

A PERFECT HEART

PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE: I CHRONICLES I Chr 29:10-20

I. INTRODUCTION

A. TITLE

1. HEBREW BIBLE

- a. First and Second Chronicles were one book
- b. Title
 - Hebrew title = *Dibre Hayyamim*
 - Meaning = *The Words of the Days*—or—*The Events of the Times*
 - Exact wording *not* drawn from Hebrew text in *Chronicles*
 - Close approximation found in **27:24**—*the chronicles of King David*—but no evidence this is the source
 - The only places the title is found are—**Neh 12:23** and **Esther 2:23**
- c. Last book in Hebrew Bible
 - One of 11 books grouped under category of ‘Writings’
 - 2 of the 11 are combined—all of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah
 - Chronicles follows Ezra-Nehemiah

2. SEPTUAGINT

- a. Greek title was = *Παραλειπομενων*
 - Meaning = *Of Things Omitted*—i.e. omitted from *Samuel* and *Kings*
- b. Divided into two books
 - *Παραλειπομενων Πρωτον* = *The First Book of Things Omitted*
 - *Παραλειπομενων Δευτερα* = *The Second Book of Things Omitted*

3. LATIN BIBLE

- a. Followed Septuagint division
- b. Vulgate transliterated *Παραλειπομενων*—added Latin for ‘First/Second Book’
 - *Paralipomenon Liber Primus* = I Chronicles
 - *Paralipomenon Liber Secundus* = II Chronicles

4. PROTESTANT BIBLE

- a. Jerome (4th cent)—his *Prologue* to books of *Samuel* and *Kings* suggested they be entitled:
 - *Chronicon Totios Divinae Historiae*—‘Chronicle of the Entire Divine History’
- b. Luther borrowed and applied Jerome’s ‘Chronicon’
 - His German version entitled it *Die Chronik*
 - English versions translated/adopted Luther’s title

B. SCOPE—SETTING—HISTORICAL BACKGROUND—I CHRONICLES

1. PERIOD COVERED

a. Genealogies—**chapters 1-9**

- From Adam through grandchildren of Remnant to Jerusalem (about 500 BC)

b. Historical Events—**chapters 10-29**

- Beginning—Saul’s death (1011 BC)—**chapter 10**
- David’s 33-year reign over **united** Israel (1004-971 BC)—**chapters 11-29**
 - Does not cover David’s seven-year reign over Judah (in Hebron)
- So—I Chronicles covers the same period as II Samuel

2. SETTING

I and II Chronicles tell the history of only Judah—not northern Israel

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

a. Beginning of Period

1. Philistine political and economic domination of Israel
2. Philistines defeated and killed Saul and Jonathan at Gilboa
3. David was still in exile during chapter 10—when he defeated Amalekites at Ziklag
4. Divided religious sites
 - Ark of Covenant—was at Kiriath-jearim
 - Tabernacle—was at Gibeon
5. Civil war—between Judah and Israel over kingship
 - Not covered in I Chronicles—*between* chapters 10 and 11

b. End of Period

1. Philistine pentapolis power was broken—Philistines pushed out of Israel

2. Monarchy was united—with one religious center in Jerusalem
3. Subjugation of surrounding nations
 - Philistines
 - Moabites
 - Syrians
 - Edomites
 - Ammonites
4. Expanded Kingdom of Israel
 - From the Negev (desert) to the Mediterranean
 - From Gulf of Aqaba—along Jordan River—to Syrian border and Orontes River

C. COMPOSITION

1. AUTHORSHIP

- a. Talmudic tradition says—**Ezra** the priest
- b. Evidence for Ezra as author
 1. Content focuses on priestly themes—Temple, priesthood, and theocratic line of David
 2. Style is similar to Book of *Ezra*—both cover similar themes
 3. Ending of *II Chronicles* (36:22-23)—is almost the same as opening of *Ezra* (1:1-3)
 - Possibly *Ezra* was written as a sequel to *Chronicles*—as Acts followed Luke
- c. Ezra—the person
 1. An educated scribe—**Ezra 7:6**
 2. He led some of the exiles to Jerusalem in 457 BC
 3. His Sources
 - a. Access to a large library—provided by Nehemiah (source: II Mac 2:13-15)
 - b. Internal evidence—of some sources he used in I Chronicles
 - ✓ *The Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah*—**I Chr 9:1**
 - ✓ *Chronicles of Samuel the Seer*—**I Chr 29:29**
 - ✓ *Chronicles of Nathan the Prophet*—**I Chr 29:29**
 - ✓ *Chronicles of Gad the Seer*—**I Chr 29:29**
 - ✓ *The Account of the Chronicles of King David*—**I Chr 27:24**

