem.

After the completion of the temple it was dedicated to God. The temple would be the only Holy Place in the world for God's people. (1 Peter 2:9-10) In Solomon's prayer he never asked God to cease being God. He only asked that in keeping with His mercy He would answer genuine repentance.

The dedication of the temple coincided with the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. A tremendously great number of animals were sacrificed. This celebration covered fourteen days.

The temple was not a monument or a memorial. It was "a house of sacrifice" where God's people could give expression to their living faith in God. God said He would bless Israel but if they should forget God and turn to idols, both the king and the people would be plucked up by the roots (completely destroyed).

In Solomon's old age, Jeroboam conspired to take Solomon's throne. The conspiracy failed and Jeroboam found refuge in Egypt until Solomon's death. Rehoboam, his son, became king.

Jeroboam became the leader of the ten northern tribes after Rehoboam failed to relieve taxes and excessive burdens.

The tribes of Judah, Simeon, and a part of Benjamin submitted to Rehoboam's kingship. All the others turned to Jeroboam. Rehoboam decided to use military strength against the northern kingdom but God advised him to "dismiss the army."

Jeroboam rejected God's worship and set up calves at Dan and Bethel. As a result many of the priests and Levites migrated to the southern kingdom. Jeroboam tried to make religious convenient for his people and to keep them from going to Jerusalem to worship.

The influx of religious people in the southern kingdom only served to make Rehoboam's government more stable for about three years. Rehoboam and Israel forsook the Law of the Lord.

The rest of 2 Chronicles deals with the consequences Israel must suffer for forsaking God and His laws. They would be invaded by various nations and most kings were wicked men.

God was serious when He said that if they failed to obey Him, He would completely destroy them and the city of Jerusalem. In 587 B.C., the Babylonians under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city of Jerusalem for eighteen months.

The Hebrews were reduced to cannibalism to try and remain alive. Zedekiah tried to escape and was captured. In Riblah they killed his son in his presence and then gouged out the king's eyes and led him to Babylon.

The temple was destroyed. After everything valuable was removed, the temple was burned. Jerusalem was left in complete desolation and the Jews were lead off into Babylonian captivity for seventy years.

Isaiah had predicted two hundred years before Cyrus that Cyrus would be a deliverer of the Hebrew people.

In 536 B.C., Cyrus issued a decree releasing the Jews from captivity. The seventy years were fulfilled. The time had come for the Hebrews to be released.

The Hebrews were set free and all who wanted could return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. Fifty thousand Jews returned under the leadership of Zerubbabel and the priest Joshua to rebuild the temple in about 516 B.C.

Daniel was God's agent who acquainted Cyrus with God's purpose for His people. Daniel continued until the third year of the reign of Cyrus.

The temple was central to the keeping of the covenant, thus the need for rebuilding it.