

JULY 5

1 Chronicles 1:1-2:17

Having read the books of Samuel and Kings, Chronicles will add some very interesting information. Chronologically these books were probably written after the Babylonian exile. Their purpose was to reestablish both the genealogy of Israel and the history of Israel for a new generation reentering the land. It has been supposed that Ezra, of the book of Ezra, was the writer. When we get to Ezra, we'll see that it was not easy for Israel to reestablish itself. This genealogy and history would help. Ezra will show that the plan of redemption runs through Israel and through the lineage of David. Ezra will also show that the worship of God was to be led by the Levites. This history is to properly order Israel as a nation returned from exile, knowing both their heritage and their purpose.

1 Chronicles 1

Why start at the beginning? Well, as mentioned in a famous song from "Sound of Music," "That's a very good place to start." Actually, the direction Ezra is going is toward the lineage of David and the Davidic kingship. That is "the shoreline" we come to today. The writer is linking David to Adam, both of whom had a special relationship to God. Enjoy the reading. Some of this will be review. See how much you remember.

Vs. 1-27 This is the lineage of redemption up to Abraham. Notice how Ezra writes this. He is showing the godly line of God's redemptive plan beginning with Adam. If a person had more than one son, and understanding what those other sons did is important, Ezra will explain what the other guys did first and then after that, he'll talk about the son who brought the godly line forward.

V. 19 Notice Peleg. In his days the earth was divided. This doesn't mean that surveying crews went out and set up boundaries. This was after the confusion of languages. People scattered from the area around Babylon. After this scattering of people, it is thought that the continents began to drift apart.

Vs. 28-33 Ezra thought it important to explain the lineage of Abraham's other sons first. Some of them became important nations in Israel's history.

Vs. 34-54 The son of promise was Isaac, but Isaac had two sons. The lineage of Esau is developed first. Again, all of this was significant information for the newly returned nation of Israel.

1 Chronicles 2:1-17

Vs. 1-4 Notice how quickly Ezra goes to the tribe of Judah.

Vs. 5-8 Ezra does quick work explaining the line of Zerah. His famous descendant was Achan, that troubler of Israel. Do you remember where we read about him?

Vs. 9-16 This goes straight down the line to David, but notice at the end you have some development of the sons of David's sisters. You should recognize some very important names here.

V. 16 Notice the relationship between David and Joab. This was another reason why it was so hard for David to get rid of him. And notice the relationship between Joab and Amasa, whom Joab murdered.

It is interesting that as the exiles returned, in rebuilding Israel, they went all the way back to the beginning, the fall and the promise of redemption. It might have been that they wanted the people to see their lives in the perspective of God's plan, rather than simply living every day with no perspective of what their lives and their nation meant. For us as disciples in the harvest, we

begin each day knowing why we are here and who it is who is leading us into the harvest. Our purpose for being here each day goes back to the plan of redemption.

Acts 23:11-35

V. 11 This is how we know that all of this mess was not a mistake on Paul's part. The Lord Himself stood with Paul in prison and told him that everything was going according to plan. So when you get here, you can look back over Paul's journey to Jerusalem, all of the warnings, Paul taking the guys into the temple to complete the vow, etc., and understand that it was God's plan, not some human mistake.

It is interesting that the word "facts" is not in the text. The issue here is that two different words for testify are used. The first means something like a solemn, insistent pleading, like laying out a case and trying to get someone to see the truth. The second word for testify is the normal word for witness.

Jesus was not only encouraging Paul, but He was acknowledging that what Paul had done, he had done well.

Vs. 12-15 This is simply first century terrorism. It's a suicide squad. I wonder if these guys really held to their vow. It would serve them right if they did. But since the circumstances changed, the high priest probably released them. Jesus predicted that the time would come when those who killed His followers would think they were serving God. Actually, Paul understood that line of thinking too.

Vs. 16-22 This tells you that Paul had family in Jerusalem and that they were still connected to the religious elite. That's the only way Paul's nephew could have been close to those who knew this information.

V. 17 This is another example in Acts of a Roman officer who was positive toward Christianity. What Luke mentions here would have gone into Roman records that might have been called upon for Paul's trial in Rome before Caesar.

Vs. 23-35 Caesarea was the Roman capital of Israel. This would be Paul's home for the next three years. Note v. 29. This again would have been in the official Roman record. So why wasn't Paul released? Because, as we will find out, Felix was a rat. Oh, and God had a purpose in all of the next three years of confusion. Imagine, Paul had been so busy and traveling so broadly, and now God's will for him was to sit "under house arrest" for at least three to four years in Caesarea and then in Rome.

As disciples we learn like Paul, and all the great servants of God before him, that we serve where and when and how He chooses. And even in jail or in isolation, we are in His will, serving the same God in His harvest.

Psalm 3

Wow. I wonder if Paul read this psalm in prison in Caesarea. God was, in fact, a shield around him. Actually, we know the circumstances of David writing this psalm. Keep in mind that he probably wrote this sometime after his return to Jerusalem when he was safe. Possibly civil war was looming as he wrote this.

Vs. 1-2 This had been true of David on several occasions.

Vs. 3-4 David had learned that God was his protector and the only thing that he had to be proud of. David's desire was to build the temple and he desired it to be in Jerusalem. As he had gone out of Jerusalem during the shame of Absalom seeking to kill him, David believed that God answered his cry from Jerusalem.

Vs. 5-6 With all the things from which God had saved him, including the results of his own sin, once David understood the Lord was with him, he could sleep.

Vs. 7-8 Amen. I'll bet Paul knew this too.

Proverbs 18:14-15

What crushes a spirit? In the Spirit, a person close to God, led by the Spirit, prays and cries out and comes to understand the times and the Lord's leading. He or she survives those times that crush men's souls through coming to grips with God's will and His love. I'm sure that is how Paul survived those very long years in jail. The knowledge that is mentioned would be in knowing God and knowing that we are always in His hand.