2. DATE OF WRITING

- a. Shortly after the main Remnant returned—about 450-430 BC

- b. When the following persons led Judah
- Nehemiah—the governor—political leader
 - Ezra—the priest—spiritual leader
 - Malachi—the prophet—moral leader

D. PURPOSES

1. TO ENCOURAGE THE REMNANT RETURNING TO JUDEA
2. TO GIVE ISRAEL'S LINEAGE FROM CREATION TO ITS RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY
 - Since Chronicles was the last book in the Hebrew Bible
 - The genealogy in chapters 1-9—introduces the messianic ones in Matthew/Luke
3. TO GIVE SPIRITUAL ACCOUNT OF DAVID'S REIGN
4. TO REMIND THEM OF GOD'S ETERNAL COVENANT WITH DAVID
 - First recorded in **II Samuel 7**—reiterated in **I Chronicles 17**

E. THEMES

1. KEY MESSAGE—GOD'S FAITHFULNESS AND ISRAEL'S HOPE
 - ❖ **Jehovah** Covenant God is **faithful**—still with Judah—has a future planned for it
2. ALL ISRAEL—STILL UNDER JEHOVAH
 - The Remnant represents All Israel—though the northern tribes have all but disappeared
 - Genealogies for all tribes are given—though the emphasis is on Judah, Benjamin, Levi
3. THE MESSIANIC LINE OF DAVID—CHAPTERS 2-3
4. SPIRITUAL REFORM
 - Centralized worship in Jerusalem—and the presence of the Ark of the Covenant
 - Plans for God's Temple
 - The Role of the Law
 - Emphasis on the Priesthood
 - ❖ NOTE: length of priestly genealogy (chapter 6) is longer than even David's!

F. STRUCTURE

1. THE GENEALOGIES—**CHAPTERS 1-9**
 - a. From Adam to Jacob—**chapter 1**
 - b. From Jacob to David—**chapter 2**

- c. From David to the Captivity—**chapter 3**
 - d. The Twelve Tribes—**chapters 4-8**
 - e. The Returning Remnant—**9:1-34**
 - f. Saul’s Genealogy—**9:35-44**
2. THE REIGN OF DAVID—**CHAPTERS 10-29**
- a. Saul’s Death—**chapter 10**
 - b. David’s Rise to Power over Unified Israel—**chapters 11-12**
 - David’s Anointment—**chapter 11**
 - Conquest of Jerusalem—**chapter 11**
 - David’s Mighty Men—**chapters 11-12**
 - c. Acquiring the Ark of the Covenant—**chapters 13-16**
 - Improper Transportation of the Ark and Disaster—**chapter 13**
 - David’s Prosperous Reign and Victory over the Philistines—**chapter 14**
 - Proper Transportation of the Ark—**chapter 15**
 - Celebration at the Ark—in Jerusalem—**chapter 16**
 - d. The Davidic Covenant—**chapter 17**
 - e. Military Victories—**chapters 18-20**
 - f. Preparations for the Temple—**chapters 21-27**
 - Sinful Census and Punishment—**chapter 21**
 - Material Provisions for Temple—**chapter 22**
 - Charge to Solomon and Leaders—**chapter 22**
 - Organization of Temple Personnel—**chapters 23-26**
 - Organization of Nation and Leaders—**chapter 27**
 - g. David’s Last Days—**chapters 28-29**
 - David’s Final Exhortations—**chapter 28**
 - Final Provisions for Temple—**chapters 28-29**
 - David’s Prayer of Thanksgiving—**chapter 29**
 - Solomon’s Coronation—**chapter 29**
 - David’s Death—**chapter 29**

