

SECOND CHRONICLES

Chapter 1

Solomon Asks for Wisdom

Solomon son of David established himself firmly over his kingdom, for the LORD his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.² Then Solomon spoke to all Israel—to the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, to the judges and to all the leaders in Israel, the heads of families—³ and Solomon and the whole assembly went to the high place at Gibeon, for God’s Tent of Meeting was there, which Moses the LORD’s servant had made in the desert.⁴ Now David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim to the place he had prepared for it, because he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.⁵ But the bronze altar that Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made was in Gibeon in front of the tabernacle of the LORD; so Solomon and the assembly inquired of him there.⁶ Solomon went up to the bronze altar before the LORD in the Tent of Meeting and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.⁷ That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”⁸ Solomon answered God, “You have shown great kindness to David my father and have made me king in his place.⁹ Now, LORD God, let your promise to my father David be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth.¹⁰ Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?”¹¹ God said to Solomon, “Since this is your heart’s desire and you have not asked for wealth, riches or honor, nor for the death of your enemies, and since you have not asked for a long life but for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king,¹² therefore wisdom and knowledge will be given you. And I will also give you wealth, riches and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have.”¹³ Then Solomon went to Jerusalem from the high place at Gibeon, from before the Tent of Meeting. And he reigned over Israel.¹⁴ Solomon accumulated chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he kept in the chariot cities and also with him in Jerusalem.¹⁵ The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills.¹⁶ Solomon’s horses were imported from Egypt and from Kue—the royal merchants purchased them from Kue.¹⁷ They imported a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty. They also exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and of the Arameans.

The Book named as 2 Chronicles in English Bibles was not called that in the early Hebrew tradition. Both 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles were one long document, as the flow of the story itself shows (see outline, pp 630–31). Hebrew scribes titled the work “The Words of the Days” or, less literally, “The Events of the Days Past.” The document was divided into two books at a later date. (TLSB)

Chs 1–9 The reign of Solomon. The Chronicler presents Solomon’s reign in a different light than does the author of 1Ki. See “Omissions,” p 629. Here the image of Solomon is that of the ideal ruler of an ideal kingdom. Two epochs are closely identified with each other—the reigns of David and Solomon. Everything that is present in David is fully realized in Solomon. David planned the temple; Solomon built it. David came to the throne by acclamation of all Israel; Solomon was acclaimed by all Israel. David was a victorious warrior; Solomon reigned in perfect peace. David established Israel as a world power; Solomon received the bounty of other nations. These chapters provide a glimpse of the fully realized messianic kingdom. If Saul is seen as an example, or type, of rebellion and divine retribution (1Ch 10), then David is the example of restoration. If David is the example of restoration, then Solomon brings the full manifestation of the ultimate kingdom. The reigns of the succeeding kings of Judah would continue the pattern of rebellion, retribution, and restoration, following the types set by Saul and David. At the time the Chronicler writes, the Judeans are awaiting the rise of a new David and the final establishment of the everlasting Kingdom promised to David. So the Church on earth sees in David’s Son, the Lord Christ, both the new Davidic age and the coming of the everlasting Solomonic age. (TLSB)

1:1–9:31 The account of the reign of Solomon is primarily devoted to his building of the temple (chs. 2–7); his endowment with wisdom is mainly to facilitate the building work. Much of the material in Kings that does not bear on building the temple is omitted by the Chronicler; e.g., he does not mention the judgment between the prostitutes (1Ki 3:16–28) or the building of the royal palace (1Ki 7:1–12). (CSB)

1:1–13 Similar to 1Ki 2:12–14; 3:1–15; and 4:1, but with significant differences. (TLSB)

1:1 *established himself*. This expression, or a variation of it, is common in Chronicles (12:13; 13:7–8, 21; 15:8; 16:9; 17:1; 21:4; 23:1; 25:11; 27:6; 32:5; 1Ch 11:10; 19:13). Here and in 21:4 it includes the elimination of enemies and rivals to the throne (see 1Ki 2, especially v. 46). (CSB)

