

Title:                               **1 CHRONICLES**  
  **GOD’S KING, GOD’S ARK, GOD’S WORSHIP**

Text:                               1 Chronicles 15:13

Subject:                       *The Message of 1 Chronicles*

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Introduction:

I want to give you the message of 1 Chronicles. You will see the direction of my message and of the message of this Book in 1 Chronicles 15:13.

(1 Chronicles 15:13) "For because ye *did it* not at the first, **the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.**"

It is evident that 1 Chronicles was written after Israel had returned from their 70 years of captivity in Babylon. It was probably written by Ezra the priest, who also wrote the book of Ezra. Ezra was one of the remarkable men who returned with the captives to reestablish the Temple and worship of God in Jerusalem.

1 Chronicles covers much of the same period of Israel’s history that is given in 2 Samuel. But in 1 Chronicles there is a distinct emphasis on instruction, instruction in the worship of God. This Book is not so much about Israel’s history as it is about God’s king, God’s ark, and God’s worship.

This Book might be compared to the gospel of John in the New Testament. You know that the first three gospel narratives (Matthew, Mark and Luke) are what we call the synoptic gospels. They give us the historical account of our Lord’s earthly life and ministry. But the gospel of John is different. John’s

gospel was the last Book of Holy Scripture to be written (probably about 90 or 95 A.D.).

The gospel of John distinctly teaches us the meaning of our Savior's accomplishments. He gave us selected incidents in the Lord's earthly life and ministry, and shows us their meaning. He tells us that his purpose was not to give a chronological history of our Lord's life on earth, but to teach us the meaning of it (John 20:30-31)

(John 20:30-31) "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: {31} But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

John made no attempt to cover the whole of the Lord's ministry. Instead, he carefully selected certain things out of Christ's ministry to illustrate the great point that he wished to make.—The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Messiah, the King of whom all the prophets spoke. This was his purpose. The books of 1 Chronicles is like that. It gives us selective bits of Israel's history, focusing our attention of God's king, David, God's ark, and God's worship, constantly pointing us to Christ, of whom David and the ark were typical, and in whom alone God is worshipped.

### **THE GENEALOGIES** (chapters 1-9)

The first nine chapters read a little laboriously They give us a long list genealogical record of the nation of Israel, 1 Chronicles reaches all the way back to Adam, and takes us through the reign of David and the earliest days of Solomon's reign.

If you are like me, you are tempted to hurry passed these long lists of names and get to the “important” stuff. We feel sort of like an old preacher I read about recently, who was reading Matthew 1. He started out reading, "*Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judah and his brethren.*" Then he said, "They kept on begetting one another all the way down this side of the page and clear on to the other side." And he picked up the reading and went on from there. We ought not do that. The genealogies are very important.

- The genealogies give us an indisputable chronological connection and order concerning the various events recorded in Old Testament history.
- They show us clearly and indisputably that our Savior is the seed of Abraham and the seed of David according to the flesh.—In fact, he is the only Person now living who is positively known to be of David’s seed, possessing a right to David’s throne. Of all the things the Jews questioned about our Lord, of all the excuses they made for their refusal to bow to him, of all the accusations they raised of him being an imposter, never once did anyone question our Master’s clear genealogy.
- But there is more.—The genealogies show us the movement of God’s providence toward the goal for which the world was made, the incarnation, redemptive work and resurrection glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- As they do so, the genealogies give us a picture of God’s sovereign electing grace. He includes some in the chosen line, and excludes others, altogether as it pleases him

The genealogy that begins in 1 Chronicles 1 begins at the dawn of human history. It lists the sons of Adam (Seth, Enosh, Kenan,

and Mahalalel). We know that among the sons of Adam were Cain, Abel and Seth, but here Cain and Abel are excluded. The focus is upon the descendants of Seth, because Abraham and Israel came from Seth.

Then the line of Seth is traced down to Enoch and Noah. The three sons of Noah are listed as Shem, Ham and Japheth, but Ham and Japheth are dismissed with a brief word and attention is focused on Shem and his family. From Shem we get to Abraham and his family. Ishmael is excluded from the promise and Isaac is chosen. Esau is rejected and Jacob is chosen.

Then attention is focused upon Jacob's twelve sons, from whom come the twelve tribes of Israel. Then, ten of the twelve tribes are rejected. But the purpose of God continues. He selects Judah and Levi, the king and the priestly lines. From the tribe of Judah come David, and Solomon and the kings of the house of David down to the time of the Babylonian captivity. The tribe of Levi is traced down to Aaron, the first of the priests, and then to the priests who were prominent in the kingdom at the time of David.

