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THE 66-BOOK GROUP BIBLE STUDY SERIES • BOOK 13 OF 66

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1 CHRONICLES

A 6-Week Group Bible Study

By Greg and Kayla Gibson

THE COMPLETE STUDY • WEEKS 1-6 • 1 CHRONICLES 1:1-29:30
GENERAL / MIXED GROUP EDITION

1 Chronicles: A 6-Week Bible Study

A 6-Week Bible Study • ESV® • 6 Sessions of 75-90 Minutes

LEADER GUIDE EDITION

Complete Participant Text + Interleaved Pacing, Hebrew Word Studies, Facilitation Probes & Pitfalls

1 Chronicles: A 6-Week Bible Study

Leader Guide Edition • General / Mixed Group Track

By Greg and Kayla Gibson

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WEEK 1 OF 6

Week 1: A People with a Past and a Future — 1 Chronicles 1:1–9:44

Scripture Scope: 1 Chronicles 1:1–9:44 (ESV) • Session Length: 75–90 Minutes

- **The title:** In the Hebrew Bible, 1 and 2 Chronicles were one book, and it stands last in the Hebrew canon. Its Hebrew title means "the events of the days." It is not a sequel to Kings but a fresh telling of Israel's story that begins with Adam.
- **The setting:** Written after the return from exile in Babylon, probably between 450 and 400 BC, for a small community in Judah under Persian rule, with no king and a modest rebuilt temple. 1 Chronicles covers the time from Adam to the death of David (about 970 BC).
- **The main characters:** David, Saul, Joab, Nathan, Gad, Asaph and the Levitical singers, Ornan, and Solomon, along with the many names of the genealogies.
- **Its place in the Bible:** Chronicles retells much of 2 Samuel and 1 Kings, often word for word, but with a distinct purpose. It adds the genealogies, David's preparations for the temple, the organization of the Levites and singers, and many speeches and prayers. It leaves out David's years as a fugitive, his sin with Bathsheba, Absalom's revolt, and most of the northern kingdom's history. The first readers knew Samuel and Kings; Chronicles chooses what a rebuilding people most needed to remember.
- **The structure (two parts):**
  - The genealogies: who God's people are, from Adam to the returned exiles (chapters 1–9).
  - David's reign, centered on the ark, the covenant, and preparations for the temple (chapters 10–29).
- **Why it matters:** A returned people asked whether they were still God's people and whether his promises still stood. Chronicles answers: you belong to a story that runs from creation through David to today; the LORD's covenant with David stands; worship is the center of your life; seek the LORD and he will be found. That promise points to Jesus, the Son of David, whose throne is forever.

How This 6-Week Study Works

You may notice this study is shorter than our usual eight weeks. Even though we are 8weekbiblestudy.com, stretching 1 Chronicles to eight weeks would have left it thin on content, and we never want to trade quality for quantity.

Designed for weekly small groups, mini-churches, and community gatherings (75–90 minutes per session) rather than daily homework checklists, each week of 1 Chronicles invites you to walk through the story of David and the house of God together through six repeatable sections:

- **Section X.1 — Opening:** Sets the scene, the Week at a Glance, Head, Heart, and Hands objectives, the Opening Frame, and the Opening Entry Question.
- **Section X.2 — Historical & Literary Context:** Places the week's chapters inside the structure of 1 Chronicles and the ancient Near Eastern world.
- **Section X.3 — Movement 1:** The week's first guided passage: Guided Scripture Reading, Anchor Verses, Teaching Narrative, and Group Discussion Questions.
- **Section X.4 — Movement 2:** The week's second guided passage, following the same flow.

- **Section X.5 — Canonical Horizon:** Traces how the passage echoes across Scripture and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.
- **Section X.6 — Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer:** Moves the week's study into everyday life, previews next week, and closes in prayer.

1 Chronicles is a 6-week study rather than 8. Chapters 1–9 (genealogies) and 23–27 (lists of Levites, singers, gatekeepers, and officials) are surveyed for their purpose instead of being spread across thin, list-heavy weeks. Key anchor verses are printed in each section for quick reference. Longer focal passages are read aloud together from the ESV. The book includes a king's death in battle, a man struck down beside the ark, wars, and a plague. The study retells those scenes briefly in its own words rather than printing or reading them in full.