II. BIBLICAL TEXT

I Chronicles 29:10-20—**10** *So David blessed the Lord in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, “Blessed are You, O Lord God of Israel our father, forever and ever. 11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. 12 Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone. 13 Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name. 14 “But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given You. 15 For we are sojourners before You, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope. 16 O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build You a house for Your holy name, it is from Your hand, and all is Yours. 17 Since I know, O my God, that You try the heart and delight in uprightness, I, in the integrity of my heart, have willingly offered all these things; so now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here, make their offerings willingly to You. 18 O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, our fathers, preserve this forever in the intentions of the heart of Your people, and direct their heart to You; 19 and give to my son Solomon a perfect heart to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies and Your statutes, and to do them all, and to build the temple, for which I have made provision.” 20 Then David said to all the assembly, “Now bless the Lord your God.” And all the assembly blessed the Lord, the God of their fathers, and bowed low and did homage to the Lord and to the king.*

III. EXPOSITION

A. THREE ATTRIBUTES OF A ‘PERFECT HEART’

- ❖ LOYAL
- ❖ RELIANT
- ❖ PLEASING

1. A PERFECT HEART IS LOYAL

- a. Totally and purely **devoted** to God
- b. Total loyalty—is expressed—and measured—in three ways

1. Integrity

- **Single-minded** devotion
- **Unity** of focus—devoted only to one Person
- *Nobody can serve two masters*

2. Intensity

- Full-hearted devotion
- *Love the Lord your God with all your heart. . .*

3. Endurance

- a. Possesses **durative** staying power
- b. Constantly—daily—renewed
- c. Not just a one-time pledge
- d. Not even leading others to loyalty
- e. It is possible to lapse in loyalty
- f. **Look at Solomon**

1. Solomon started strong—urged his people to have a ‘perfect heart’—**I Kgs 8:61**
2. Why did Solomon lapse?
 - a. Not because he was not devoted
 - ✓ He still considered himself a follower of Jehovah!
 - b. But because his loyalty was **divided**
 1. He *also* allowed worship of other gods—of his wives
 2. This diluted his **intensity** of devotion
 3. It eroded his **endurance**—finally capitulated to whole-hearted idolatry

2. A PERFECT HEART IS **RELIANT**

- a. Totally **trusts** God—totally **dependent** on God
 - God *wants* us to **rely** totally on Him
- b. Results in fearlessness—following God boldly
- c. Key to David’s success—his total reliance on God that made him fearless
 1. Against Goliath
 2. Against the lion and bear that attacked his sheep
 3. Against Saul and his army
 4. Against all of Israel’s enemies—that he defeated
 - Amalekites
 - Jebusites

- Ammonites
- Moabites
- Syrians
- Philistines
- Edomites

d. Key to success of other kings with a ‘perfect heart’

1. Asa defeated a million-man Ethiopian—**II Chr 14**

2. Hezekiah withstood Sennacherib’s assault—**II Kgs 19**—the strongest army of his day

3. A PERFECT HEART IS **PLEASING**

a. Total devotion—ends in **obedience**—not just lip-service

b. But—more than just ‘obedient’ rule-following

1. It is impossible to be totally devoted to God—without obeying Him

2. But—it is possible to ‘obey’ the rules—but not be totally devoted to God

3. It is possible to do right—but *without* a ‘perfect heart’—not whole-heartedly

4. **Example**

II Chr 25:2—King Amaziah did right before the Lord, but not with a perfect heart

c. Total devotion—a ‘perfect heart’—is

1. Not personal perfection in doing things right

2. But doing the right thing—pleasing and honoring the Lord

B. SETTING THE TONE—THE LEGACY OF DAVID’S PERFECT HEART

1. DAVID’S CHIEF QUALITY

a. He sought God’s heart—**I Sam 13:14**

b. He had a ‘perfect heart’ to follow God—unlike his son Solomon—**I Kgs 11:4**

c. This set the tone for David’s reign

- **I Chr 12:38**—David’s ‘mighty men’ came with a ‘perfect heart’ to make him king
- **I Chr 28:9**—David urged Solomon to walk with a ‘perfect heart’ and willing mind
- **I Chr 29:9**—The people gave with a ‘perfect heart’ to build the temple
- **I Chr 29:19**—David asked God to give Solomon a ‘perfect heart’

