

## David's Final Decrees—Divisions of the Levites (c. 971t–970t BC)

### 1 Chronicles 23

#### Introductory Statement

1 Now David *was* old and full of days. And he made Solomon his son king over Israel. [*Chronicles does not record Adonijah's attempted coup d'état or Solomon's first crowning; however, 1 Chronicles 29:22 does make tacit reference to the first crowning when it says that Solomon was made king for a "second time".*]

#### Divisions of the Levites

2 And he assembled all the commanders of Israel and the priests and the Levites.

3 And the Levites thirty years old and above were counted, and their number according to their head count for the men *was* thirty-eight thousand.

4 Of these, *David said*, "Twenty-four thousand *are* to direct the work of the house of Yahweh, along with six thousand judges and officials,

5 four thousand gatekeepers, *and* four thousand offering praise with the instruments that I have made for praise."

6 And David organized them *in* divisions according to the sons of Levi: to Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

#### Gershon

7 For the Gershonites *were* Ladan and Shimei.

8 The sons of Ladan: Jehiel the chief and Zetham and Joel, three.

9 The sons of Shimei: Shelomoth, Haziel, and Haran, three. These *were* the heads of the families of Ladan.

10 And the sons of Shimei: Jahath, Zina, Jeush, and Beriah; these four *were* the sons of Shimei.

11 And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second, but Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons. They were enrolled as one for the house of a father.

#### Kohath

12 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four.

13 The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses. And Aaron was set apart to consecrate the most holy things. He and his sons *were* to burn offerings forever before Yahweh to serve him and to bless in his name forever.

14 But Moses the man of God *and* his sons were reckoned among the tribe of Levi.

15 The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer.

16 The sons of Gershom: Shebuel the chief.

17 And the sons of Eliezer were Rehabiah, the head. And Eliezer had no other sons, but the sons of Rehabiah were very many.

18 The sons of Izhar: Shelomith the chief.

19 The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.

20 The sons of Uzziel: Micah the chief and Isshiah the second.

#### Merari

21 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar and Kish.

22 And Eleazar died, and he did not have sons, but only daughters. And the sons of Kish, their relatives, married them.

23 The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

24 These *were* the sons of Levi according to the house of their fathers, the heads of the families, according to their enrollment, by the number of the names, according to their head count, *who were to* do the work of the service of the house of Yahweh, from twenty years old and above.

#### A Change in the Nature of Levitical Service (Temple vs. Tabernacle)

25 For David said, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, has given rest to his people, and he dwells in Jerusalem forever.

26 And also, the Levites do not *need* to carry the tabernacle and all its vessels for its service."

#### Non-Priestly Assignments

27 For by the last words of David, they *are* the number of the sons of Levi, from twenty years old and above.

28 For their station *was* to assist the sons of Aaron with the service of the house of Yahweh, over the courtyards, over the chambers, and over the cleansing of all the sanctified objects, and *with* the work of the service of the house of God,

29 and with the rows of bread, the flour, the grain offering, the wafers of unleavened bread, the baked offering, the offering mixed with oil, and for all the amounts and measurements.

30 And *they were* to stand every morning, thanking and praising Yahweh, and likewise in the evening,

31 and for every burnt offering offered to Yahweh, on Sabbaths, on new moon festivals, and at the appointed feasts, according to the customary number required of them, regularly before Yahweh.

32 And they shall keep the responsibility of the tent of assembly, the responsibility of the sanctified objects, and the responsibility of

the sons of Aaron, their brothers, to serve the house of Yahweh.

