

**June 12<sup>th</sup> 2005: Overview of O.T. : 1&2 Chronicles: Learning from the past:**  
**2Chron 36:15-23**

**Last week....end of 2 Kings.....and it would seem.....Nation of Israel      finished  
 Captured by the mighty Babylonian Empire.....HER capital Jerusalem....destroyed  
 Her glorious Temple.....Her people taken far away**

**But Israel was no normal Nation.....This was the People of God**  
 And 70 years later.....as God had predicted thro.....THEIR new Ruler....King Persia  
 Sends whoever wishes.....back to their land.....with instructions to rebuild

## SO

**In 538BC Zerubbabel** ....a prince of Judah....leads 49,897 Jews...out of 2 or 3 million  
 ..back to Jerusalem

In 536 the foundation of the Temple is laid  
 In 534 work ceases because of opposition

**The prophets** Haggai / Zechariah exhort the people to begin again...And in 520 they do  
 This time the opposition fails.....**And in 515 BC**....Temple is completed

**In 457 (81yrs).....**Ezra the Priest returns with a smaller group .....to Jerusalem  
 And what he finds disturbs him greatly

**The Temple is built.....**but spiritually and morally the people are very low  
 There is no wall around.....**They are still** under the rule....foreign Emperor  
 And the people and the priests....broken God's law.....by intermarrying

**They are but a shadow of the powerful Nation they once were...**  
 under King David and King Solomon

...and as **Ezra the**.....seeks to inspire them again....to trust and believe in Almighty..  
 He is met by dispondancy.....distress.....dispair

**He knows the questions they are asking.....QUESTIONS LIKE ➔**  
 Is God still interested in us?....Are His promises still in force ?  
 Now we have no Davidic King....and are ruled by....Do God's promises to David still

**And in response to such questions**.....Ezra begins to preach.....now know as 1&2  
A sermon which shows from their history

THAT GOD'S POWER TO KEEP THEM  
THAT GOD VALUES AND BLESSES OBEDIENT TRUST  
THAT GOD HAS NOT FINISHED WITH HIS PEOPLE YET

**Later on we will sing.....Days of Elijah**

It does a similar thing

***Look at the first verse*.....EVEN the God power may at times seem absent  
He is still the same God who worked thro.....And He will work the same**

**So 1&2 Chronicles reveals God's Power to restore and to keep His people**

Beginning with the reign of their first king Saul.....we see the story unfolding  
Through the good times and the bad times

Accounts of them conquering.....of being conquered  
Records of great kings and of hopeless kings

Of righteous times.....and exceedingly wicked times....Obedience & disobedience  
Strength and weaknesses.....Some successes and many horrible failures

**Of a Nation split in two by civil war**.....Yet of a Kingly Line.....that of David  
Which was miraculously preserved....Despite...ongoing attacks of the evil one

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**God's hand had never let them go**.....God's power had kept...thru rocky times  
God's grace had restored them ....out of misery & heartbreak  
**Would do so again**

Even in this time of suffering and despair.....He was still preparing them for His purposes

**And that truth has never changed**  
And in Christ Jesus.....it is true for you this morning

**Whatever you may be going thro.....** You can reply on God's power to keep you.  
He has done so in your past...**Even using the broken times....**make you more beautiful

*(More Stories From the Heart.....p220.....Saving the broken pieces..)*

**1 & 2 Chronicles also reveals how God values Obedient Trust**

**Ezra was facing** God's people who had sin in their lives.....had to be dealt with  
Before the blessings could flow  
They had to take the hard step of obedience.....And of trust

**So thro this account of their history.....**Ezra highlights the times....sin & disob  
Has led to things going wrong  
**How God is not mocked.....**What they had sowed .....also reaped

**But He also** emphasises the times when Kings like David.....Solomon.....Hezekiah  
Had done what was right.....and how they had been blessed

**And how** Hezekiah and the people.....in times of real National danger and stress  
Had chosen to obey God.....rather than give in to evil  
And how God had honoured that trust.....miraculously intervened on their behalf

**Ezra knew that God's People were faced with a huge choice.....**  
They had to turn from the sin in their lives.....and that meant putting away.....

**But if they did** that...their history showed them that God would bless....wonderful way

**It is always hard to change.....**To recognize sin in our lives.....disobedience  
A WRONG DIRECTION.....And to do something about it  
But until we do.....we rob ourselves of God's blessing....God's direction....

(A Xtian writer tells.....27 sailboat.....caught in a very dangerous storm when husband noticed that the anchor.....Without waiting to put on.....he went.....and as the waves crashed over him it was vital for his safety....kept the boat on course  
But she was so concerned over her husband.....her focus was on him....What she would do if overboard.....

She writes:- The sound of my husband's voice shouting to me through the storm broke the hold fear had on me and snapped me back to reason. "Get back on course! Point her toward the marker!"

Prying my thoughts off my husband and setting my sights back to the marker was the most difficult order I have ever been called to obey. It was against all my instincts to turn my back on what seemed to be the need of the moment, and trust the rules of the water. As I heeded Bud's command, however, I was able to get us back on course. Bud refastened the anchor and we were once again headed in the right direction.

Sometimes when everything is going wrong we are tempted to turn away from God and put our focus on other things. Sin can so easily enter our lives at that moment and it's so hard to turn back to God...To obey Him and trust Him first, but when we do, then He takes us once more along the right „the safe...and eventually, the most blessed path.)

**Then Finally Ezra used 1&2 Chronicles to remind them.....**  
**That God Had Not Finished with His people**

**Despite all they were going through**

Despite their fears and insecurity as a Nation  
 God had a future for them.....and He would bring it to pass

**Turn with me to 2 Chronicles 36:15-**

It tells us about the dreadful fall of Jerusalem.....because the people had not listened  
 The exile into Babylon

**But then the Lord acts**

22-23.....

**That's the** wonderful thing about our God.....He loves us so much....never let us go  
 He is always near us.....ready to rescue us.....To work His glory in our lives

To forgive us .....To lift us out of the miry clay....set our feet upon the Rock...  
 To turn our mourning into dancing ....Our tears into Joy

**(Kay Arthur.....**how as a little girl she was very close to her Father....Whenever  
 ....would run to Daddy.....From More Stories For The Heart,,p266)

