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COMMENTARY ON THE WHOLE BIBLE

2 Chronicles

by Matthew Henry

To the Students of the Words, Works and Ways of God:

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AN EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS, OF

THE SECOND BOOK OF

CHRONICLES

This book begins with the reign of Solomon and the building of the temple, and continues the history of the kings of Judah thenceforward to the captivity and so concludes with the fall of that illustrious monarchy and the destruction of the temple. That monarchy of the house of David, as it was prior in time, so it was superior in worth and dignity to all those four celebrated ones of which Nebuchadnezzar dreamed. The Babylonian monarchy I reckon to begin in Nebuchadnezzar himself — *Thou art that head of gold*, and that lasted but about seventy years; The Persian monarchy, in several families, about 130; the Grecian, in their several branches, about 300; and 300 more went far with the Roman. But as I reckon David a greater hero than any of the founders of those monarchies, and Solomon a more magnificent prince than any of those that were the glories of them, so the succession was kept up in a lineal descent throughout the whole monarchy, which continued considerable between 400 and 500 years, and, after a long eclipse, shone forth again in the kingdom of the Messiah, *of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end*. This history of the Jewish monarchy, as it is more authentic, so it is more entertaining and more instructive, than the histories of any of those monarchies. We had the story of the house of David before, in the first and second books of Kings, intermixed with that of the kings of Israel, which *there* took more room than that of Judah; but here we have it entire. Much is repeated here which we had before, yet many of the passages of the story are enlarged upon, and divers added, which we had not before, especially relating to the affairs of religion; for it is a church-history, and it is written for our learning, to let nations and families know that then, and then only, they can expect to prosper, when they keep in the way of their duty to God: for all along the good kings prospered and the wicked kings suffered. The peaceable reign of Solomon we have (2 Chronicles 1-9), the blemished reign of Rehoboam (2 Chronicles 10-12), the short but busy reign of Abijah (2 Chronicles 13), the long and happy

reign of Asa (2 Chronicles 14-16), the pious and prosperous reign of Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 17-20), the impious and infamous reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah (2 Chronicles 21-22), the unsteady reigns of Joash and Amaziah (2 Chronicles 24, 25), the long and prosperous reign of Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26), the regular reign of Jotham (2 Chronicles 27), the profane and wicked reign of Ahaz (2 Chronicles 28), the gracious glorious reign of Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29-32), the wicked reigns of Manasseh and Amon (2 Chronicles 33), the reforming reign of Josiah (2 Chronicles 34, 35), the ruining reigns of his sons (2 Chronicles 36). Put all these together, and the truth of that word of God will appear, *Those that honour me I will honour, but those that despise me shall be lightly esteemed*. The learned Mr. Whiston, in his chronology, suggests that the historical books which were written after the captivity (namely, the two books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah) have more mistakes in names and numbers than all the books of the Old Testament besides, through the carelessness of transcribers: but, though that should be allowed, the things are so very minute that we may be confident *the foundation of God stands sure* notwithstanding.