Choosing a Bible Translation: Top 5 Translations Compared

Every English Bible translation falls along a spectrum between two primary approaches: word-for-word translation (formal equivalence, which prioritizes literal accuracy to the original phrasing and sentence structure) and thought-for-thought translation (dynamic equivalence, which prioritizes immediate modern readability by translating idioms and ideas into natural contemporary expressions). Here is how five widely used English translations compare:

- **ESV (English Standard Version) — Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Follows the wording and sentence structure of the original Hebrew and Greek closely while using modern English; well suited to close study.
  - Cons: Because it tracks the original sentence structure, some phrasing can feel more formal than everyday speech.
- **NIV (New International Version) — Balanced (Between Word-for-Word and Thought-for-Thought)**
  - Pros: Widely read; balances accuracy to the original languages with natural, everyday readability.
  - Cons: Because some idioms are rendered as modern expressions, a few literal wordplays or technical terms can be less visible.
- **NLT (New Living Translation) — Thought-for-Thought**
  - Pros: Warm and conversational; reads smoothly aloud and helps readers follow the big picture of long passages.
  - Cons: Because it prioritizes meaning over literal phrasing, it can be harder to use for close word study.
- **CSB (Christian Standard Bible) — Optimal Equivalence (Balanced)**
  - Pros: Stays close to the original words where possible while smoothing awkward phrasing into natural modern English.
  - Cons: Because it is a newer translation, some well-known verses may sound different from the wording many readers remember.
- **KJV / NKJV (King James Version & New King James Version) — Traditional Word-for-Word**
  - Pros: Historic cadence that shaped English literature and church history; the NKJV updates archaic pronouns ("thee/thou") while keeping the classic rhythm.
  - Cons: Often reads like older English poetry, with complex sentences and archaic or formal vocabulary that can be harder for modern readers to follow.

This study quotes the ESV.

Greg & Kayla's Recommended Study Bibles

Having a trusted study Bible on hand is one of the best ways to go deeper as you read through 1 Chronicles:

- **Greg's Favorite Study Bible:** The MacArthur Study Bible (ESV), which contains extensive explanatory notes beneath almost every verse, ideal for detailed study.
- **Kayla's Favorite Study Bible:** The ESV Study Bible, containing over 20,000 study notes, articles, and explanations.

The 6-Week 1 Chronicles Study at a Glance

Week	Title & Passage	Movement 1 / Movement 2	Canonical Horizon
1	**A People with a Past and a Future** (1:1–9:44)	From Adam to David's Line (1:1–3:24) / The Tribes, the Levites, and the Returned (4:1–9:44)	The genealogy that leads to Christ
2	**All Israel Gathers to David** (10:1–12:40)	Saul's Fall and David Made King (10:1–11:9) / David's Mighty Men and Willing Helpers (11:10–12:40)	The gathering of all God's people to the Son of David
3	**The Ark Comes Home** (13:1–16:43)	A Wrong Start and a Right Way (13:1–15:29) / A Song of Thanksgiving (16:1–43)	The worship of the King and the song of the nations
4	**A House Promised, a Site Chosen** (17:1–21:30)	The LORD's Covenant with David (17:1–27) / Victories, a Sinful Census, and an Altar (18:1–21:30)	The Son whose throne is forever
5	**Preparing for the House** (22:1–26:32)	David Prepares Solomon (22:1–19) / Ordering the Worship of God (23:1–26:32)	The church as God's temple, ordered for worship
6	**Yours Is the Kingdom** (27:1–29:30)	The Kingdom's Officials and David's Charge (27:1–28:21) / David's Prayer and Solomon Enthroned (29:1–30)	The kingdom, power, and glory belong to God

How to Use This Leader Guide Edition

This **Leader Guide Edition** is built on a synchronized two-edition architecture so you never have to juggle two separate books during your small group or mini-church gathering:

1. 100% Word-for-Word Participant Text Included: Every section, Scripture reading prompt, verbatim ESV anchor verse callout, teaching narrative, table, and discussion or reflection prompt appears here **word-for-word identical** to what your group members see in their Participant Study Edition. Section numbers and question labels match exactly, so leaders and participants can stay on the same page.

2. Interleaved `[LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY]` Blocks: Immediately following each section, you will find a dedicated leader block containing:

- **Pacing & Time Targets** calibrated for a 75–90 minute session. Pacing targets appear in every Leader section header. Weeks 1 and 5 are survey weeks: never read the genealogies or lists aloud in full. Read the focal passages, summarize the rest in a sentence or two, and protect the discussion time.
- **Hebrew Word Study & Ancient Near Eastern Research Quick-References** so you can explain terms naturally without lecturing, when they add something useful.
- **Question-by-Question Facilitation Probes** listed in question order, designed to move conversation past polite answers into honest reflection.
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around** so you can gently redirect common rabbit trails back to the biblical text.
- **Additional Research Notes** appear when they add something useful.

3. Leader Flags: Numbered in reading order, they mark passages that need pastoral care or tend to raise hard questions, with guidance on handling them. 1 Chronicles includes painful family histories, Saul's death, Uzzah's death, war, a plague, and David's own death. The flags give a consistent approach: retell the scene briefly in your own words, never read graphic verses aloud, do not present violent acts as models for today, and make room for members who carry their own wounds, including grief, trauma, despair, or a hard family story.

