



Reading the book of 1 Chronicles

DID YOU KNOW ?

1. In the ancient Hebrew canon, 1 and 2 Chronicles were one book. Devoted to the history of Judah from the death of Saul to the Babylonian captivity, they repeat many of the events recorded in 1 and 2 Kings. However, they were written well after the books of Kings, perhaps during the captivity; they look at the story mainly from a priestly point of view.
2. 1 Chronicles opens with the most detailed genealogical account in the Bible, showing that all the elements of redemption converge towards David. The text gives special emphasis to the dedication of the Temple, the services, and the ministry of the Levites.
3. In the first book of Chronicles, the history of Judah under the reign of David is overlooked in some of the rather dark episodes reported in 1 and 2 Kings. The northern kingdom (Israel) is not mentioned in Chronicles, except for events related to Judah.
4. The first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles trace the origins of Israel back to Adam. Its author has recounted more family stories than any other in the Bible. These memoirs helped the Israelites remember that they were members of God's chosen family. He had prescribed specific patterns for them on how to follow and worship him.
5. The genealogy that begins the book of 1 Chronicles makes no mention of Cain's lineage (1 Ch. 1:1) because this idea was to show the lineage that God had used to fulfill his promise.
6. In the genealogy of 1 Chronicles, there is a particular detail given about the family of Noah because it played a crucial role in the repopulation of the earth and it is from this line that Abraham, God's chosen one, descended.
7. Generally, there is no mention of David's sisters. However, according to the genealogy of 1 Chronicles David had 2 sisters: Zeruah and Abigail. (1 Ch. 2:13-17)
8. Chronicles was written for a people who no longer had a king. However, as 1 Chronicles 3 reminds us, they still knew the royal lineage. God's promise to give them a king in perpetuity as ruler remained. He could expect to see David's son become king again one day. That is why in the New Testament Jesus the awaited king is presented as a descendant or son of David.

9. The family of Levi fulfilled the priestly function. In addition, part of this tribe were singers who composed songs. Among these were the sons of Korah and Asaph who wrote Psalms. The Levites were responsible for leading Israel in worship (1 Ch. 6)
10. The Philistines kept fighting Israel (1 Ch. 14, 18). But they lost every time they fought Israel under David's leadership because God was with David.
11. Even though the priests were the only ones appointed to carry the Ark of God, they still had to purify themselves every time they went to carry it (1 Ch. 15).
12. In the context of war or political conflict between 2 states, the shaving of the head of a representative of another kingdom was an act of humiliation during the ancient Mesopotamian period (1 Ch. 19).
13. The sin that David committed in taking a census of the people was that he took the initiative without God (1 Ch. 21:1).
14. If it is true that God told David that his son Solomon would build the temple, David made all the necessary preparations to facilitate his task (1 Ch. 22). It should be noted that David had personally contributed to the building of the temple. In addition, the plan of the temple and the materials to be used for its construction were revealed to King David as was the case with Moses when he built the Tabernacle.
15. Each group of priests was to perform a specific function according to the purposes of their services in the temple (1 Ch. 24 - 26).
16. While 1 Chronicles focuses on the life of David, this short section (1 Ch. 9:2-34) takes a big leap of 500 years into the future to the time when a small portion of Israel had returned from exile (See the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Zechariah for more information on these returning exiles).
17. For a number of years Israel had two tabernacles (1 Ch. 16:39). David had built a new tent for the Ark of the Covenant when it arrived in Jerusalem. Yet the old tent, dating from the time of Moses, was still set up in Gibeon, five miles from the holy city. Sacrifices were offered in both places. When the temple was built during the reign of Solomon, son of David, Jerusalem was the center of worship.
18. David explained to Solomon that the Lord did not allow him to build the temple because he had shed much blood (1 Ch. 22:8). This does not mean that David was wrong to lead Israel into war. God had instructed him to lead some of those wars. Nevertheless, war and bloodshed, even when necessary, are contrary to God's ideal. God wanted the temple to be built by a peaceful man.

19. Since the time of Moses, the Levites had been responsible for carrying and caring for the tabernacle - the movable tent where God was worshipped. But now that the Ark had been permanently settled in Jerusalem and a temple was to be built, the Levites needed new responsibilities and a new organization. Chapters 23-26 describe these tasks in detail.
20. God's promise to David to always place a successor from his lineage on the throne was so important to Israel that it was written about several times, and in different ways (I Ch. 17). Sometimes it gives the impression that God will bless good kings, regardless of their behavior. But David explains in 1 Chronicles 28:9 that God's favor will depend on Solomon's devotion.
21. David's prayer at the beginning of the building of the temple indicates why he was a man after God's own heart (1 Ch. 29:10-20). He was very humble despite all his achievements. He wanted the glory to be given to God alone, not to him. This passage would have reminded the first readers of Chronicles, back from exile and without a king, that David's greatest desire was to build a temple, a place in which people could worship and serve God.