



This week at Magdalen Road church we started a new series working through Chronicles. It turns out Chronicles is officially the least preached book of the Bible (!) and yet what will see as we work our way through is it is a very contemporary and relevant book for people like us in our time.

It is a late history of God's people, written after they have returned back to their land after the Persians defeated the Babylonians. It covers similar material to Samuel and Kings in many ways but has a particular slant and emphasis.

Gods people have been back in the land for at least six generations but there still seem to be a number of questions they are ... Does Gods covenant still stand? Is He still faithful? What about his promise to King David? And why were they exiled in the first place anyway, and how can they stop that happening again? Chronicles answers these questions, and many more - the author looks back on history but in such a way as to give us hope...

This week after spending some time thinking about the structure of the book we briefly worked our way through the genealogy from chapter 1 to chapter 9, noting where the author spent particular time and energy - as these sections revealed to us some of the key emphases in the book.

*The illustration we used was of a grade A student writing an exam essay with limited time and a limited word count. Rather than writing down **everything** they can in an attempt to get some marks, this student knows what to put in and what to leave out, thus giving a focused answer rather than simply a historical narrative. This is a theological book.*

The family of God...

... From Adam

The fact that he even includes a genealogy shows that the chronicler wants to root us within the people of God again, into the story of Gods faithfulness. Where the writer of Samuel and Kings begins with the accounts of individual people, the chronicler begins at the very beginning with Adam. The danger with genealogy is that we simply skim them or skip them, however each name is a shorthand way of retelling stories, provoking them to remember God at work among his people and the shared history and common identity that they have.

It seems to that he goes back as far as Adam because he wants them not just to see gods faithfulness but also that what he is teaching affects the whole world. The story of Judah where he will focus Concerns the story of the whole human race.

... From Abraham (1:27-54)

God promise to Abraham in Genesis 12 shape the entire Scriptures and so as the chronicler focuses in on him so we have to remember Gods covenant. He's promised a land and a people who will bless the nations. And for Gods people at this point who have only recently returned to that land having been decimated in number - God promise to Abraham will be very precious. There is Hope!

... From David

David is a key character in the genealogy reminding and reinforcing the reader that Gods promise **still** stands. In 3v17 to 24 we see six generations of David's family back in the land again – there is still hope, Gods promises are not dead! David will be a key character within the book as a whole

... From Levi

There is a huge emphasis from chapter 6 onwards on the importance of orderly worship. In chapter 6 we read of the Levitical line (Including the highlighting of certain individuals) but also the genealogy is interrupted as we read of temple musicians and particularly the fact that there was obedience to the regulations laid down for them (e.g. 6v32 or v49). There is an emphasis on obedient worship in this book and worship in accordance with what God has commanded us. One of the reasons the people had been exiled was that they had stopped worshipping God as they were meant to.

The emphasis on Levi continues at the start of chapter 9. There is a juxtaposition between v1 and v2 where in v1 we read of the unfaithfulness that lead them into captivity in Babylon but as they resettle in v2 the temple community were the first to return.

...in Jesus

We also explored how each of these emphases in the genealogy were perfected in Christ.

- Jesus is the second **Adam** the start of a new creation.
- Jesus is the answer to the promised to **Abraham** this through him at all nations will be blessed and the new happens in the new worth will come.
- Jesus is the true **Davidic** King the one who will rule perfectly for ever and finally
- Jesus is the answer to the entire **Levitical** sacrificial system (he is the temple the priest the sacrifice the offering needed to make attainment).

Which means we will never be exiled because Jesus has been exiled for us. Fundamentally where we are disobedient as his children, Jesus took the punishment for us and so we can have hope...

Here are a few questions to start off your group as we begin to get to grips with Chronicles

- recount the story of God's people as best you can from Genesis to this point. Who are the key characters and why?
- where does hope come from in the bible?
- how would the people have been feeling?
- why does the writer begin with a genealogy? why are they important?
- why do you think there's an emphasis on Adam, Abraham, David and Levi.