**Chapter 10** gives us an account of Saul's miserable reign and of the judgment of God upon him because he refused to heed the counsel of the Lord and chose rather the counsel of a witch (10:13-14).

### **GOD'S KING** (chapter 11)

**Chapter 11** opens with the establishment of David as king over Israel. As we have seen before, David was an eminent type of our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Zion, the King of Glory, whom God has exalted to be our Prince and Savior to give his salvation to chosen sinners.

(1 Chronicles 11:1-3) "Then all Israel gathered themselves to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh. {2} And moreover in time past, even when Saul was king, thou *wast* he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel. {3} Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the LORD; and they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by Samuel."

- All God's Israel shall be gathered to Christ.
- Even when he is not acknowledged, he is the One who leads, protects and defends his people.
- Christ shall wax greater and greater, because the Lord of hosts is with him!

(1 Chronicles 11:9) "So David waxed greater and greater: for the LORD of hosts *was* with him."

### **GOD'S ARK** (chapter 13)

Beginning in chapter 13 our attention is focused on the ark of God, the temple of God, and the worship of God. These are the things which are constantly held before us in the Book of God as matters of paramount importance.

- The ark of the covenant represents the Lord Jesus Christ, our Propitiation, our sin-atoning Substitute (Heb. 9:1-14; 1 John 1:7-2:2).
- The temple of God represents the church and the kingdom of God. It represents the whole salvation of God's elect. That is the purpose of God, accomplished in and by Christ.
- The worship of God is that which we render to him by faith in Christ.

These things must be paramount in our hearts and in our lives. There is a cathedral in Milan, Italy with three doors and an inscription over each door. Over the right hand door a wreath of flowers is carved and the inscription reads, "All that pleases is but for a moment." On the left hand door the inscription is, "All that troubles is but for a moment." Over the main entrance are the words, "Nothing is important save that which is eternal." This is the lesson of 1 Chronicles. In a sense, it is the lesson of the whole Bible.

(1 Corinthians 10:31) "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

(Colossians 3:1-3) "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. {2} Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. {3} For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

(Colossians 3:17) "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

### **THE WORSHIP OF GOD**

Let's see what this instructive Book teaches us about the worship of our God and Savior. May God the Holy Spirit be pleased to inscribe its lessons upon our hearts.

### **THE DUE ORDER**

One of David's first acts as king was bringing the ark of the Lord back to Zion. It is recorded in chapters 13 and 15.

(1 Chronicles 13:1-3) "And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, *and* with every leader. {2} And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If *it seem* good unto you, and *that it be* of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, *that are* left in all the land of Israel, and with them *also* to the priests and Levites *which are* in their cities *and* suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us: {3} And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we inquired not at it in the days of Saul."

For twenty years the Ark with its mercy-seat, God's appointed meeting-place with His people, was neglected and almost forgotten. The sacrifice, the mercy-seat, the place where God meets with men, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST had been despised and neglected! David wanted to re-establish the worship of God in Israel. But he made several fatal mistakes.

- Rather than consulting with God, he consulted with the people.
- Rather than having the ark carried on the shoulders of the Levites, he made an impressive, ornate new cart for the ark.
- Rather than sacrificing, they made a great, impressive show that pleased everyone, everyone except God.—"*They played before God with all their might*" (13:8).

Then, suddenly, the oxen that pulled the cart stumbled. Their new cart tipped over. And the ark of God appeared to be falling. So "*Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark.*"

(1 Chronicles 13:10) "And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God."

God required that no man touch that ark. It represented salvation by Christ alone. No man's hand is involved in God's great work

of redemption and grace! But Uzza dared to defy God. No matter what his intentions were, his act was the defiance of God. For that God killed him on the spot. Now, learn this lesson and learn it well. **God almighty still kills men who dare put their hands to his great work of redemption and salvation!**

When the Lord showed his disapproval of their devices, David God made at God and was afraid of him. Then, in chapter 15, after he learned his lesson and prepared a place for it, David went and fetched the ark to Jerusalem. This time, he did everything by the Book, acknowledging that what he had done before was altogether wrong and an affront to God.

(1 Chronicles 15:13) "For because ye *did it* not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order."

**If we would worship God, we must worship him in the way he has prescribed in his Word.**

- Trusting Christ alone.
- Adding nothing to his Word.
- Taking nothing from his Word.