4. Reading aloud: Assign readers ahead of time for the Guided Scripture Reading. Printed anchor verses are for quick reference; read the longer focal passages from an open ESV. Passages marked "in brief" are summarized or retold by the leader rather than read.

5. Facilitating well: Ask the printed question, wait, and let silence work. Use the probes to deepen, not to lecture. Aim for every voice to be heard at least once each session.

Week 1 Session Pacing at a Glance (75–90 Minutes)

Section	Focus	Time Target
Section 1.1	Opening: A People with a Past and a Future (1 Chronicles 1:1–9:44) (1.1 Q1)	**10 mins**
Section 1.2	Historical & Literary Context: Names That Tell a Story (1.2 Q1–Q3)	**12 mins**
Section 1.3	Movement 1: From Adam to David's Line (1 Chronicles 1:1–3:24) (1.3 Q1–Q5)	**22 mins**
Section 1.4	Movement 2: The Tribes, the Levites, and the Returned (1 Chronicles 4:1–9:44) (1.4 Q1–Q5)	**20 mins**
Section 1.5	Canonical Horizon: The Genealogy That Leads to Christ (1.5 Q1–Q3)	**12 mins**
Section 1.6	Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer (1.6 Q1–Q3)	**9 mins**
Total	**Full Week 1 Group Session**	**75–90 mins**

Scripture Scope: 1 Chronicles 1:1–9:44 • **Focal Group Readings:** 1 Chronicles 1:1–4; 1:28–34; 3:1–9; 3:17–24; 4:9–10; 5:18–20, 25–26; 6:31–32; 9:1–3 (ESV) • **Session Pacing:** 75–90 Minutes

Section 1.1

Opening: A People with a Past and a Future (1 Chronicles 1:1–9:44)

Opening

Picture a small group of families standing in the ruins of Jerusalem after seventy years in Babylon. The walls are broken, the temple is a fraction of its former glory, and there is no king on David's throne. They are asking: are we still God's people? Did his promises die in the exile? 1 Chronicles opens its answer with a single word: "Adam."

Before it tells any story, it lays out a family tree that runs from the first man, through Abraham and Israel, to David, to the exile, and right up to the people who came home. You are not a random remnant, it says. You belong to God's story.

Week 1 At a Glance

Scripture Scope	1 Chronicles 1:1–9:44 (from Adam to Abraham, Judah's line, David's line, the tribes of Israel, the Levites and singers, and the community that returned to Jerusalem). This is a survey week
Focal Passages	1 Chronicles 1:1–4; 1:28–34; 3:1–9; 3:17–24; 4:9–10; 5:18–20, 25–26; 6:31–32; 9:1–3
Literary & Structural Anchor	The genealogies narrow like a funnel, from all humanity to Israel, to Judah, to David, to the returned community. Judah, Levi, and Benjamin come first and receive the most space, because they formed the community after the exile. Levi, the tribe of worship, stands at the center (chapter 6). The phrase "breach of faith" (9:1; compare "broke faith" in 5:25) explains the exile, and short stories set within the lists (Jabez, the eastern tribes) show that God hears and judges.
Big Idea	God's people belong to a story that runs from creation through David to the present, and he still hears those who call on him.

Week 1 Learning Objectives (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD	**Know the Story:** Understand why Chronicles opens with nine chapters of names and what they told a people home from exile.
HEART	**Rest in Belonging:** Find your identity in God's family, whatever your own family story.
HANDS	**Call on the LORD:** Take one concrete step to call on God in a need, or to tell the next generation the story of God's faithfulness.

Opening Frame: Who Are We Now?

2 Kings ended in exile. Jerusalem was burned, the temple was gone, and David's heir, Jehoiachin, sat as a released prisoner at the Babylonian king's table (2 Kings 25:27–30). It was a thread of hope, but only a thread. 1 Chronicles was written for the families who came home after that exile, to a small, struggling Judah with no king on David's throne. It retells Israel's story from the very beginning to show them who they are. This week we survey nine chapters of names, from Adam to the returned exiles, listening for the names that carry God's promise and for a few short stories where God answers a prayer or judges unfaithfulness. The question for this week: when life has been broken apart, where do we find out who we really are? Before we read together, take a moment to share with the group:

Opening Entry Question (Icebreaker)