### David's Final Decrees—Divisions of the Sons of Aaron (c. 971t–970t BC)

1 Chronicles 24:1–19

1 And as for the sons of Aaron, *these were* their divisions. The sons of Aaron *were* Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.  
 2 And Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and they had no sons, so Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests.  
 3 And David, with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them according to their appointments for their service.  
 4 And more sons of Eleazar were found as heads of the men than the sons of Ithamar, so they divided them to the sons of Eleazar to *be* sixteen heads over the house of the fathers, and to the sons of Ithamar over the house of the fathers *were* eight heads.  
 5 They divided them by lot all alike, for they were commanders of the sanctuary and commanders of God from among the sons of Eleazar and the sons of Ithamar.  
 6 And Shemaiah the son of Nethanel, the scribe, from the Levites, recorded them before the king, the princes, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and the heads of the families of the priests and Levites, one father's house drawn by Lot for Eleazar and one drawn by lot for Ithamar.  
 7 And the first lot went out to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah,  
 8 the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim,  
 9 the fifth to Malkijah, the sixth to Mijamin,  
 10 the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah, [cf. [Luke 1:5](#)]  
 11 the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shekaniah,  
 12 the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim,  
 13 the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab,  
 14 the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer,  
 15 the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Ha-Pizzaz,  
 16 the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Ezekiel,  
 17 the twenty-first to Jakin, the twenty-second to Gamul,  
 18 the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah.  
 19 *These were* their appointments for their service to come into the house of Yahweh according to their custom by the hand of Aaron their father, as Yahweh the God of Israel had commanded him.

### David's Final Decrees—Divisions of Additional Levites (c. 971t–970t BC)

1 Chronicles 24:20–31

20 And as for the remainder of the sons of Levi: of the sons of Amram, Shubael; of the sons of Shubael, Jehdeiah.  
 21 Of Rehabiah: of the sons of Rehabiah, Isshiah the chief.  
 22 Of the Izharites, Shelomoth; of the sons Shelomoth, Jahath.  
 23 Of the sons of Jeriah, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth.  
 24 The sons of Uzziel, Micah; the sons of Micah, Shamur.  
 25 The brother of Micah, Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah, Zechariah.  
 26 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi; the sons of Jaaziah, his son.  
 27 The sons of Merari: of Jaaziah, his son, Shoham, Zakkur, and Ibri.  
 28 Of Mahli: Eleazar, who had no sons.  
 29 Of Kish: the sons of Kish, Jerahmeel.  
 30 And the sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. *These were* the sons of the Levites according to the house of their fathers.  
 31 And lots were also cast *for* these, just as their brothers, the sons of Aaron, before David the king, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the heads of the families for the priests and for the Levites the fathers, on the principle of the chief and younger brother alike.

### David's Final Decrees—Divisions of the Musicians (c. 971t–970t BC)

1 Chronicles 25

#### The Music Leaders' Sons

1 And David and the commanders of the army set apart for the service the sons of Asaph, *of* Heman, and *of* Jeduthun, who prophesied with stringed instruments, with harps, and with cymbals. And their inventory of the men of the work *and* for their duty was:  
 2 for the sons of Asaph: Zakkur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asarelah, sons of Asaph, under the hand of Asaph, who prophesied under the hands of the king.

3 Of Jeduthun, the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiiah, Heshabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with the stringed instrument with thanksgiving and praise to Yahweh.

4 Of Heman, the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, Mahazioth.

5 All these *were* sons to Heman, the seer of the king, according to the words of God to raise a horn. And God had given to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.

6 All these *were* under the direction of their father in the music of the house of Yahweh, with cymbals, harps, and stringed instruments for the service of the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman *were* under the direction of the king.

7 And their number, along with their brothers, trained singers, all the skilled people for Yahweh, were two hundred and eighty-eight.

