

Sunday, July 19, 2015
Did You Know?

Dreaded Chronicles

I have a Bible reading confession to make. Whenever I come across the beginning part of 1 Chronicles that consists of the long list of names, I barely skim-read them. There, I said it. What a relief to get that off my chest. All kidding aside, I have found this portion of Scripture to be the most boring and uneventful parts to read. It makes Leviticus read like a John Grisham novel, but there it is -- included in Holy Scripture and every year we all know that this section will come up again in our Bible reading plans. What are we to do?

1 Chr. 1-5 is there to remind us again of the story line of the Bible. It's meant to bring us back to the beginnings of God's redemptive plan and point us towards its goal. The genealogies begin with Adam and jump to Abraham, the father of faith, the father of God's people, and the person to which God gave the great promise of a countless nation of Christ-followers. From Abraham we go to Israel (Jacob), the 2nd son of Isaac and the father of the nation that bears his name. He had 12 sons who made up the 12 tribes of Israel, but in 2:3 Judah, the 4th son, is mentioned first. Why? That's what we should be asking? Why isn't Ruben, the 1st son, mentioned first? We find out when we get to 5:1 where it states that he sinned against his father by sleeping with his concubine (Gen 35:21; 49:4). Simeon and Levi, the next two in the birth order are not next because of their violent tendencies (Gen 49:5-7). This brings us to Judah. It was to Judah that Jacob gave the most jaw-dropping blessing in Gen 49:8-12.

⁸ "Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons will bow down to you. ⁹ You are a lion's cub, Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse him? ¹⁰ The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his."

From this blessing, we learn very early on that someone possessing immense kingly power and rule will come from among Judah's descendants.

Now back to 1 Chr. Judah's lineage leads us to King David (3:1ff). If you remember, God gave David a tremendous promise that he would never fail to have a king sit on David's throne. And from his descendants will come one who will rule on an everlasting throne over an everlasting kingdom (2 Sam 7:13-16). That king is none other than Jesus Christ, who has come and will come again. And when he does, he will vanquish all his enemies and then justly and lovingly rule his people forever.

The early chapters of 1 Chronicles are there to tell us that God's redemptive plan is still on track; that God's people of old must continue to wait for his coming Messiah. For us who read this as historical scripture, written before the coming of Christ, we should praise and glory in God's magnificent plan, where by his providence and foresight, through Adam, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David, and Joseph, brought forth Jesus, the Savior of the world. Read or reread 1 Chronicles differently, marveling in God's awesome plan.

Pastor Peter