1.1 Q1 (Opening Entry Question): What is one family story, or a story from someone who raised or mentored you, that helped shape who you are?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.1 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 10 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 10 minutes. Opening and At a Glance, 3 minutes; Head, Heart, Hands, 2 minutes; Opening Frame, 2 minutes; Opening Entry Question, 3 minutes.
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Welcome the group to 1 Chronicles, point to the front matter, and explain that this is a 6–week study. Tell the group up front that you will not read nine chapters of names aloud; this week studies why the names are there. The icebreaker deliberately allows a story from a mentor or someone who raised you, not only a biological family.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.1 Q1**: Who told you that story? What did it teach you about who you are? How has it shaped what you pass on?
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not press anyone to talk about their family of origin. Some members are adopted, estranged, or do not know their ancestry.
- **Additional Research Notes:** In the Hebrew Bible, Chronicles is the last book, so the Hebrew canon ends with Cyrus's invitation to go up and rebuild (2 Chronicles 36:22–23). Chronicles uses Samuel and Kings as sources, often word for word, and also cites other records such as "the Book of the Kings of Israel" (9:1). Its main themes are all Israel, seeking the LORD, the covenant with David, the temple and joyful worship, and faithfulness versus "breach of faith."
- **Hebrew Word Study:** Yachas (in the form hityachas (הִתְיַחֵשׂ)), "recorded in genealogies," in 5:1, 7, 17 and 9:1. To be enrolled was to belong. In this opening it frames the week: the returned exiles are still counted among God's people.

Section 1.2

Historical & Literary Context: Names That Tell a Story (1 Chronicles 1:1–9:44)

Entering the World of the Returned Exiles

1. Historical Background

The Persian king Cyrus allowed the exiles to return in 538 BC. The temple was rebuilt by 516 BC, and Ezra and Nehemiah led further returns in the following century. Judah was now Yehud, a small Persian province, and the community was poor, few in number, and without a king.

2. Cultural Setting

Genealogies mattered after the exile. They decided who could serve as a priest and who could claim family land (Ezra 2:62). A name often recorded the circumstances of a birth, as Jabez's name sounds like the Hebrew word for "pain."

3. Literary Structure of 1 Chronicles 1:1–9:44

- **Adam to Abraham** (1:1–27)
- **Abraham's sons, Isaac, and Esau's line** (1:28–54)
- **Judah** (2:1–4:23)
- **Simeon and the tribes east of the Jordan** (4:24–5:26)
- **Levi, the priests, and the singers** (6:1–81)
- **The other tribes and Saul's family** (7:1–8:40)
- **The returned community in Jerusalem** (9:1–34)
- **Saul's family again as a bridge to the story** (9:35–44)

4. Key Themes

Identity and belonging; all Israel; the royal line of David; worship at the center; unfaithfulness explained and prayer answered.

5. Theological Considerations

God's purposes run from creation through Israel to David and beyond the exile. The exile came because of the people's unfaithfulness, not because God failed.

6. Relevant Scholarly Insights

Ancient genealogies were often arranged by theme and could skip generations. Differences between Chronicles' lists and those in Genesis or Samuel usually reflect different sources and purposes.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.2)

1.2 Q1: Chronicles was written for a small, struggling community with no king. Why would a family tree reaching back to Adam encourage people like that?

1.2 Q2: After the exile, genealogies decided who could serve as priests and who could claim family land. What gives people a sense of belonging today, and what happens when they lack it?

1.2 Q3: The lists give the most space to Judah, Levi, and Benjamin, and they place Levi, the tribe of worship, in the middle. What does that shape suggest about what mattered most to the returned community?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.2 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 12 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 12 minutes. Context summary, 5 minutes; discussion, 7 minutes (about 2 minutes per question).
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Keep the historical summary short and concrete: exile in Babylon, return under Persia, a rebuilt but modest temple, no king. Describe places in words; the eastern tribes lived across the Jordan River, and Jerusalem was the home of the returned community.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.2 Q1**: What were they afraid of? What does a long family tree say about God's faithfulness? Where do you need that reminder?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.2 Q2**: Where do people look for belonging? What happens when it is missing? Where have you found it?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.2 Q3**: Which tribes come first? Why is Levi in the center? What would the center of your life's story be?
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not get lost in dating debates or in reconciling every name with Genesis.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Ezra 2:62 and Nehemiah 7:64 describe priests who could not find their family records and were excluded from priestly service until the matter could be settled. Ezra 2, Nehemiah 7, and Nehemiah 11–12 contain lists of the returned community that parallel 1 Chronicles 9.
- **Ancient Near Eastern Research Notes:** Ancient Near Eastern genealogies established identity, inheritance, and legitimacy, and they could be arranged by theme rather than strict sequence. Royal lists such as the Sumerian King List legitimized dynasties; Chronicles' list of David's line shows that his house continued after the exile.
- **Hebrew Word Study:** Ma'al (מַעַל), "breach of faith," in 5:25 and 9:1. It is Chronicles' key word for covenant unfaithfulness. In this context section it explains why the exile happened and frames the genealogies at their start and end.

