

Christians Are Spiritual Levites

First Chronicles 6

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • July 11, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2021

Scripture Reader and Reading: Bryan Rich – First Chronicles 9.1–2

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Phil Joseph – No Suggestions (Do we have “Beulah Land”?)

Prelude:

I. First Chronicles 6 shows the tribe of Levi.

- A. 1–15 Family of Aaron
- B. 16–30 Sons of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari
- C. 31–48 Song masters
- D. 49–53 From Aaron to Ahimaaz
- E. 54–81 Where the Levites lived

II. It is obvious what the Levites did, and

- A. Ezra did not mention their work as priests in the temple.
- B. He did show something that was not as well known, but
 - 1. the Law, and especially David,
 - 2. did have the Levites do something very important: Singing.

Persuasion:

I. First Chronicles 6.1–14 • The Sons of Levi

1 The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 2 The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 3 The children of Amram were Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. And the sons of Aaron were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 4 Eleazar begot Phinehas, and Phinehas begot Abishua; 5 Abishua begot Bukki, and Bukki begot Uzzi; 6 Uzzi begot Zerahiah, and Zerahiah begot Meraioth; 7 Meraioth begot Amariah, and Amariah begot Ahitub; 8 Ahitub begot Zadok, and Zadok begot Ahimaaz; 9 Ahimaaz begot Azariah, and Azariah begot Johanan; 10 Johanan begot Azariah (it was he who ministered as priest in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem); 11 Azariah begot Amariah, and Amariah begot Ahitub; 12 Ahitub begot Zadok, and Zadok begot Shallum; 13 Shallum begot Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begot Azariah; 14 Azariah begot Seraiah, and Seraiah begot Jehozadak.

A. Nadab and Abihu should have had a glorious life as high priests.

1. Instead what we remember them for is an unauthorized act of worship.
2. Leviticus 10 shows what happened to them:

1 Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. 2 So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

– Leviticus 10.1–2

B. The names of: Ahitub, Zadok, and Ahimaaz (vv. 7–8) come from David's time.

C. In verse 10, Ezra gave us a time frame,

1. saying that Azariah was priest during the days of Solomon.
2. That was in the 900s AD.

D. Hilkiyah is mentioned several times in the Bible:

1. Second Kings 22.8

8 Then Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

2. Second Kings 22.14–20
3. Second Kings 23.4–27
4. Second Chronicles 25.1–19

II. First Chronicles 6.15–30 • The Captivity

15 Jehozadak went into captivity when the LORD carried Judah and Jerusalem into captivity by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. 16 The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 17 These are the names of the sons of Gershon: Libni and Shimei. 18 The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 19 The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. Now these are the families of the Levites according to their fathers: 20 Of Gershon were Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son, 21 Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, and Jeatherai his son. 22 The sons of Kohath were Amminadab his son, Korah his

son, Assir his son, 23 Elkanah his son, Ebiasaph his son, Assir his son, 24 Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uziah his son, and Shaul his son. 25 The sons of Elkanah were Amasai and Ahimoth. 26 As for Elkanah, the sons of Elkanah were Zophai his son, Nahath his son, 27 Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, and Elkanah his son. 28 The sons of Samuel were Joel the firstborn, and Abijah the second. 29 The sons of Merari were Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah his son, 30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, and Asaiah his son.

A. With verse 15, Ezra gave us another historical marker.

1. Jehozadak and his generation
2. were the ones who went into Babylonian captivity.

B. Did you recognize the name of Korah?

1. He led the rebellion against Moses.
2. You will notice that he was a priest.
 - a) Moses used that against Korah, because
 - b) he was seeking more.

1 Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men; 2 and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown. 3 They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"

– Numbers 16.1–3

7b "You take too much upon yourselves, you sons of Levi!"

– Numbers 16.7

C. Verse 28 and the listing of Samuel helped me to understand something.

1. Here Ezra did not say that Samuel was the son of Elkanah, but
2. he listed Samuel just after mentioning Elkanah.
 - a) First Samuel 1 informs us of their relationship.