#### Responsibilities of the Musicians

8 And they cast lots *for* responsibilities on the principle of small and great alike, teacher with student.

9 And the first lot for Asaph went out to Joseph; the second to Gedaliahu; he and his brothers and his twelve sons.

10 The third, Zakkur, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

11 the fourth to Izri, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

12 the fifth, Nethaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

13 the sixth, Bukkiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

14 the seventh, Jesarelah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

15 the eighth, Jeshaiiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

16 the ninth, Mattaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

17 the tenth, Shimei, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

18 eleventh, Azarel, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

19 the twelfth to Hashabiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

20 to *the* thirteenth, Shubael, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

21 to *the* fourteenth, Mattithiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

22 to *the* fifteenth, to Jeremoth, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

23 to *the* sixteenth, to Hananiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

24 to *the* seventeenth, to Joshbekashah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

25 to *the* eighteenth, to Hanani, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

26 to *the* nineteenth, to Mallothi, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

27 to *the* twentieth, to Eliathah, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

28 to *the* twenty-first, to Hothir, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

29 to *the* twenty-second, to Giddalti, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

30 to *the* twenty-third, to Mahazioth, his sons and his brothers, twelve;

31 to *the* twenty-fourth, to Romamti-ezer, his sons and his brothers, twelve.

### David's Final Decrees—Divisions of the Gatekeepers (c. 971t–970t BC)

1 Chronicles 26:1–19

#### Genealogical Based List of Gatekeepers

1 As for the working groups of the gatekeepers: of the Korahites, Meshelemiah the son of Kore, from the sons of Asaph.

2 And Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah the firstborn, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth,

3 Elam the fifth, Jehohana the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh.

4 And Obed-Edom had sons: Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sachar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth,

5 Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peullethai the eighth; for God blessed him.

6 And to Shemaiah his son were sons born who *were* rulers in the house of their father, for they *were* mighty warriors of ability.

7 The sons of Shemaiah: Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad, whose brothers *were* sons of ability, Elihu and Semakiah.

8 All these from the sons of Obed-Edom, they and their sons, and their brothers *were* men of ability with strength for service; sixty-two of Obed-Edom.

9 And Meshelemiah had sons and brothers, sons of ability, eighteen.

10 And Hosah, from the sons of Merari, had sons: Shimri the chief (though he was not firstborn, his father appointed him as chief),

11 Hilkiyah the second, Tabaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brothers of Hosah *were* thirteen.

#### Responsibilities of the Gatekeepers

12 These working groups of gatekeepers, corresponding to the chief men, had responsibilities like their brothers to serve in the house of Yahweh.

13 And they cast lots, small and great alike, by their fathers' houses, for their gates.

14 And the lot fell to the east to Shelemiah. As for Zechariah his son, a wise counselor, they cast lots. And his lot came out for the

north.

15 To Obed-Edom *went out* the south, and to his sons, the storehouses.

16 For Shuppim and Hosah *it went out* for the west, at the gate of Shalleketh, on the road that goes up, guard for guard.

17 To the east, six Levites; to the north, four daily; to the south, four daily; and at the storerooms, two *by two*.

18 For the court to the west, four at the road, two at the court.

19 These *were* the working groups of the gatekeepers among the sons of the Korahites and among the sons of Merari.

### David's Final Decrees—Treasurers and Other Officials (c. 971t–970t BC)

1 Chronicles 26:20–32

#### Treasurers and Storehouses

20 And of the Levites: Ahijah *was* over the treasuries of the house of God and over the treasuries of the sanctified objects.

21 The sons of Ladan: the sons of the Gershonites belonging to Ladan, the heads of the families belonging to Ladan the Gershonite: Jehieli.

22 The sons of Jehieli, Zetham and Joel his brother, *were* over the treasuries of the house of Yahweh.

23 Of the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, *and* the Ozzielites:

24 Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, *was* commander over the treasuries.

25 And his brothers: from Eliezer *were* Rehabiah his son, and Jeshaiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zikri his son, and Shelomoth his son.

26 That Shelomoth and his brothers *were* over all the treasuries of the sanctified objects that King David and the heads of the families to the commanders of thousands and hundreds and the commanders of the army had dedicated.

27 From the battles and from the spoil they had dedicated *these things* to strengthen the house of Yahweh.

28 And all that Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah had dedicated—all the dedicated gifts *were* under the hand of Shelomith and his brothers.