Section 1.3

Movement 1: From Adam to David's Line (1 Chronicles 1:1–3:24)

Guided Scripture Reading

Read aloud in this order, with brief connecting summaries between readings:

- **Reader 1: 1 Chronicles 1:1–4** (focal passage) — The list begins with Adam and runs through Noah and his sons.
- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 1:5–27** — The descendants of Noah's sons spread out into the nations, echoing Genesis 10 and 11, and the line narrows to Abram.
- **Reader 2: 1 Chronicles 1:28–34** (focal passage) — Abraham's sons, and then Isaac's sons, Esau and Israel.
- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 1:35–54** — Esau's descendants and the kings and chiefs of Edom are listed and then set aside.
- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 2:1–55** — Israel's twelve sons are named, and Judah's line comes first, because the king will come from Judah. A brief note records that Judah's firstborn, Er, was evil in the LORD's sight and died, and Tamar's sons are named. The line runs through Ram and Boaz to Jesse and his seven sons, the youngest of whom is David.
- **Reader 3: 1 Chronicles 3:1–9** (focal passage) — David's sons born in Hebron and in Jerusalem.
- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 3:10–16** — The kings of Judah, from Solomon to Zedekiah, listed in a single line of descent.

- **Reader 4: 1 Chronicles 3:17–24** (focal passage) — The royal line continues through Jehoiachin, the exile, and several generations beyond.

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **1 Chronicles 1:34:** Abraham fathered Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel.

Teaching Narrative: The Chosen Line from Adam to David

1. It Begins with Adam (1 Chronicles 1:1–4)

Chronicles starts with the first man. Israel's story belongs to the story of all humanity.

2. The Nations and the Chosen Line (1 Chronicles 1:5–34)

All the nations are named, and then the list narrows to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. God chose one family in order to bless all the families of the earth (Genesis 12:3).

3. Esau Listed and Set Aside (1 Chronicles 1:35–54)

Edom is not erased; it is named and then the story moves on. God's choice is a matter of his purpose, not of anyone's worth.

4. Judah First (1 Chronicles 2:1–55)

The king comes from Judah (Genesis 49:10). Judah's line includes Tamar and later continues through Boaz and Ruth. Grace runs through broken families.

5. David and His House (1 Chronicles 3:1–16)

David's sons and the kings of Judah follow one another in an unbroken line.

6. The Line Survives the Exile (1 Chronicles 3:17–24)

After Jehoiachin, the names keep going: Zerubbabel, who led the first return, and generations after him. The exile did not end David's line.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.3)

> **1.3 Q1:** Chronicles begins its story of Israel with the name "Adam" (1:1). What does it say about God's purposes that Israel's story starts with all humanity?

> **1.3 Q2:** After listing the nations, the line narrows: "Abraham fathered Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel" (1:34). Why do you think God chose to work through one family?

1.3 Q3: Esau's descendants are named in full before the list moves on (1:35–54). What does it suggest that the people not chosen for the royal line are still recorded?

1.3 Q4: Judah's line includes Tamar and, through Boaz, the story of Ruth. What does it mean to you that God's promise runs through imperfect and surprising families?

1.3 Q5: David's line continues by name after the exile (3:17–24). How would those names have encouraged a people waiting for God to keep his promise to David?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.3 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 22 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 22 minutes. Guided Scripture Reading with brief summaries, 6 minutes; Anchor Verse and Teaching Narrative, 5 minutes; discussion, 11 minutes (about 2 minutes per question).
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Have readers take 1:1–4, 1:28–34, 3:1–9, and 3:17–24. Summarize the other sections yourself, in a sentence or two each, using the wording above. Hold up your Bible to show how many chapters are names, then point the group to the handful of names that carry the story: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, Judah, Jesse, David, Jehoiachin, and Zerubbabel.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q1**: Where else does the Bible begin with Adam? What does that say about God's concern for all people? How does it shape the way you see your neighbors?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q2**: Who was chosen? For what purpose (Genesis 12:3)? How does God still work through ordinary families?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q3**: What happens to Esau's line in the list? Why record it at all? What does that say about God's view of every person?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q4**: Who are the surprising names? What were their stories? Where do you see grace in your own family story?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.3 Q5**: What had the exiles lost? What did the names prove? What promise of God are you waiting on?
- **LEADER FLAG 1: Reading genealogies (1:1–3:24)**
  - Do not read the lists aloud in full. Members with painful family histories, adoption stories, estrangement, or unknown ancestry may find genealogy talk difficult. Present the lists as stories of grace, and emphasize that every believer's deepest identity is in Christ. The note about Er's death (2:3) is stated in one sentence without speculation.
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not try to reconcile every difference between these lists and Genesis or Samuel in the session. Do not suggest that a person's worth depends on their ancestry.
- **Additional Research Notes:** 1:1–27 condenses Genesis 5, 10, and 11; 1:28–54 draws on Genesis 25 and 36. Where Chronicles differs from its sources: it places Judah first among the tribes rather than following birth

order, because the king comes from Judah, and it carries David's line well past the point where 2 Kings ends (2 Kings 25:27–30), naming generations after the exile (3:17–24). Zerubbabel (3:19) led the first return and the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 3:8). Some names and spellings differ from Genesis and Samuel.

