
 1CHRONICLES 1: 1 Adam, Seth, Enosh,

Anciently these two books were considered but as one: for this we have not only the testimony of St. Jerome, but also that of the Masoretes, who gave the sum of all the sections, chapters, and verses, under one notation at the end of the second book, without mentioning any division; and although the modern Jews divide them, yet they give the Masoretic enumeration of sections, etc., as it was given of old; and all editors of the Masoretic Bibles, whether Jewish or Christian, follow the same plan.

These books have had several names. In Hebrew they are denominated דברי הימים dibrey haiyamim; literally, The Words of the Days, i.e., The Journals, particularly of the kings of Israel and kings of Judah. But this name does not appear to have been given by the inspired writer.

The Syriac has, The Book of the Transactions in the days of the Kings of Judah: which is called, Dibrey Yamim; referring to the Hebrew title.

The Arabic has, The Book of the Annals, which is called in Hebrew, Dibrey Haiyamim.

The Septuagint has, παραλειπομενων, of the things that were left or omitted; supposing that these books were a supplement either to Samuel and to the books of Kings, or to the whole Bible. To this the Greek translators might have been led by finding that these books in their time closed the Sacred Canon, as they still do in the most correct editions of the Hebrew Bible.

The Vulgate uses the same term as the Septuagint, referring, like the Syriac and Arabic, to the Hebrew name.

In our English Bibles these books are termed Chronicles, from the Greek χρονικα, from χρονος, i.e., A History of Times; or, as the matter of the work shows, "A History of Times, Kingdoms, States, Religion, etc., with an Account of the most memorable Persons and Transactions of those Times and Nations." Concerning the author of these books, nothing certain is known. Some think they are the works of different authors; but the uniformity of the style, the connection of the facts, together with the recapitulations and reflections which are often made, prove that they are the work of one and the same person.

The Jews, and Christian interpreters in general, believe they were the work of Ezra, assisted by the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. That Ezra was the author is, on the whole, the most probable opinion. That he lived at the conclusion of the Babylonish captivity is well known; and the second book of Chronicles terminates at that period, barely reciting the decree of Cyrus to permit the return of the captivated Israelites to their own land; which subject is immediately taken up in the book of Ezra, in which the operation of that decree is distinctly marked.

There are words and terms, both in Chronicles and Ezra, which are similar, and prove that each was written after the captivity, and probably by the same person, as those terms were not in use previously to that time, and some of them are peculiar to Ezra himself: e.g., we have כפורי זהב kipporey zahab, "golden cups;" Ezr 1:10; Ezr 8:27; and in 1Chr 28:17; and דרכמון drakmon, "a drachma" or drachm, 1Chr 29:7; Ezr 2:69; Neh 7:70; and רפסדות raphsodoth, "rafts" or floats, 2Chr 2:16, widely differing from דברות doberoth, 1Kgs 5:9, which we there translate in the same way. Calmet considers these words as strong evidence that these books were the work of Ezra, and penned after the captivity.

We are not to suppose that these books are the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah and Israel so often referred to in the historical books of the Old Testament; these have been long lost, and the books before us can only be abridgments, either of such chronicles, or of works of a similar kind.

That the ancient Jews took great care to register their civil, military, and ecclesiastical transactions, is sufficiently evident from frequent reference to such works in the sacred writings; and that these registers were carefully and correctly formed, we learn from the character of the persons by whom they were compiled: they were in general prophets, and seem to have been employed by the kings under whom they lived to compile the annals of their reigns; or most likely this was considered a part of the prophet's regular office.

Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, wrote under the reign of David; 1Chr 29:29.

The acts of the reign of Solomon were written by Nathan, Ahijah, and Iddo; 2Chr 9:29.

Shemaiah and Iddo wrote those of Rehoboam; 2Chr 12:15.

Iddo wrote also those of Abijah; 2Chr 13:22.

It is likely that Hanani the seer wrote those of Asa; 2Chr 16:7.

