

**David's Final Decrees—Divisions of the Levites (c. 971t–970t BC)****1 Chronicles 23****Introductory Statement**

1 Now when David reached old age, he made his son Solomon king over Israel.

**Divisions of the Levites**

2 And he gathered together all the leaders of Israel with the priests and the Levites.

3 The Levites were numbered from thirty years old and upward, and their number by census of men was 38,000.

4 Of these, 24,000 were to oversee the work of the house of the LORD; and 6,000 *were* officers and judges,

5 and 4,000 *were* gatekeepers, and 4,000 *were* praising the LORD with the instruments which David made for giving praise.

6 David divided them into divisions according to the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

**Gershon**

7 Of the Gershonites *were* Ladan and Shimei.

8 The sons of Ladan *were* Jehiel the first and Zetham and Joel, three.

9 The sons of Shimei *were* Shelomoth and Haziel and Haran, three. These were the heads of the fathers' *households* of Ladan.

10 The sons of Shimei *were* Jahath, Zina, Jeush and Beriah. These four *were* the sons of Shimei.

11 Jahath was the first and Zizah the second; but Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, so they became a father's household, one class.

**Kohath**

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

13 The sons of Amram were Aaron and Moses. And Aaron was set apart to sanctify him as most holy, he and his sons forever, to burn incense before the LORD, to minister to Him and to bless in His name forever.

14 But *as for* Moses the man of God, his sons were named among the tribe of Levi.

15 The sons of Moses *were* Gershom and Eliezer.

16 The son of Gershom *was* Shebuel the chief.

17 The son of Eliezer was Rehabiah the chief; and Eliezer had no other sons, but the sons of Rehabiah were very many.

18 The son of Izhar was Shelomith the chief.

19 The sons of Hebron *were* Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third and Jekameam the fourth.

20 The sons of Uzziel *were* Micah the first and Isshiah the second.

**Merari**

21 The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli *were* Eleazar and Kish.

22 Eleazar died and had no sons, but daughters only, so their brothers, the sons of Kish, took them *as wives*.

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

24 These were the sons of Levi according to their fathers' households, *even* the heads of the fathers' *households* of those of them who were counted, in the number of names by their census, doing the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from twenty years old and upward.

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

25 For David said, "The LORD God of Israel has given rest to His people, and He dwells in Jerusalem forever.

26 Also, the Levites will no longer need to carry the tabernacle and all its utensils for its service."

**Non-Priestly Assignments**

27 For by the last words of David the sons of Levi *were* numbered from twenty years old and upward.

28 For their office is to assist the sons of Aaron with the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts and in the chambers and in the purifying of all holy things, even the work of the service of the house of God,

29 and with the showbread, and the fine flour for a grain offering, and unleavened wafers, or *what is baked in* the pan or what is well-mixed, and all measures of volume and size.

30 They are to stand every morning to thank and to praise the LORD, and likewise at evening,

31 and to offer all burnt offerings to the LORD, on the sabbaths, the new moons and the fixed festivals in the number *set* by the ordinance concerning them, continually before the LORD.

32 Thus they are to keep charge of the tent of meeting, and charge of the holy place, and charge of the sons of Aaron their relatives, for the service of the house of the LORD.

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

1 Chronicles 24:1–19

- 1 Now the divisions of the descendants of Aaron *were these*: the sons of Aaron *were* Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.
- 2 But Nadab and Abihu died before their father and had no sons. So Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests.
- 3 David, with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them according to their offices for their ministry.
- 4 Since more chief men were found from the descendants of Eleazar than the descendants of Ithamar, they divided them thus: *there were* sixteen heads of fathers' households of the descendants of Eleazar and eight of the descendants of Ithamar, according to their fathers' households.
- 5 Thus they were divided by lot, the one as the other; for they were officers of the sanctuary and officers of God, both from the descendants of Eleazar and the descendants of Ithamar.
- 6 Shemaiah, the son of Nethanel the scribe, from the Levites, recorded them in the presence of the king, the princes, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and the heads of the fathers' *households* of the priests and of the Levites; one father's household taken for Eleazar and one taken for Ithamar.
- 7 Now the first lot came out for Jehoiarib, the second for Jedaiah,
- 8 the third for Harim, the fourth for Seorim,
- 9 the fifth for Malchijah, the sixth for Mijamin,
- 10 the seventh for Hakkoz, the eighth for Abijah, [cf. [Luke 1:5](#)]
- 11 the ninth for Jeshua, the tenth for Shecaniah,
- 12 the eleventh for Eliashib, the twelfth for Jakim,
- 13 the thirteenth for Huppah, the fourteenth for Jeshebeab,
- 14 the fifteenth for Bilgah, the sixteenth for Immer,
- 15 the seventeenth for Hezir, the eighteenth for Happizez,
- 16 the nineteenth for Pethahiah, the twentieth for Jehezkel,
- 17 the twenty-first for Jachin, the twenty-second for Gamul,
- 18 the twenty-third for Delaiah, the twenty-fourth for Maaziah.
- 19 These were their offices for their ministry when *they* came in to the house of the LORD according to the ordinance *given* to them through Aaron their father, just as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