Section 1.4

Movement 2: The Tribes, the Levites, and the Returned (1 Chronicles 4:1–9:44)

Guided Scripture Reading

Read aloud in this order, with brief connecting summaries between readings:

- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 4:1–8** — More of Judah's clans are listed.
- **Reader 1: 1 Chronicles 4:9–10** (focal passage) — Jabez, named for pain, calls on the God of Israel, and God grants his request.
- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 4:11–5:17** — The rest of Judah, Simeon, and the tribes east of the Jordan: Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh.
- **Reader 2: 1 Chronicles 5:18–20** (focal passage) — The eastern tribes cry out to God in battle, and he answers them because they trusted in him.
- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 5:21–24** — They won the battle and settled in the land until the exile.
- **Reader 3: 1 Chronicles 5:25–26** (focal passage) — The same tribes later break faith with God, and God brings the king of Assyria to carry them into exile.
- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 6:1–30** — The line of the priests from Aaron and the families of the Levites.
- **Reader 4: 1 Chronicles 6:31–32** (focal passage) — David puts men in charge of the service of song before the LORD.
- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 6:33–8:40** — The singers' families, the Levites' towns, and the other tribes, including a short note about Ephraim, who grieved many days when some of his sons were killed in a raid, and then named a new son for that sorrow. The family of Saul closes chapter 8.
- **Reader 5: 1 Chronicles 9:1–3** (focal passage) — All Israel is recorded; Judah went into exile for its breach of faith; and the first to return settle in their towns and in Jerusalem.
- **Leader summary of 1 Chronicles 9:4–44** — The returned families, priests, Levites, and gatekeepers, and the family of Saul repeated as a bridge to next week's story.

Anchor Verses (ESV)

> **1 Chronicles 4:9:** Jabez was more honorable than his brothers; and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain."
>
> **1 Chronicles 4:10:** Jabez called upon the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from harm so that it might not bring me pain!" And God granted what he asked.
>
> **1 Chronicles 5:25:** But they broke faith with the God of their fathers, and whored after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them.
>
> **1 Chronicles 6:31:** These are the men whom David put in charge of the service of song in the house of the LORD after the ark rested there.
>
> **1 Chronicles 9:1:** So all Israel was recorded in genealogies, and these are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel. And Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their breach of faith.

Teaching Narrative: The Tribes Gathered Around Worship

1. A Name of Pain, a Prayer Answered (1 Chronicles 4:9–10)

In the middle of a list, one man calls on God. Jabez's name was a burden; his prayer was a humble cry for blessing and protection, and God heard.

2. Trust and Breach of Faith (1 Chronicles 5:18–26)

The eastern tribes trusted God and were helped; later they broke faith and were exiled. Both are recorded side by side as a lesson.

3. Worship at the Center (1 Chronicles 6:1–81)

Levi stands in the middle of the tribes. David's singers are named here, before David's story is even told. Worship is the heart of Chronicles.

4. All Israel (1 Chronicles 7:1–8:40)

The northern tribes are included, even though their kingdom fell long before. The returned community is the continuation of all Israel.

5. Recorded, Exiled, and Returned (1 Chronicles 9:1–34)

The exile is named honestly, and then the list of the returned begins. God brought his people home, and worship resumed with priests, Levites, and gatekeepers.

6. A Bridge to the Story (1 Chronicles 9:35–44)

Saul's family is repeated to lead into Saul's death and David's kingship next week.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.4)

> **1.4 Q1:** Jabez's mother named him for pain, yet he "was more honorable than his brothers" (4:9). What does his story say to people who feel defined by a painful start?

1.4 Q2: Jabez prayed that God would bless him, be with him, and keep him from harm, "And God granted what he asked" (4:10). What do you notice about what he asked for and how he asked?

1.4 Q3: The eastern tribes trusted God in battle (5:20), but later "they broke faith with the God of their fathers" (5:25). Why do you think faithfulness in one season does not guarantee it in the next?

1.4 Q4: Before David's story is even told, Chronicles names the men he "put in charge of the service of song in the house of the LORD" (6:31). Why do you think Chronicles places worship at the center of who God's people are?

