

January 7

Scriptures: Read 1 Chronicles 1 & 2

Key Verse: “These were the sons of Israel... “ (1 Chronicles 2:1)

Overview

The Book of Chronicles begins with genealogies. One may question: “Why bother reading all these names?” God had a purpose for including them and, for the ancient Hebrews, genealogical records were considered vitally important. The information had been memorized and passed on in their oral tradition from generation to generation, but over the years it became necessary for it to be written down to maintain accurate information. The family records were especially significant for land, resettlement, according to their inheritance, by those who returned from the Captivity (mainly from the tribe of Judah).

“But what significance do they have today?” Let us remember what the Word of God says concerning these Old Testament writings: “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The genealogies are a great source of learning about the history of those nations and help us to see the providence of God in it all.

These records also reveal God’s interest in the human race; thus 1 Chronicles 1 shows mankind’s development beginning with Adam, the father of all people. We learn that the earth was populated by the descendants of the three sons of Noah, and then the genealogy concentrates on the Semitic people — the line of Shem from which Abraham came (1:17, 27). The chronicler desired to show the people of God their roots and special place among the nations of the world, so they would better understand that they are a blessed people, chosen by God to be included in His plan of redemption for the world. The emphasis, therefore, is placed upon the family of Isaac, Abraham’s son of promise. The descendants of Abraham’s other sons, including Ishmael, are only briefly mentioned.

The account then deals first with the line of Isaac’s son Esau (the inhabitants of Edom; 1:35-54). It is quite detailed, probably because of their historical connections with Israel, but the focus is upon Isaac’s son Jacob, also called Israel. Then the record notes his sons who were the heads of the tribes of Israel, but focuses only upon Judah (2:1, 3). In this way, it traced the royal line from which King David came (2:15) and from which God’s Messiah, the hope of the whole world, would one day come. The records show that God was fulfilling His promises and was faithful to the Covenant. It was therefore the responsibility of His people to fulfill their obligations to Him as well: to love, obey, and serve Him only.

Prayer

O God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we pray that our family will be blessed by fulfilling Your purpose for our lives. Grant us grace to walk in Your will. Amen.