Jehu the prophet, the son of Hanani, 1Kgs 16:1, 1Kgs 16:7, wrote the acts of Jehoshaphat; 2Chr 20:34. Under this same reign we find Jahaziel the prophet, 2Chr 20:14; and Eliezer the prophet, 2Chr 20:37.

Isaiah recorded the transactions of Uzziah, 2Chr 26:22; and those of Hezekiah, 2Chr 32:32; and of Ahaz, of whose reign we find the principal facts in the fifth, sixth, and ninth chapters of his prophecies. Under this reign we find Oded the prophet, 2Chr 28:9.

Hosea wrote the history of the reign of Manasseh. See 2Chr 33:19, in the margin.

And Jeremiah wrote the history of Josiah and his descendants, the last kings of Judah.

This was such a succession of historians as no nation of the world could ever boast. Men, all of whom wrote under the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit; some of whom had minds the most highly cultivated, and of the most extraordinary powers. Whether the prophets who flourished in the reigns of the kings of Israel wrote the annals of those kings, we know not, because it is not positively declared. We know that Ahijah the Shilonite lived under Jeroboam, the son of Nebat; 1Kgs 11:29; 1Kgs 14:2; and Jehu, son of Hanani, under Baasha; 1Kgs 16:7.

Elijah and many others flourished under the reign of Ahab. Elisha, Jonah, and many more, succeeded him in the prophetic office.

Besides these prophets and prophetic men, we find other persons, whose office it was to record the transactions of the kings under whom they lived. These were called secretaries or recorders; so, under David and Solomon, Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder. מזכיר mazkir, "remembrancer;" 2Sam 8:16, and 1Chr 18:15. And under Hezekiah we find Joah, the son of Asaph; 2Kgs 18:18. And under Josiah, Joah the son of Joahaz, who filled the office; 2Chr 34:8.

The real object of the author of these books is not very easy to be ascertained. But it is evident that he never could have intended them as a supplement to the preceding books, as he relates many of the same circumstances which occur in them, and often in greater detail; and, except by way of amplification, adds very little that can be called new, and omits many things of importance, not only in the ancient history of the Israelites, but even of those mentioned in the preceding books of

Samuel and Kings. Nine chapters of his work are occupied with extensive genealogical tables, but even these are far from being perfect. His history, properly speaking, does not begin till the tenth chapter, and then it commences abruptly with the last unsuccessful battle of Saul and his death, but not a word of his history.

Though the writer gives many curious and important particulars in the life of David, yet he passes by his adultery with Bath-sheba, and all its consequences. He says nothing of the incest of Amnon with his sister Tamar, nor a word of the rebellion and abominations of Absalom. He says very little of the kings of Israel, and takes no notice of what concerned that state, from the capture of Amaziah king of Judah by Joash king of Israel; 2Chr 25:17, etc. And of the last wars of these kings, which terminated in the captivity of the ten tribes, he says not one word!

The principal design of the writer appears to have been this: to point out, from the public registers, which were still preserved, what had been the state of the different families previously to the captivity, that at their return they might enter on and repossess their respective inheritances. He enters particularly into the functions, genealogies, families, and orders of the priests and Levites; and this was peculiarly necessary after the return from the captivity, to the end that the worship of God might be conducted in the same way as before, and by the proper legitimate persons.

He is also very particular relative to what concerns religion, the worship of God, the temple and its utensils, the kings who authorized or tolerated idolatry, and those who maintained the worship of the true God. In his distribution of praise and blame, these are the qualities which principally occupy his attention, and influence his pen.

It may be necessary to say something here concerning the utility of these books. That they are in this respect in low estimation, we may learn from the manner in which they are treated by commentators: they say very little concerning them, and suppose the subject has been anticipated in the books of Samuel and Kings. That the persons who treat them thus have never studied them, is most evident, else their judgment would be widely different. Whatever history these books possess, in common with the books of Samuel and Kings, may, in a commentary, be fairly introduced in the examination of the latter; and this I have endeavored to do, as the reader may have already seen. But there are various details, and curious facts and observations, which must be considered in these books alone: nor will a slight mention of such circumstances do them justice.