1.4 Q5: Chapter 9 names the exile plainly and then lists the people who came home (9:1–3). What does it mean for you that God's story does not stop at failure?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.4 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 20 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 20 minutes. Guided Scripture Reading with brief summaries, 6 minutes; Anchor Verses and Teaching Narrative, 4 minutes; discussion, 10 minutes (about 2 minutes per question).
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Have readers take 4:9–10, 5:18–20, 5:25–26, 6:31–32, and 9:1–3. Summarize the rest yourself. Jabez's prayer is well known, so expect strong opinions; steer toward what the text actually says.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q1**: What did his name mean? What changed? What painful label do people carry today?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q2**: What four things did he ask? To whom did he pray? What would a humble prayer for help sound like from you?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q3**: What did they do in the battle? What did they do later? Where do you need to stay faithful after a season of victory?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q4**: Where is Levi in the lists? Whom did David appoint? What place does worship have in your week?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.4 Q5**: What caused the exile? Who came back? Where have you seen God bring someone home after failure?
- **LEADER FLAG 2: Jabez's prayer (4:9–10)**
  - Avoid prosperity or formula readings that treat the prayer as a key to wealth. Present it as a humble cry for God's blessing, presence, and protection from a man whose life began in pain.

- **LEADER FLAG 3: Judgment in the lists (2:3; 5:25–26; 7:21–22)**
  - Paraphrase briefly. Do not speculate about why particular people died. Ephraim's grief (7:21–23) may touch members who have lost children; acknowledge it gently if it comes up.
- **LEADER FLAG 4: Exile and return (9:1–34)**
  - Members who are immigrants, refugees, or far from home may connect deeply with a returned people. Affirm their belonging in the church, and let them share if they wish.
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not read chapters 4–9 aloud in full. Do not turn 4:10 into a prayer formula for success.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Jabez does not appear anywhere else in Scripture; his story is unique to Chronicles. The exile of the eastern tribes (5:26) corresponds to the Assyrian campaigns described in 2 Kings 15:29 and 17:6; Chronicles explains it with its own key word, "broke faith." Where Chronicles differs from Kings: Kings records the fall of the north at length (2 Kings 17), while Chronicles mentions it in a sentence and still includes the northern tribes in "all Israel." 1 Chronicles 9:2–34 closely parallels Nehemiah 11:3–19.
- **Ancient Near Eastern Research Notes:** In the ancient Near East a name often recorded the circumstances of a birth or a parent's prayer, so a name like Jabez could feel like a lifelong label. Persian rulers allowed some exiled peoples to return and restore local temples, which is the world of 1 Chronicles 9.
- **Hebrew Word Study:**
  - 'Otsev (עֹצֶב), "pain," in 4:9. It sounds like the name Jabez. In this movement it shows a name of pain becoming a story of answered prayer.
  - Qara' (קָרָא), "called upon," in 4:10. It means to pray. In this movement it shows that even in a list of names, God hears one person's cry.
  - Batach (בָּטַח), "trusted," in 5:20. In this movement it describes the eastern tribes' faith in battle and sets up the contrast with their later breach of faith.
  - Ma'al (מַעַל), "breach of faith," in 5:25 and 9:1. In this movement it explains both the eastern tribes' exile and Judah's, so the lists end with an honest reason for the exile and then with a return.
  - Meshorerim (מְשֹׁרְרִים), "singers," in 6:33, with the "service of song" in 6:31–32. In this movement it shows that worship stands at the center of the tribes, before David's story is told.

Section 1.5

Canonical Horizon: The Genealogy That Leads to Christ

Tracing the Thread Across Scripture

The family tree that runs from Adam through Abraham and David to the returned exiles points forward to Jesus, the Son of David, whose genealogy opens the New Testament and in whom every believer's name is written in heaven. Turn to each passage as the connections are traced.

1. The Book of the Genealogy (Matthew 1:1–17)

The New Testament opens as Chronicles does, with a family tree. Matthew runs from Abraham through David and the deportation to Babylon to Jesus, the Son of David.

2. Back to Adam (Luke 3:23–38)

Luke traces Jesus' line back to Adam, as Chronicles begins with Adam. Jesus belongs to all humanity.

3. Surprising Names (Matthew 1:3, 5)

Tamar and Ruth appear in Jesus' genealogy too. Grace runs through ordinary and broken families.

4. Enrolled in Heaven (Luke 10:20; Revelation 21:27)

Jesus told his disciples to rejoice that their names are written in heaven. Those written in the Lamb's book of life enter the city of God.

5. Children of God Through Faith (Galatians 3:26–29)

In Christ, people from every background become Abraham's offspring and heirs according to the promise.

Anchor Verse (ESV)

> **1 Chronicles 9:1:** So all Israel was recorded in genealogies, and these are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel. And Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their breach of faith.

Group Discussion Questions (Section 1.5)

1.5 Q1: Matthew opens the New Testament with Jesus' genealogy, running through David and the exile (Matthew 1:1–17). How does 1 Chronicles 1–9 help you read that family tree?

1.5 Q2: Jesus told his disciples to "rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). How does that change the way we think about belonging and identity?

1.5 Q3: Paul says that if you belong to Christ, "then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (Galatians 3:29). What does it mean for believers from every background to be written into this family?

