

JULY 10

1 Chronicles 9-10

We're almost out of the woods.

1 Chronicles 9

Vs. 1-9 This gives you the point of this chapter and the past eight chapters. Who were the first of the people to return from exile in Babylon? Those who could trace their roots.

Vs. 10-35 The particular interest in this chapter is the Levites and setting up the worship of God. One of the questions you might ask yourself is how they were so ready to return, both in terms of organization and genealogies. Did they have a "heads up?" God did some amazing things during their time in Babylon. More on that later. I'm amazed how organized this was.

Vs. 10-13 These were the priests who returned ready to roll.

Vs. 14-16 These are the seven families of Levites who returned to serve in the temple.

Vs. 17-27 Since the temple operated every day for morning and evening sacrifices, the gatekeepers were important and appropriately organized.

Vs. 28-32 They apparently needed fewer Levites to attend to the services in the temple.

Vs. 33-34 And then you have the singers. We'll hear more about them later.

In a way this shows that when Israel returned they knew it was God's grace. Where the worship of God had been a mess before the exile, they wanted to return and worship God properly with the proper people. This was a very good thing. What is interesting is that this was prepared for during the exile. When we begin the book of Daniel you will see how these preparations could have been possible.

Vs. 35-44 Once again, this is the lineage of King Saul going up to those of his descendants who returned to Jerusalem after the exile.

1 Chronicles 10

This is a very abbreviated rendition of Saul, in fact, only his death. The real point is to get to David in the next chapter.

Vs. 1-12 This is the account of Saul's death and his sons. Notice that this account is at odds with the guy who came to David and said he had killed Saul (2 Sam. 1:14). Saul was dead before his armor bearer killed himself. It gives proof to the fact that the kid lied in order to win David's favor. His lie got him killed.

Vs. 13-14 This is an interesting commentary on Saul's sin and death. How do you reconcile the fact that Saul said he had tried to contact God, but God wasn't talking, with this report that Saul didn't seek guidance from the Lord? Sometimes seeking is a matter of how and how long. Also, we never heard that Saul was in any sense repentant for killing a town of priests and unjustly seeking to kill David. Sometimes seeking God needs to happen the right way. It is clear that most of his life Saul didn't seek God.

Acts 27:21-44

Vs. 21-26 Some people wonder why Luke included this story of Paul's trip to Rome. The trip is evidence of God's working. And, I'll bet it made the centurion's report exciting to read.

V. 21 Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Paul says, "I told you so."

Vs. 23-24 Once again we have confirmation, that even in this catastrophe at sea, God was in it. Remember too, that the centurion would have to file a report.

Vs. 27-32 That's a long time. I definitely would have been beyond seasick.

V. 29 Nelson, of Her Majesty's Navy, took a lesson from this use of the anchors and did likewise before one of his battles.

Vs. 31-32 It wasn't a matter of God needing the crew together to save them all, it was a matter of needing all the experienced sailors present when they struck land so they could save everyone else.

So the centurion wrote in his little book. "Once again, that Jewish criminal was pretty helpful."

Vs. 33-38 Paul had faced so many storms for Jesus, that he was definitely in control and able to serve them.

Vs. 39-44 The centurion was a good guy. I'll bet he wrote in his little book, "We all made it safe to land. Little Jewish criminal was right again. His vision must have been true."

It is interesting to me that as Paul and company were going through this, they were encouraging those who had given up and helping others see that God was in the situation. It is a good thing Paul knew God was present. As disciples, we don't determine the harvest field; the Lord does. All He asks us to do is to follow with the passion to reach lost people and make disciples. He does the rest. He trains us and gets us to the place where we can bring calm into a storm. The people around us see that it is because of our Lord. He does this. It isn't a strategy. It is following in the harvest.

Psalm 8

I wonder if David wrote this one evening in the wilderness when there was a pause in running from Saul.

Vs. 1-2 It is interesting that even in a praise psalm like this, David still had his enemies in view. He says that God's wonder, spoken through the lips of *babes and infants*, is so strong that it defeats and confounds His enemies. This is what Jesus meant and what the Pharisees would have understood in Matthew 21:16, when the Pharisees *said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise?'"* In the context of this psalm, the Pharisees would have understood they were God's enemies and that these babies were defeating them.

Vs. 3-4 This is part of the purpose of God's creation.

Vs. 5-8 There is an important contrast in v. 5. The angels are heavenly and glorious, yet man is crowned *with glory and honor*. This definitely applies to Jesus in Hebrews 2:7, and in the future it will apply to us. This is what made Satan mad enough to become proud and rebel. He was the beauty of God's creation and should he serve mankind?

V. 6 David the shepherd appreciated this command from the creation to have dominion over the work of God's hands. Notice that *under his feet* prophetically applies to Jesus, but in terms of man's dominion, it doesn't mean to crush or treat in a demeaning way. David as a shepherd loved and cared for his sheep, protecting them with his life, pulling a lion's beard here and clubbing a bear to death there. Authority means different things depending on the degree of rebellion and submission of the followers.

V. 9 Amen.

Proverbs 18:23-24

I guess this is saying that the poor make real friends because they are humble and know they are needy. There is something about adversity that teaches you humility and bonding together. I'll bet that Paul and the centurion on the ship were friends after their adventure together. Both were needy and humble, and the centurion was willing to trust the word that Paul had heard from the Lord.

In our lives here on earth, I think it is the harvest that gives us this kind of humility and this kind of closeness. Churches and pastors herniate themselves trying to produce the kind of unity that only comes from knowing we're saved by grace to follow Christ and work together in the harvest. Musical worship and potlucks and summer missions trips will never replace living as disciples in the shadow of His grace, in the shadow of the coming storm, working together in the harvest.