St. Jerome had the most exalted opinion of the books of Chronicles. According to him, "they are an epitome of the Old Testament." He asserts, that "they are of such high moment and importance, that he who supposes himself to be acquainted with the sacred writings, and does not know them, only deceives himself; and that innumerable questions relative to the Gospel are here explained." *Paralipomenon liber, id est, Instrumenti Veteris επιτομη, tantus ac talis est, ut abeque illo, si quis scientiam Scripturarum sibi voluerit arrogare, seipsum irrideat. Per singula quippe nomina, juncturasque verborum, et praetermissae in Regum libris tanguntur historiae, et innumerae explicantur Evangelii Quaestiones.* - Epis. Secund. ad Paulinum Presbyterum., Oper. Edit. Benedict. vol. iv., col. 574. And in another place he asserts, that "all Scripture knowledge is contained in these books;" *Omnis eruditio Scripturarum in hoc libro continetur.* - Praefat. in lib. Paral. *justa Septuaginta Interpret Oper. Edit. Bened., vol. i., col. 1418.* This may be going too far; but St. Jerome believed that there was a mystery and meaning in every proper name, whether of man, woman, city, or country, in the book. And yet he complains greatly of the corruption of those names, some having been divided, so as to make two or three names out of one, and sometimes names condensed, so as of three names to make but one. To cure this evil he labored hard, and did much; but still the confusion is great, and in many cases past remedy. To assist the reader in this respect I wish to refer him to the

marginal readings and parallel texts, which are here carefully represented in the inner margin; these should be constantly consulted, as they serve to remove many difficulties and reconcile several seeming contradictions. In addition to these helps I have carefully examined the different ancient versions, and the various readings in the MSS. of Kennicott and De Rossi, which often help to remove such difficulties.

There is one mode of exposition which I have applied to these books, which has not, as far as I know, been as yet used: I mean the Targum, or Chaldee Paraphrase, of Rabbi Joseph. It is well known to all oriental scholars, that a Chaldee Targum, or Paraphrase, has been found and published in the Polyglots, on every book of the Old Testament, purely Hebrew, the books of Chronicles excepted. Neither in the Complutensian, Antwerp, Parisian, nor London Polyglot, is such a Targum to be found; none having been discovered when these works were published. But shortly after the London Polyglot was finished, a MS. was found in the University of Cambridge, containing the Targum on these books: this, with several other pieces, Arabic, Persian, Syriac, etc., Dr. Samuel Clarke collected, and intended to publish, as a supplementary volume to the Polyglot, but was prevented by premature death. The MS. was afterwards copied by Mr. David Wilkins, and printed, with a Latin translation, at Amsterdam, quarto, 1715. Of this work the reader will find I have made a liberal use, as I have of the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, on the preceding books. Rabbi Joseph, the author, lived about three hundred years after the destruction of the second temple, or about a.d. 400. The MS. in question formerly belonged to the celebrated Erpen, and was purchased by the duke of Buckingham, then Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and by him presented to the public library of that University.

It is worthy of remark, that the term *מימרא* meymera, "word," and *מימרא דיי* meymera dayeya, "the word of Jehovah," is used personally in this Targum; never as a word spoken, but as a Person acting: see the notes on Joh 1:1.

The first book of Chronicles contains a sort of genealogical history from the creation of the world to the death of David, A.M. 2989.

The genealogy of Adam to Noah, 1Chr 1:1-3. Of Noah to Abraham, vv. 4-27. The sons of Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, 1Chr 1:28. The sons of Ishmael, 1Chr 1:29, 1Chr 1:33. The sons of Esau, 1Chr 1:34-42. A list of the kings of Edom, 1Chr 1:43-50. A list of the dukes of Edom, 1Chr 1:51-54.

Verse 1

Adam, Sheth, Enosh - That is, Adam was the father of Sheth or Seth. Seth was the father of Enosh, Enosh the father of Kenan, and so on. No notice is taken of Cain and Abel, or of any of the other sons of Adam. One line of patriarchs, from Adam to Noah, is what the historian intended to give; and to have mentioned the posterity of Cain or Abel would have been useless, as Noah was not the immediate descendant of either. Besides, all their posterity had perished in the deluge, none remaining of the Adamic family but Noah and his children; and from these all the nations of the earth sprang.