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

1 Chronicles 24:20–31

- 20 Now for the rest 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 first.
- 22 Of the Izharites, Shelomoth; of the sons of Shelomoth, Jahath.
- 23 The sons of *Hebron*: Jeriah *the first*, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth.
- 24 *Of* the sons of Uzziel, Micah; of the sons of Micah, Shamir.
- 25 The brother of Micah, Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah, Zechariah.
- 26 The sons of Merari, Mahli and Mushi; the sons of Jaaziah, Beno.
- 27 The sons of Merari: by Jaaziah *were* Beno, Shoham, Zaccur and Ibri.
- 28 By Mahli: Eleazar, who had no sons.
- 29 By Kish: the sons of Kish, Jerahmeel.
- 30 The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder and Jerimoth. These *were* the sons of the Levites according to their fathers' households.
- 31 These also cast lots just as their relatives the sons of Aaron in the presence of David the king, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the heads of the fathers' *households* of the priests and of the Levites—the head of fathers' *households* as well as those of his younger brother.

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

1 Chronicles 25

#### The Music Leaders' Sons

- 1 Moreover, David and the commanders of the army set apart for the service *some* of the sons of Asaph and of Heman and of Jeduthun, who *were* to prophesy with lyres, harps and cymbals; and the number of those who performed their service was:
- 2 Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah and Asharelah; the sons of Asaph *were* under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied under the direction of the king.
- 3 Of Jeduthun, the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiah, Shimej, Hashabiah and Mattithiah, six, under the direction of their father Jeduthun with the harp, who prophesied in giving thanks and praising the LORD.
- 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* the sons of Heman the king's seer to exalt him according to the words of God, for God gave fourteen sons and three daughters to Heman.

6 All these were under the direction of their father to sing in the house of the LORD, with cymbals, harps and lyres, for the service of the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman *were* under the direction of the king.

7 Their number who were trained in singing to the LORD, with their relatives, all who were skillful, *was* 288.

#### Responsibilities of the Musicians

8 They cast lots for their duties, all alike, the small as well as the great, the teacher *as well* as the pupil.

9 Now the first lot came out for Asaph to Joseph, the second for Gedaliah, he with his relatives and sons *were* twelve;

10 the third to Zaccur, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

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

12 the fifth to Nethaniah, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

13 the sixth to Bukkiah, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

14 the seventh to Jesharelah, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

15 the eighth to Jeshaiiah, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

16 the ninth to Mattaniah, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

17 the tenth to Shimei, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

18 the eleventh to Azarel, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

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

20 for the thirteenth, Shubael, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

21 for the fourteenth, Mattithiah, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

22 for the fifteenth to Jeremoth, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

23 for the sixteenth to Hananiah, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

24 for the seventeenth to Joshbekashah, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

25 for the eighteenth to Hanani, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

26 for the nineteenth to Mallothi, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

27 for the twentieth to Eliathah, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

28 for the twenty-first to Hothir, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

29 for the twenty-second to Giddalti, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

30 for the twenty-third to Mahazioth, his sons and his relatives, twelve;

31 for the twenty-fourth to Romamti-ezer, his sons and his relatives, twelve.

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

1 Chronicles 26:1–19

#### Genealogical Based List of Gatekeepers

1 For the divisions of the gatekeepers *there were* of the Korahites, Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph.

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

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

4 Obed-edom had sons: Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sacar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth,

5 Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh *and* Peullethai the eighth; God had indeed blessed him.

6 Also to his son Shemaiah sons were born who ruled over the house of their father, for they were mighty men of valor.

7 The sons of Shemaiah *were* Othni, Rephael, Obed and Elzabad, whose brothers, Elihu and Semachiah, were valiant men.

8 All these *were* of the sons of Obed-edom; they and their sons and their relatives *were* able men with strength for the service, 62 from Obed-edom.

9 Meshelemiah had sons and relatives, 18 valiant men.

10 Also Hosah, *one* of the sons of Merari had sons: Shimri the first (although he was not the firstborn, his father made him first),

11 Hilkiyah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth; all the sons and relatives of Hosah *were* 13.

#### Responsibilities of the Gatekeepers

12 To these divisions of the gatekeepers, the chief men, *were given* duties like their relatives to minister in the house of the LORD.

13 They cast lots, the small and the great alike, according to their fathers' households, for every gate.

14 The lot to the east fell to Shelemiah. Then they cast lots *for* his son Zechariah, a counselor with insight, and his lot came out to the north.

15 For Obed-edom *it fell* to the south, and to his sons went the storehouse.

16 For Shuppim and Hosah *it was* to the west, by the gate of Shallecheth, on the ascending highway. Guard corresponded to guard.

17 On the east there were six Levites, on the north four daily, on the south four daily, and at the storehouse two by two.