- b) First Chronicles 5 did the same thing
 - (1) when Ezra suddenly mentioned Joel.
 - (2) I asked why Ezra suddenly mentioned Joel.
 - (a) Compare First Chronicles 5.3 then 4.
 - (b) Joel must have been a son of Reuben, but
 - i) his prominence require that Ezra
 - ii) list him separately, like with Samuel.
- D. The sons of Samuel should have followed their father as judges, but
 - 1. it was their poor job as judges
 - 2. that led Israel to ask for a king.
- E. Uzzah in verse 29 is the one who lost his life
 - 1. when Israel was moving the ark of the Lord to Jerusalem, and
 - 2. the oxen stumbled,
 - a) causing the cart with the ark
 - b) to begin to fall, and
 - (1) Uzzah tried to stop the fall, but
 - (2) the Lord took his life because
 - (a) they were not moving it correctly in the first place.

III. First Chronicles 6.31–38 • Musicians

31 Now these are the men whom David appointed over the service of song in the house of the LORD, after the ark came to rest. 32 They were ministering with music before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of meeting, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they served in their office according to their order. 33 And these are the ones who ministered with their sons: Of the sons of the Kohathites were Heman the singer, the son of Joel, the son of Samuel, 34 the son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Eliel, the son of Toah, 35 the son of Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai, 36 the son of Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah, 37 the son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, 38 the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son

of Levi, the son of Israel.

A. David was big on music.

1. He wrote lyrics and
2. he played music.
 - a) Therefore, he took part in leading the Levites
 - b) to have a song service.

B. That order continued until Solomon built the temple.

C. Some of those names you may remember from the prefaces to the Psalms.

IV. First Chronicles 6.39–47 • Asaph and His Singing Brethren

39 And his brother Asaph, who stood at his right hand, was Asaph the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea, 40 the son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchijah, 41 the son of Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah, 42 the son of Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei, 43 the son of Jahath, the son of Gershon, the son of Levi. 44 Their brethren, the sons of Merari, on the left hand, were Ethan the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch, 45 the son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah, 46 the son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer, 47 the son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi.

A. Asaph wrote twelve of the Psalms.

B. It was not just David who loved music, but

1. the Lord loves music.
2. He is the one who created us with the ability to sing.
 - a) He also gave some the ability to write
 - b) the lyrics and the music.

C. Let us see singing as a divine mission.

D. See it as an evangelistic opportunity – Acts 16

E. You hear the preacher preach his heart out.

1. Singing is an opportunity for everyone to show their zeal.

2. Psalm 100.2

**2 Serve the LORD with gladness;
Come before His presence with singing.**

V. First Chronicles 6.48–49 • The Levites Served the High Priests

48 And their brethren, the Levites, were appointed to every kind of service of the tabernacle of the house of God. 49 But Aaron and his sons offered sacrifices on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense, for all the work of the Most Holy Place, and to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.

A. Aside from the high priests,

1. the rest of the Levites helped the sons of Aaron
2. in whatever they need to do their jobs.

B. However, only the high priests

1. could offer sacrifices on the altar of burnt offering and
2. on the altar of incense.
 - a) They also did all the work in the Most Holy Place, or Holy of Holies.
 - b) They were the ones who made atonement for Israel.

C. They did what Moses commanded, but

1. Moses got all those commands from God,
2. making Moses a servant of God.

VI. First Chronicles 6.50–53 • Eleazar's Sons

50 Now these are the sons of Aaron: Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son, 51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son, 52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, 53 Zadok his son, and Ahimaaz his son.

A. Phinehas stopped a plague.

6 And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his

brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 7 Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; 8 and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel.