And as we worship our God through faith in Christ, giving all honor and glory to him alone, we must expect to be despised by those who do not know our God, just as David was despised by his wife Michal (15:29).

### **1 CHRONICLES 16:1-3**

(1 Chronicles 16:1-3) "So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God. {2} And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and

the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. {3} And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine."

- The burnt offerings and peace offerings speak of Christ, by whom we have peace with God.
- Once the offerings were accepted, David blessed the people.
- Not only did he bless them, he gave them each a loaf of bread and a flagon of wine—Pictures of Christ's sacrifice and of our communion with God by his blood and righteousness.

### **GOD'S PROMISE**

Next, we read of God's promise to David (chapter 17). The great desire of David's heart was to build a temple for the Lord. But the Lord would not allow him to do it because David had "*shed much blood upon the earth.*" However, the Lord promised David that a son should be born unto him, who should be "*a man of rest,*" he would build his house, and that God would establish his throne forever.

David bowed God's will without a murmur, and poured forth a song of praise for goodness. In the promised son we see Christ our Lord, "*a Greater than Solomon.*" "*Thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end*" (Lk. 1:31-3).

- The preservation of Israel (not the physical nation, but the spiritual Israel of God) is guaranteed till the end of time, "*as long as the sun and the moon endure*" (Jer. 31:35-37).

- David's throne (Christ's Throne) is permanently secured, with the added sign, "*and as the faithful witness in the sky*" the rainbow (Ps. 89:3, 4, 27-37).
- David's Son shall sit upon David's throne in Jerusalem.

### **THE NUMBERING OF ISRAEL**

The next event very significant and instructive event recorded in 1 Chronicles is David's sin in numbering the people chapter 21). His sin in this was, I am sure, at least in part, his because of the greatness of his kingdom. But there is more to it than that.

**David's numbering of Israel seems to have conveyed the thought that the success of God's purpose depends upon the number of those who are with us in our efforts.** He wanted to see the number of people that were available to him, and thus to glory in the physical strength of his realm.

God never works by a majority. When we begin to think that the cause of Christ is losing out because our numbers are small, we dishonor God and the gospel of God. God's cause does not depend upon us, our strength, or abilities, or our numbers. does not rely upon numbers but upon quality.

I cannot help thinking of Gideon and God's deliberate reduction of the number of men from 32,000 to 300. David slew Goliath and delivered of Israel with a single sling and a rock from the brook. Samson slew the Philistines with nothing but the jawbone of a ass.

Still, there is more. When David numbered Israel, there was no payment of ransom money, as required by the law of God. Again, **we see a terrible judgment brought upon Israel by the neglect of God's sacrifice, by the neglect of the atonement, by the neglect of Christ.**

(Exodus 30:11-16) "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, (12) When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when *thou* numberest them. (13) This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel *is* twenty gerahs:) an half shekel *shall be* the offering of the LORD. (14) Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD. (15) **The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when *they* give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.** (16) And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls."

This numbering of the children of Israel and the atonement money they paid, so that no plague come upon them, was typical of our ransom by Christ.

- **None but Israelites were ransomed.**
- **A specific, numbered people were ransomed.**
- **The ransom price was the same for all.**
- **Those who were ransomed were preserved from any plague** (Pro. 12:21; Ps. 91:10).

Proverbs 12:21 "There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief."

Psalms 91:10 "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

**SUBSTITUTION** (21:17)

Yet, against this backdrop, the Lord gives us a blessed picture of that very thing which David had neglected, substitution. And that is the message of the whole Book of God.

(1 Chronicles 21:17) "And David said unto God, *Is it* not I *that* commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but *as for* these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued."

When the Lord God said to the angel of judgment, "*It is enough, stay now thine hand*" (21:15), he had his eye on the substitutionary work of Christ portrayed in the sacrifices offered on Mt. Moriah, which David purchased from Ornan (The Place of Abraham's Sacrifice—Calvary).

**THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

When David had finished his work, when all the material for the temple was gathered, he went home (Christ – John 17:1-4; 19:30). And all the people worshipped and served God with a willing heart (chapter 29).

(1 Chronicles 29:9) "Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy."

(1 Chronicles 29:16) "O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own."

- The Lord chose them.
- They honored him.

Here is a marvelous thought to carry home. It brings joy to the heart of our King when we offer willingly to his service, whether it be ourselves, or our dear ones, or our substance that we give. David's thanksgiving shows the right attitude of heart, the recognition that all indeed belongs to God. *"Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee"* (1 Chron. 29:14). God give me such a heart!