#### Other Officials

29 For the Izharites: Kenaniah and his sons *were appointed* to the duties outside of Israel as officials and as judges.

30 For the Hebronites: Hashabiah and his brothers, one thousand seven hundred men of ability, *were* over the administration of Israel beyond the Jordan westward, for all the work of Yahweh and for the service of the king.

31 For the Hebronites: Jeriah the chief of the Hebronites for the genealogy for the families. (In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were examined, and there was found among them mighty warriors of strength at Jazer in Gilead.)

32 And his brothers, sons of ability, *were* two thousand seven hundred heads of the families, and King David appointed them over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, for every matter of God and matter of the king.

### David's Final Decrees—Civil and Military Arrangements (c. 971t–970t BC)

1 Chronicles 27

#### The Commanders of the Monthly Relays

1 And as for the number of the Israelites, the heads of families, the commanders of thousands and hundreds, and their officials who serve the king in all matters of the working groups that came and went, month by month, throughout all the months of the year, each working group: twenty-four thousand.

2 Over the first working group for the first month: Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel. And *he was* over his working group *of* twenty-four thousand.

3 From the sons of Perez *who was* the chief of the commanders of the armies for the first month.

4 And over the working groups of the second month: Dodai the Ahohite and his working group, and Mikloth the commander. And *he was* over his working group *of* twenty-four thousand.

5 The third commander of the army for the third month *was* Benaiah son of Jehoiada the chief priest. And *he was* over his working group *of* twenty-four thousand.

6 This *was* Benaiah *who was* a mighty warrior of thirty, and over the thirty and his working group *was* Ammizabad his son.

7 The fourth, for the fourth month, *was* Asahel the brother of Joab and his son Zebadiah after him. And *he was* over his working group *of* twenty-four thousand.

8 The fifth, for the fifth month, the commander *was* Shamhuth the Izrahite. And *he was* over his working group *of* twenty-four thousand.

9 The sixth, for the sixth month, *was* Ira the son of Ikkes the Tekoite. And *he was* over his working group *of* twenty-four thousand.

10 The seventh, for the seventh month, *was* Helez the Pelonite, from the sons of Ephraim. And *he was* over his working group *of* twenty-four thousand.

11 The eighth, for the eighth month, *was* Sibbecai the Hushathite of the Zerahites. And *he was* over his working group *of* twenty-four thousand.

12 The ninth, for the ninth month, *was* Abiezer the Anathothite of the Benjamites. And *he was* over his working group of twenty-four thousand.

13 The tenth, for the tenth month, *was* Maharai the Netophathite of the Zerahites. And *he was* over his working group of twenty-four thousand.

14 The eleventh, for the eleventh month, *was* Benaiah the Pirathonite from the sons of Ephraim. And *he was* over his working group of twenty-four thousand.

15 The twelfth, for the twelfth month, *was* Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel. And *he was* over his working group of twenty-four thousand.

#### **The Officers of the Tribes**

16 And over the tribes of Israel, for the Reubenites: the commander *was* Eliezer the son of Zikri. For the Simeonites: Shephatiah the son of Maacah.

17 For Levi: Hashabiah the son of Kemuel. For Aaron, Zadok.

18 For Judah: Elihu, from the brothers of David. For Issachar: Omri the son of Michael.

19 For Zebulun: Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah. For Naphtali: Jerimoth the son of Azriel.

20 For the Ephraimites: Hoshea the son of Azaziah. For the half-tribe of Manasseh: Joel the son of Pedaiiah.

21 For the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead: Iddo the son of Zechariah. For Benjamin: Jaasiel son of Abner.

22 For Dan: Azarel the son of Jeroham. These *were* the commanders of the tribes of Israel.

23 And David did not take a census of those twenty years old or under because Yahweh promised to make Israel more numerous than the stars of heaven.

24 Joab the son of Zeruiah began to count, but he did not finish. But wrath came upon Israel concerning this, and the number was not included in the chronicles of King David.