How learned must those men be who can take for a text "The first verse of the first chapter of the first book of Chronicles." and find a mystery in each name; which, in the aggregate, amounts to a full view of the original perfection, subsequent fall, consequent misery, and final restoration, of Man! O ye profound illustrators of the names of men and cities! why do ye not give us the key of your wisdom, write comments, and enlighten the world?

1CHRONICLES 1: 2 Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared,

1CHRONICLES 1: 3 Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech,

1CHRONICLES 1: 4 Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

1CHRONICLES 1: 5 The sons of Japheth: Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

Verse 5

After Tiras, the Targum adds, "And the names of their countries were Africa, and Germany, and Media, and Macedonia, Bithynia, and Maesia, and Thrace." And in another copy, "Germany, Getia, and Media, and Ephesus, Bithynia, and Maesia, and Thrace."

1CHRONICLES 1: 6 The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, and Diphath, and Togarmah.

Verse 6

To this verse the Targum adds, "And the names of their countries were Asia, and Persia, and Barbary."

1CHRONICLES 1: 7 The sons of Javan: Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.

Verse 7

The sons of Javan - "But the sons of Macedon, Alsu, and Tarsus, Ilation, and Dardania, or, according to others, Elisha, Alam, Titsas, Achzavia, and Dardania, Ridom, and Chamen, and Antioch." So says this Targum, which I shall henceforth designate by the letter T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 8 The sons of Ham: Cush, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.

Verse 8

The sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim - "Arabia and Egypt." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 9 The sons of Cush: Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raama, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba, and Dedan.

Verse 9

Seba, and Havilah - "Sindi and Hindi, and Semadaei, and Libyes and the Zingitae; but the sons of the Mauritanians, Demargad and Mesag." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 10 Cush became the father of Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth.

Verse 10

He began to be mighty upon the earth - "He began to be bold in sin, a murderer of the innocent, and a rebel before the Lord." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 11 Mizraim became the father of Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,

Verse 11

Ludim, etc. - "The Nivitaei, the Mariotaei, the Libakaei, and the Pentaskenaei." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 12 and Pathrusim, and Casluhim (where the Philistines came from), and Capthorim.

Verse 12

Caphthorim - "The Cappadocians." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 13 Canaan became the father of Sidon his firstborn, and Heth,

Verse 13

Canaan begat Zidon - "Canaan begat Bothniam, his first-born, who built Sidon." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 14 and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite,

1CHRONICLES 1: 15 and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

1CHRONICLES 1: 16 and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.

1CHRONICLES 1: 17 The sons of Shem: Elam, and Asshur, and Arpachshad, and Lud, and Aram, and Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Meshech.

1CHRONICLES 1: 18 Arpachshad became the father of Shelah, and Shelah became the father of Eber.

1CHRONICLES 1: 19 To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg; for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.

Verse 19

The name of the one was Peleg - "Because in his days the inhabitants of the earth were divided according to their languages. And the name of his brother was Joktan, because in his days the years of men began to be shortened, on account of their iniquities." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 20 Joktan became the father of Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,

Verse 20

Joktan begat Almodad - "He divided and measured the earth by lines. Sheleph; he assigned rivers to be boundaries. Hazarmaveth; he prepared a place of snares to kill by the highways. Jerah; he built inns, and when any person came to eat and drink, he gave him deadly poison, and so took his property." - T.

According to these traditions, the two first were geographers; the third, a public robber; and the fourth, an unprincipled innkeeper, who gave poison to his rich guests, that he might get their property. Such things have been done even in modern times.

1CHRONICLES 1: 21 and Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah,

1CHRONICLES 1: 22 and Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba,

1CHRONICLES 1: 23 and Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.

Verse 23

And Ophir - "Whence gold is brought." And Havilah; "whence pearls are brought." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 24 Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah,

Verse 24

Shem - "The great priest." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 25 Eber, Peleg, Reu,

1CHRONICLES 1: 26 Serug, Nahor, Terah,

1CHRONICLES 1: 27 Abram (the same is Abraham).