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.5 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 12 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 12 minutes. Canonical Horizon teaching, 5 minutes; discussion, 7 minutes.
- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Assign participants to look up Matthew 1:1–17, Luke 3:23–38, Luke 10:17–20, and Galatians 3:26–29 ahead of time.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.5 Q1**: Where does Matthew start? What three turning points does he mark? What does that say about Jesus?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.5 Q2**: What were the disciples excited about? What did Jesus point them to instead? Where do you look for identity?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.5 Q3**: Who is included? What do heirs receive? How should that shape the way your group welcomes others?

- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not try to reconcile the Matthew and Luke genealogies in the session; mention that study Bibles explain the main views.
- **Additional Research Notes:** Matthew 1:17 divides the generations into three groups of fourteen: Abraham to David, David to the deportation to Babylon, and the deportation to Christ. Matthew 1:12 names Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) and Zerubbabel, the same names that carry David's line in 1 Chronicles 3:17–19. Matthew and Luke trace different lines between David and Jesus; common explanations include one line through Joseph and one through Mary, or a legal line and a natural line.

Personal & Group Application (Head, Heart, Hands)

HEAD	Chronicles opens with nine chapters of names that link a returned people to Adam, Abraham, Israel, and David, with Levi's worship at the center and a few short stories of answered prayer and unfaithfulness.
HEART	In Christ, our names are written in heaven, and God's story does not stop at failure.
HANDS	Faith calls on the LORD in need, stays faithful after victory, and passes on the story of God's faithfulness.

Section 1.6

Application, Looking Ahead, and Closing Prayer

Application

Take a few minutes to move this week's study into everyday life. Discuss these three questions together and write down what you want to remember:

1.6 Q1: Where do you most need to remember that your identity rests in God's family rather than in your past or your circumstances?

1.6 Q2: Like Jabez, what is one need you will bring humbly to God this week?

1.6 Q3: Who in the next generation could you tell a story of God's faithfulness to this week?

Looking Ahead to Next Week

Recap: In Week 1, the genealogies told a returned people that they belong to a story running from Adam through David, that God hears those who call on him, and that the exile was not the end.

Transition: The narrative now begins, with the death of Saul and all Israel gathering to make David king.

Week 2 Overview — All Israel Gathers to David (1 Chronicles 10:1–12:40): Movement 1, Saul's Fall and David Made King (10:1–11:9), covers Saul's death and its reason, David anointed by all Israel, and the capture of Jerusalem. Movement 2, David's Mighty Men and Willing Helpers (11:10–12:40), covers the warriors and the tribes who came to David with a whole heart. The Canonical Horizon traces the gathering of all God's people to the Son of David.

Focal Readings to Preview

- 1 Chronicles 10:13–14
- 1 Chronicles 11:1–9
- 1 Chronicles 11:15–19
- 1 Chronicles 12:16–18
- 1 Chronicles 12:32
- 1 Chronicles 12:38–40

My One Concrete Step for the Week Ahead

Write down or name aloud the specific rhythm, boundary, or conversation you want to practice before next week's gathering:

Closing Prayer

Close your time together by inviting each person to share a one-sentence takeaway or prayer request, then pray together along these lines:

Closing Group Prayer

God of every generation, you made the first man, and you have kept your promises from Adam until now. Thank you for choosing Abraham and David, and for preserving David's line even through the exile. Comfort any here who carry a painful family story; remind them that they belong to you. Forgive us for our own breaches of faith. Thank you that you hear those who call on you, as you heard Jabez. Thank you for Jesus, the Son of David, in whom our names are written in heaven. Help us live this week as people who belong to you. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

◆ LEADER GUIDE OVERLAY — SECTION 1.6 · SECTION PACING TARGET: 9 MINUTES

- **Pacing & Time Target:** 9 minutes. Application and questions, 5 minutes; Looking Ahead and Focal Readings, 2 minutes; Concrete Step and Closing Prayer, 2 minutes.

- **Facilitation Cues & Follow-Up Probes:**
  - Use silent reflection for 1.6 Q1. Mention that Week 2 begins with Saul's death in battle, which will be retold briefly, and that anyone affected by suicide or a loss in their family is welcome to talk with you beforehand.
  - Follow-up probe for **1.6 Q1**: What tends to define you? What does God say about you in Christ? How would believing that change your week?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.6 Q2**: What is the need? How will you ask? What would humble trust look like here?
  - Follow-up probe for **1.6 Q3**: Who comes to mind? What story will you tell? When will you tell it?
- **Pitfalls to Steer Around:** Do not turn 1.6 Q2 into a promise that God will grant every request in the way we ask.
- **Additional Research Notes:** In Week 2, Saul's death is explained with the same word that explained the exile, "breach of faith" (10:13; compare 9:1), so the genealogies lead directly into the story.