#### **The Stewards of Crown Property**

25 And over the treasury rooms of the king *was* Azmaveth the son of Adiel. And over the treasuries in the country, in the cities, in the unwallled villages, and in the towers *was* Jonathan the son of Uzziah.

26 And over those who did the work in the field to till the soil *was* Ezri the son of Kelub.

27 And over the vineyards *was* Shemei the Ramathite. And over the produce in the vineyards for the storehouses of the wine *was* Zabdi the Shiphmite.

28 And over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that *were* in the Shephelah *was* Baal-Hanan the Gederite. And over the treasury houses of olive oil *was* Joash.

29 And over the cattle pastured in the Sharon *was* Shitrai the Sharonite. And over the cattle in the valley *was* Shaphat the son of Adlai.

30 And over the camels *was* Obil the Ishmaelite. And over the female donkeys *was* Jehdeiah the Meronothite. And over the sheep *was* Jaziz the Hagrite.

31 All of these *were* officials of the property of King David.

#### **David's Personal Counselors**

32 And Jehonathan the uncle of David *was* an adviser, a man of insight, and he was a scribe. And Jehiel the son of Hachmoni *was* with the sons of the king.

33 And Ahithophel *was* an adviser to the king, and Hushai the Arkite *was* a friend of the king.

34 And after Ahithophel *came* Jehoiada, the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar. And Joab *was* the commander of the king's army.

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#### **Chronological Notes**

- 1) Although Chronicles does not record the attempted coup d'état by Adonijah or Solomon's first crowning, it makes tacit reference to the events of 1 Kings 1:28–40 when it says that Solomon was made king for the "second time" (cf. 1 Chr 29:22). According to the MT<sup>1</sup>, Solomon was later crowned for a second time, ostensibly as a more formal sequel to the rather hurried

<sup>1</sup> The words are lacking in LXX<sup>B</sup> and P, and some commentators dismiss them as a later gloss (cf. Sara Japhet, "I & II Chronicles," *The Old Testament Library*, 514). Williamson, while commenting "this may be so," offers an "alternative explanation" and posits the position taken here, i.e., 1 Chr 29:22 makes tacit reference to 1 Kgs 1:28–40 (cf. H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 187).

ceremony described in 1 Kings 1:28–40.<sup>2</sup> In support of the MT, it should be noted that there are substantial differences between the account in 1 Kings 1 and 1 Chronicles 29. “The great public assembly and the thousands of sacrifices (1 Chr 29:21) would have been impossible in the context of the ceremony at Gihon. The Chronicler was in any case not ignorant of the earlier account. There are several allusions to it, including Solomon’s appointment as ruler (v. 22; ‘prince’, NRSV, RSV, REB, NEB; cf. 1 Kgs 1:35), and the pledged ‘allegiance’ (v. 24, NRSV, RSV) of all David’s sons. The framework of 1 Chronicles 22–29 is also based on 1 Kings 2:1–12, and verse 23 follows 1 Kings 2:12 closely. Finally, Solomon could not have been involved in David’s temple preparations unless his succession was secure. In the light of all this, it seems more probable that Solomon was actually anointed twice (cf. David’s three anointings, 1 Sam. 16:13; 2 Sam. 2:4; 5:3). Typically, Chronicles has replaced the rather personal account in Kings by emphasizing all Israel’s role in the succession (vv. 21, 23, 25, 26).”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> This view is held by many commentators: Alfred Edersheim, *History of Judah and Israel from the Birth of Solomon to the Reign of Ahab*, 55–56; H. L. Ellison, “1 and II Chronicles,” *The New Bible Commentary*, 382–83; Frederick J. Mabie, “1 and 2 Chronicles,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Rev. Ed., 154; John A. Thompson, “1, 2 Chronicles,” *The New American Commentary*, 199 and Martin Selman, “1 Chronicles,” *Tyndale Old Testament Commentary*, 273.

<sup>3</sup> Selman, 273.