d. David’s ‘perfect heart’ became the pattern for all Judah’s good kings

1. Solomon—before he lapsed
 - **I Kgs 8:61**—He urged the people—*let your heart be perfect with the Lord*
2. Three of seven reforming kings of Judah were described as having a ‘perfect heart’
 - a. **Asa**—**I Kgs 15:14** [and **II Chr 15:17**]
 - b. **Jehoshaphat**—**II Chr 19:9**—urged priests/leaders to judge with a ‘perfect heart’
 - c. **Hezekiah**—**II Kgs 20:3**
- e. Used negatively to describe kings who fell short
 - **I Kgs 11:4**—**Solomon’s** heart was not perfect with the Lord—as was David’s
 - **I Kgs 15:3**—**Abijam** walked in the sins of his father—his heart was not perfect

C. SUCCESS CAN UNDERMINE THE PERFECT HEART

1. SUCCESS CAN BREED SELF-RELIANCE

- Opposite of trusting God completely—opposite of the ‘perfect heart’
- When we see *ourselves* as ‘perfect’—our hearts are no longer perfectly devoted!

2. EXAMPLES

a. **David**

1. After success in battle against all his enemies
2. David became reliant on numbers in his army—took the census!—**I Chr 21**
3. God rebuke this as sinful self-reliance—and punished Israel—plague killing 70,000

b. **Asa**—the first great reforming king after David—had a ‘perfect heart’

1. Relied on God to beat the million-man Ethiopian army—**II Chr 14**
2. But later relied on military alliance with the Arameans (Syrians)—**II Chr 16**
3. God rebuked Asa—through the prophet Hanani

II Chr 16:9—*For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is perfectly His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars.*

4. God’s warning

- True success comes only to those whose hearts remain perfect
- Success comes only because God chooses to give them His strong support

D. A PERFECT HEART DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE DESIRES OF OUR HEART

1. SOMETIMES WE MAKE THIS EMPTY ‘HEARTFELT’ CLAIMS

Ps 37:4—*Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart*

a. But we must read this promise in context

Ps 37:1-5—*Do not fret because of evildoers, be not envious toward wrongdoers. For they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb. Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it.*

b. Conclusion

- Commit all our ways totally to the Lord
- Trust Him completely—that His will is best—for us—and Him
- Our ‘delight’ must be to seek His will—not just our personal ‘desires’

2. GOD DOES NOT ALWAYS CHOOSE TO FULFILL OUR PERSONAL DESIRE

a. Even when *we think* it is the best thing for His kingdom work

b. Sometimes God has another plan—that is better

c. Example: David

1. God did not permit David to build the Temple
2. Even—though David’s intent was pure and he wanted to please God
3. Reason
 - a. David was a man of war who had shed blood—**I Chr 28:3**
 - b. The Temple was to be a ‘house of prayer’—‘for all nations’!

3. PRINCIPLES

a. God’s will is sovereign in all matters

- He chooses *whom* He wants—to do *what* He wants!

b. Each of us—has a special and important place and purpose in God’s plan

- David’s purpose was to prepare—Solomon’s to execute
- The Temple would not have been built without *both* doing their jobs!

c. One’s place of service/purpose is not superior/inferior to another’s

E. APART FROM GOD—NOBODY HAS A PERFECT HEART

1. NOBODY’S HEART IS NATURALLY ‘PERFECT’

Jer 17:9—*The heart is deceitful above all things, and is desperately sick; who can understand it?*

2. BY OURSELVES—WE CANNOT SET OUR OWN HEARTS RIGHTLY ON GOD

3. HERE IS A DIVINE IRONY

We cannot fully trust God until we trust Him to make us that way

We must rely totally on god to make us totally reliant on Him

In other words—we must throw ourselves on His mercy to have mercy on us

And our ability to do this—begins with His empowering us to make that choice

4. EXAMPLES

a. **When David repented** of doing the census—this was his plea

I Chr 21:13—*I am in great distress; please let me fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are very great. But do not let me fall into the hand of men.*

b. **When David wanted Israel and Solomon to have a ‘perfect heart’**—he turned to God

18 O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, our fathers, preserve this forever in the intentions of the heart of Your people, and direct their heart to You; 19 and give to my son Solomon a perfect heart.