– Numbers 25.6–8

VII. First Chronicles 6.54–64 • Where the Levites Lived

54 Now these are their dwelling places throughout their settlements in their territory, for they were given by lot to the sons of Aaron, of the family of the Kohathites: 55 They gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, with its surrounding common-lands. 56 But the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh. 57 And to the sons of Aaron they gave one of the cities of refuge, Hebron; also Libnah with its common-lands, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its common-lands, 58 Hilen with its common-lands, Debir with its common-lands, 59 Ashan with its common-lands, and Beth Shemesh with its common-lands. 60 And from the tribe of Benjamin: Geba with its common-lands, Alemeth with its common-lands, and Anathoth with its common-lands. All their cities among their families were thirteen. 61 To the rest of the family of the tribe of the Kohathites they gave by lot ten cities from half the tribe of Manasseh. 62 And to the sons of Gershon, throughout their families, they gave thirteen cities from the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. 63 To the sons of Merari, throughout their families, they gave twelve cities from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun. 64 So the children of Israel gave these cities with their common-lands to the Levites.

- A. The tribe of Levi did not have a region of land.
 - 1. Their father Levi, along with Simeon, had attacked a town because
 - a) one of their men had raped their sister.
 - b) The two brothers killed all the males.
 - 2. Therefore, the Lord scattered them throughout Israel.
 - a) They had certain cities and the surrounding areas, but

- b) no large track of land like the rest of the tribes,
 - (1) except for Simeon,
 - (2) although he had a section of land, but
 - (a) it was all surrounded by Judah and
 - (b) eventually Judah took on that land.
- B. Although the tabernacle at first, and later the temple, would be in Jerusalem,
 - 1. the Levites lived all over the land of Israel.
 - 2. They would travel to Jerusalem for their work period.
- C. Ezra mentioned the cities of refuge (explain)

VIII. First Chronicles 6.65–81 • More Cities

65 And they gave by lot from the tribe of the children of Judah, from the tribe of the children of Simeon, and from the tribe of the children of Benjamin these cities which are called by their names. 66 Now some of the families of the sons of Kohath were given cities as their territory from the tribe of Ephraim. 67 And they gave them one of the cities of refuge, Shechem with its common-lands, in the mountains of Ephraim, also Gezer with its common-lands, 68 Jokmeam with its common-lands, Beth Horon with its common-lands, 69 Aijalon with its common-lands, and Gath Rimmon with its common-lands. 70 And from the half-tribe of Manasseh: Aner with its common-lands and Bileam with its common-lands, for the rest of the family of the sons of Kohath. 71 From the family of the half-tribe of Manasseh the sons of Gershon were given Golan in Bashan with its common-lands and Ashtaroth with its common-lands. 72 And from the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh with its common-lands, Daberath with its common-lands, 73 Ramoth with its common-lands, and Anem with its common-lands. 74 And from the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its common-lands, Abdon with its common-lands, 75 Hukok with its common-lands, and Rehob with its common-lands. 76 And from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its common-lands, Hammon with its common-lands, and Kirjathaim with its common-lands. 77 From the tribe of Zebulun the rest of the children of Merari were given Rimmon with its common-lands and Tabor with its common-lands. 78 And on the other side of the Jordan, across from Jericho, on the east side of the Jordan, they were given from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the wilderness with its common-lands, Jahzah with its common-lands, 79 Kedemoth with its common-lands, and Mephaath with its common-lands. 80 And from the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its common-lands, Mahanaim with its common-lands, 81 Heshbon with its common-lands, and Jazer

with its common-lands.

A. As you can see then, the Levites were spread all throughout the Land.

Exhortation:

I. Christians are like Levites

A. spread all over the earth.

B. No land exists that the Lord said should be a section for Christians.

II. We are priests.

A. We are priests who serve the great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. We are also priests on behalf of the world – 1Ti 2

III. Another thing that the Levites did in Israel,

A. which Ezra did not mention in this chapter,

B. was that of teaching.

1. In that way, we are also spiritual Levites, because

2. the lifeblood of the church is teaching.