18 At the Parbar on the west *there were* four at the highway and two at the Parbar.  
 19 These were the divisions of the gatekeepers of the sons of Korah and of 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 The Levites, their relatives, had charge of the treasures of the house of God and of the treasures of the dedicated gifts.  
 21 The sons of Ladan, the sons of the Gershonites belonging to Ladan, *namely*, the Jehielites, *were* the heads of the fathers' *households*, belonging to Ladan the Gershonite.  
 22 The sons of Jehieli, Zetham and Joel his brother, had charge of the treasures of the house of the LORD.  
 23 As for the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites and the Uzzielites,  
 24 Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was officer over the treasures.  
 25 His relatives by Eliezer *were* Rehabiah his son, Jeshaiiah his son, Joram his son, Zichri his son and Shelomoth his son.  
 26 This Shelomoth and his relatives had charge of all the treasures of the dedicated gifts which King David and the heads of the fathers' *households*, the commanders of thousands and hundreds, and the commanders of the army, had dedicated.  
 27 They dedicated part of the spoil won in battles to repair the house of the LORD.  
 28 And all that Samuel the seer had dedicated and Saul the son of Kish, Abner the son of Ner and Joab the son of Zeruiah, everyone who had dedicated *anything*, *all of this* was in the care of Shelomoth and his relatives.

#### Other Officials

29 As for the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons were *assigned* to outside duties for Israel, as officers and judges.  
 30 As for the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his relatives, 1,700 capable men, had charge of the affairs of Israel west of the Jordan, for all the work of the LORD and the service of the king.  
 31 As for the Hebronites, Jerijah the chief (these Hebronites were investigated according to their genealogies and fathers' *households*, in the fortieth year of David's reign, and men of outstanding capability were found among them at Jazer of Gilead)  
 32 and his relatives, capable men, *were* 2,700 in number, heads of fathers' *households*. And King David made them overseers of the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of the Manassites concerning all the affairs of God and 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 Now *this is* the enumeration of the sons of Israel, the heads of fathers' *households*, the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, and their officers who served the king in all the affairs of the divisions which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, each division *numbering* 24,000:  
 2 Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel had charge of the first division for the first month; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 3 *He was* from the sons of Perez, *and was* chief of all the commanders of the army for the first month.  
 4 Dodai the Ahohite and his division had charge of the division for the second month, Mikloth *being* the chief officer; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 5 The third commander of the army for the third month *was* Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, *as* chief; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 6 This Benaiah *was* the mighty man of the thirty, and had charge of thirty; and over his division was Ammizabad his son.  
 7 The fourth for the fourth month *was* Asahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 8 The fifth for the fifth month *was* the commander Shamhuth the Izrahite; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 9 The sixth for the sixth month *was* Ira the son of Ikkes the Tekoite; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 10 The seventh for the seventh month *was* Helez the Pelonite of the sons of Ephraim; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 11 The eighth for the eighth month *was* Sibbecai the Hushathite of the Zerahites; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 12 The ninth for the ninth month *was* Abiezer the Anathothite of the Benjamites; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 13 The tenth for the tenth month *was* Maharai the Netophathite of the Zerahites; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 14 The eleventh for the eleventh month *was* Benaiah the Pirathonite of the sons of Ephraim; and in his division *were* 24,000.  
 15 The twelfth for the twelfth month *was* Heldai the Netophathite of Othniel; and in his division *were* 24,000.

#### The Officers of the Tribes

16 Now in charge of the tribes of Israel: chief officer for the Reubenites was Eliezer the son of Zichri; for the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maacah;  
 17 for Levi, Hashabiah the son of Kemuel; for Aaron, Zadok;  
 18 for Judah, Elihu, *one* of David's brothers; for Issachar, Omri the son of Michael;

19 for Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah; for Naphtali, Jeremoth the son of Azriel;

20 for the sons of Ephraim, 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 the son of Abner;

22 for Dan, Azarel the son of Jeroham. These *were* the princes of the tribes of Israel.

23 But David did not count those twenty years of age and under, because the LORD had said He would multiply Israel as the stars of heaven.

24 Joab the son of Zeruiah had begun to count *them*, but did not finish; and because of this, wrath came upon Israel, and the number was not included in the account of the chronicles of King David.

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

25 Now Azmaveth the son of Adiel had charge of the king's storehouses. And Jonathan the son of Uzziah had charge of the storehouses in the country, in the cities, in the villages and in the towers.

26 Ezri the son of Chelub had charge of the agricultural workers who tilled the soil.

27 Shimei the Ramathite had charge of the vineyards; and Zabdi the Shiphmite had charge of the produce of the vineyards *stored* in the wine cellars.

28 Baal-hanan the Gederite had charge of the olive and sycamore trees in the Shephelah; and Joash had charge of the stores of oil.

29 Shitrai the Sharonite had charge of the cattle which were grazing in Sharon; and Shaphat the son of Adlai had charge of the cattle in the valleys.

30 Obil the Ishmaelite had charge of the camels; and Jehdeiah the Meronothite had charge of the donkeys.

31 Jaziz the Hagrite had charge of the flocks. All these were overseers of the property which belonged to King David.

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

32 Also Jonathan, David's uncle, *was* a counselor, a man of understanding, and a scribe; and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni tutored the king's sons.

33 Ahithophel *was* counselor to the king; and Hushai the Archite *was* the king's friend.

34 Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar succeeded Ahithophel; 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 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>

<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).

<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, "I 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.