1CHRONICLES 1: 28 The sons of Abraham: Isaac, and Ishmael.

1CHRONICLES 1: 29 These are their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,

1CHRONICLES 1: 30 Mishma, and Dumah, Massa, Hadad, and Tema,

1CHRONICLES 1: 31 Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.

1CHRONICLES 1: 32 The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bore Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan: Sheba, and Dedan.

Verse 32

Keturah, Abraham's concubine - Abraham's pilegesh, or wife of the second rank; she was neither whore, harlot, nor concubine, in our sense of these words.

1CHRONICLES 1: 33 The sons of Midian: Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah.

1CHRONICLES 1: 34 Abraham became the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau, and Israel.

1CHRONICLES 1: 35 The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jalam, and Korah.

1CHRONICLES 1: 36 The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, and Omar, Zephi, and Gatam, Kenaz, and Timna, and Amalek.

1CHRONICLES 1: 37 The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

1CHRONICLES 1: 38 The sons of Seir: Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, and Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan.

1CHRONICLES 1: 39 The sons of Lotan: Hori, and Homam; and Timna was Lotan's sister.

1CHRONICLES 1: 40 The sons of Shobal: Alian, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. The sons of Zibeon: Aiah, and Anah.

1CHRONICLES 1: 41 The sons of Anah: Dishon. The sons of Dishon: Hamran, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.

1CHRONICLES 1: 42 The sons of Ezer: Bilhan, and Zaavan, Jaakan. The sons of Dishan: Uz, and Aran.

1CHRONICLES 1: 43 Now these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel: Bela the son of Beor; and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

Verse 43

Before any king reigned over - Israel - See Gen 36:31 (note), etc., where the same verses occur, as I have supposed borrowed from this place; and see the notes there.

Bela the son of Beor - "Balaam the impious son of Beor, the same as Laban the Syrian, who formed a confederacy with the sons of Esau, to destroy Jacob and his children; and he studied to destroy them utterly. Afterwards he reigned in Sodom; and the name of his royal city was Dinhabah, because it was undeservedly given to him." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 44 Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place.

Verse 44

Bela was dead - "Being killed by Phineas, in the wilderness." - T.

Jobab the son of Zerah - Supposed by some to be the same as Job, whose book forms a part of the canon of Scripture. But in their names there is no similarity; Job being written יוֹב אִיּוֹב aiyob; Jobab, יוֹבָב yobab. See the notes on Job, and the parallel place in Genesis.

1CHRONICLES 1: 45 Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place.

1CHRONICLES 1: 46 Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who struck Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place; and the name of his city was Avith.

Verse 46

Smote Midian - Nothing is known of this war.

1CHRONICLES 1: 47 Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place.

1CHRONICLES 1: 48 Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth by the River reigned in his place.

Verse 48

By the river - "Shaul of Plathiutha, a great city, built on the banks of the Euphrates." - T.

1CHRONICLES 1: 49 Shaul died, and Baal Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place.

1CHRONICLES 1: 50 Baal Hanan died, and Hadad reigned in his place; and the name of his city was Pai: and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

Verse 50

Daughter of Mezahab - This word מֵי זָהָב mey zahab, is literally the golden waters; or What is gold? The Targumist paraphrases thus: "Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, was so earnest and diligent in business that she became immensely rich; but when she was converted, she said, What is this silver, and What is this gold? That is, They are of no real worth.

1CHRONICLES 1: 51 Hadad died. The chiefs of Edom were: chief Timna, chief Aliah, chief Jetheth,

Verse 51

Hadad died - "And his kingdom ended; for his land was subdued by the children of Esau, and the dukes of Edom ruled in the land of Gebala." - T.

For various particulars in this chapter, see Genesis 10 (note) and Genesis 36 (note), and the parallel places.

1CHRONICLES 1: 52 chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon,

1CHRONICLES 1: 53 chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar,

1CHRONICLES 1: 54 chief Magdiel, chief Iram. These are the chiefs of Edom.