1:2–13 See 1Ki 3:4–15 and notes. Verses 2–6 are largely unique to Chronicles and show some of the writer’s concerns: 1. The support of “all Israel” (v. 2) is emphasized (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles: Purpose and Themes). 2. While the writer of Kings is somewhat apologetic about Solomon’s visit to a high place (1Ki 3:3), the Chronicler adds the note that this was the location of the tabernacle made by Moses in the desert (v. 3), bringing Solomon’s action into line with the provisions of the law (Lev 17:8–9). (CSB)

1:3 *Gibeon*. Chosen because the Tent of Meeting was there, in conformity with Lv 17:8–9. (TLSB)

1:5 *Bezalel*. See Introduction: The Building of the Temple in Chronicles. It is specifically in connection with his offering on the altar built by Bezalel (Ex 31:1–11; 38:1–2) that Solomon receives the wisdom from God to reign. In the account that follows, Solomon devotes his gift of wisdom primarily to building the temple, just as Bezalel had been gifted by God to serve as the master craftsman of the tabernacle. (CSB)

bronze altar. Made by Bezalel of acacia wood and overlaid with bronze. The king and divinely instituted worship of the Lord are intimately connected. (TLSB)

1:6 *Solomon ... offered.* Though Solomon at times acted in a priestly manner (cf 6:3), the priests likely offered all these sacrifices on Solomon's behalf. (TLSB)

1:1–6 The Lord greatly blesses Solomon, who worships at the Tent of Meeting set up at Gibeon. Today, the Lord meets with us and blesses us at the services of His Word and Sacraments. Do not neglect His appointed means of grace. Through these humble means, the Lord grants us the blessings of Jesus' sacrifice. In this way, He meets with us as He did with Solomon. • Greet us, dearest Savior, at the tabernacle of Your Word, by which we may confidently call upon Your name. Amen. (TLSB)

1:7–10 Solomon's dream in 1Ki 3:5 is described here as a prophetic encounter such as David's. Solomon is the king who sacrifices properly and receives the prophetic word: he becomes a messianic figure as the king, priest, and prophet. (TLSB)

1:7 *God ... said to him.* Both David and Solomon function as prophets (7:1; 29:25; 1Ch 22:8; 28:6, 19). (CSB)

1:9 *numerous as the dust.* In provisional fulfillment of the promise to Abraham (Ge 13:16; 22:17; see note on 1Ch 27:23; cf. Ge 28:14). (CSB)

1:10 *go out and come in.* Expression for carrying out his public duties.

1:11–12 The Lord's reply. The Chronicler's version of Solomon's prayer is abbreviated, as here he asks only for "wisdom and knowledge" (v 10; cf 1Ki 3:9). The Lord not only grants Solomon's request for wisdom but also promises him riches, possessions, and honor greater than any king before or after him. The reign of Solomon is thus established as the ultimate kingdom, never to be equaled by his successors in Judah. Aug: "In the beginning of his reign he was inflamed with a desire for wisdom, but after he had attained it through spiritual love, he lost it through carnal lust" (NPNF 1 2:565). (TLSB)

1:13 The Chronicler does not mention how Solomon displayed his wisdom in the lawsuit of the two women, recorded in 1Ki 3:16–28. (TLSB)

1:14–17 The Chronicler does not include the material in 1Ki 3:16–4:34. He moves rather to the account of Solomon's wealth in 1Ki 10:26–29; part of this material is repeated in 2Ch 9:25–28. Recounting Solomon's wealth at this point shows the fulfillment of God's promise (v. 12). (CSB)

Catalogs the tremendous wealth Solomon gained in fulfillment of the Lord's promise (v 12). The list is repeated at the end of Solomon's reign (9:25–28). (TLSB)

Egypt and Kue. Buying up Egyptian and Hittite military goods. (TLSB)

1:16 *Egypt*. See NIV text note; see also note on 1Ki 10:29. (CSB)

1:14–17 Chronicles emphasizes how Solomon used the Lord’s wisdom in the kingly activities of administration and trade, which strengthened his kingdom. As the Lord blesses your service, use your gifts to bless those who work with you and for you. Remember how the Lord works on your behalf in all things, and how He administers the greatest blessings of all: the treasures of His mercy in Christ. • O Lord, I yield my treasure, my life, and all things in wise service to Your kingdom and care for my neighbor. Amen. (TLSB)