

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

1 Chronicles 23

Introductory Statement

1 When David was old and approaching the end of his life, he made his son Solomon 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 David assembled all the leaders of Israel, along with the priests and the Levites.
3 The Levites who were thirty years old and up were counted; there were 38,000 men.
4 David said, "Of these, 24,000 are to direct the work of the LORD's temple; 6,000 are to be officials and judges;
5 4,000 are to be gatekeepers; and 4,000 are to praise the LORD with the instruments I supplied for worship."
6 David divided them into groups corresponding to the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

Gershon

- 7 The Gershonites included Ladan and Shimei.
8 The sons of Ladan: Jehiel the oldest, Zetham, and Joel—three in all.
9 The sons of Shimei: Shelomoth, Haziel, and Haran—three in all. These were the leaders of the family of Ladan.
10 The sons of Shimei: Jahath, Zina, Jeush, and Beriah. These were Shimei's sons—four in all.
11 Jahath was the oldest and Zizah the second oldest. Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, so they were considered one family with one responsibility.

Kohath

- 12 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel—four in all.
13 The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses. Aaron and his descendants were chosen on a permanent basis to consecrate the most holy items, to offer sacrifices before the LORD, to serve him, and to praise his name.
14 The descendants of Moses the man of God were considered Levites.
15 The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer.
16 The son of Gershom: Shebuel the oldest.
17 The son of Eliezer was Rehabiah, the oldest. Eliezer had no other sons, but Rehabiah had many descendants.
18 The son of Izhar: Shelomith the oldest.
19 The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the oldest, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.
20 The sons of Uzziel: Micah the oldest, and Isshiah the second.

Merari

- 21 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar and Kish.
22 Eleazar died without having sons; he had only daughters. The sons of Kish, their cousins, married them.
23 The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth—three in all.
24 These were the descendants of Levi according to their families, that is, the leaders of families as counted and individually listed who carried out assigned tasks in the LORD's temple and were twenty years old and up.

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

- 25 For David said, "The LORD God of Israel has given his people rest and has permanently settled in Jerusalem.
26 So the Levites no longer need to carry the tabernacle or any of the items used in its service."

Non-Priestly Assignments

- 27 According to David's final instructions, the Levites twenty years old and up were counted.
28 Their job was to help Aaron's descendants in the service of the LORD's temple. They were to take care of the courtyards, the rooms, ceremonial purification of all holy items, and other jobs related to the service of God's temple.
29 They also took care of the bread that is displayed, the flour for offerings, the unleavened wafers, the round cakes, the mixing, and all the measuring.
30 They also stood in a designated place every morning and offered thanks and praise to the LORD. They also did this in the evening
31 and whenever burnt sacrifices were offered to the LORD on the Sabbath and at new moon festivals and assemblies. A designated number were to serve before the LORD regularly in accordance with regulations.
32 They were in charge of the meeting tent and the holy place, and helped their relatives, the descendants of Aaron, in the service of the LORD's temple.

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

1 Chronicles 24:1–19

- 1 The divisions of Aaron's descendants were as follows: The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.
- 2 Nadab and Abihu died before their father did; they had no sons. Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests.
- 3 David, Zadok (a descendant of Eleazar), and Ahimelech (a descendant of Ithamar) divided them into groups to carry out their assigned responsibilities.
- 4 The descendants of Eleazar had more leaders than the descendants of Ithamar, so they divided them up accordingly; the descendants of Eleazar had sixteen leaders, while the descendants of Ithamar had eight.
- 5 They divided them by lots, for there were officials of the holy place and officials designated by God among the descendants of both Eleazar and Ithamar.
- 6 The scribe Shemaiah son of Nethanel, a Levite, wrote down their names before the king, the officials, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech son of Abiathar, and the leaders of the priestly and Levite families. One family was drawn by lot from Eleazar, and then the next from Ithamar.
- 7 The first lot went 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 Shecaniah,
- 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 Happizez,
- 16 the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel,
- 17 the twenty-first to Jakin, the twenty-second to Gamul,
- 18 the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah.
- 19 This was the order in which they carried out their assigned responsibilities when they entered the LORD's temple, according to the regulations given them by their ancestor Aaron, just as the LORD God of Israel had instructed him.

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

1 Chronicles 24:20–31

- 20 The rest of the Levites included: Shubael from the sons of Amram, Jehdeiah from the sons of Shubael,
- 21 the firstborn Isshiah from Rehabiah and the sons of Rehabiah,
- 22 Shelomoth from the Izharites, Jahath from the sons of Shelomoth.
- 23 The sons of Hebron: Jeriah, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.
- 24 The son of Uzziel: Micah; Shamir from the sons of Micah.
- 25 The brother of Micah: Isshiah. Zechariah from the sons of Isshiah.
- 26 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The son of Jaaziah: Beno.
- 27 The sons of Merari, from Jaaziah: Beno, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri.
- 28 From Mahli: Eleazar, who had no sons.
- 29 From Kish: Jerahmeel.
- 30 The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the Levites, listed by their families.
- 31 Just like their relatives, the descendants of Aaron, they also cast lots before King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, the leaders of families, the priests, and the Levites. The families of the oldest son cast lots along with the those of the youngest.

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

1 Chronicles 25

The Music Leaders' Sons

- 1 David and the army officers selected some of the sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun to prophesy as they played stringed instruments and cymbals. The following men were assigned this responsibility:
- 2 From the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asarelah. The sons of Asaph were supervised by Asaph, who prophesied under the king's supervision.
- 3 From the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiyah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah—six in all, under supervision of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied as he played a harp, giving thanks and praise to the LORD.
- 4 From the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-Ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth.
- 5 All these were the sons of Heman, the king's prophet. God had promised him these sons in order to make him prestigious. God

gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.

6 All of these were under the supervision of their fathers; they were musicians in the LORD's temple, playing cymbals and stringed instruments as they served in God's temple. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the supervision of the king.

7 They and their relatives, all of them skilled and trained to make music to the LORD, numbered two hundred eighty-eight.

Responsibilities of the Musicians

8 They cast lots to determine their responsibilities—oldest as well as youngest, teacher as well as student.

9 The first lot went to Asaph's son Joseph and his relatives and sons—twelve in all, the second to Gedaliah and his relatives and sons—twelve in all,

10 the third to Zaccur and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

11 the fourth to Izri and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

12 the fifth to Nethaniah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

13 the sixth to Bukkiah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

14 the seventh to Jesharelah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

15 the eighth to Jeshaiiah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

16 the ninth to Mattaniah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

17 the tenth to Shimei and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

18 the eleventh to Azarel and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

19 the twelfth to Hashabiah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

20 the thirteenth to Shubael and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

21 the fourteenth to Mattithiah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

22 the fifteenth to Jerimoth and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

23 the sixteenth to Hananiah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

24 the seventeenth to Joshbekashah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

25 the eighteenth to Hanani and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

26 the nineteenth to Mallothi and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

27 the twentieth to Eliathah and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

28 the twenty-first to Hothir and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

29 the twenty-second to Giddalti and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

30 the twenty-third to Mahazith and his sons and relatives—twelve in all,

31 the twenty-fourth to Romanti-Ezer and his sons and relatives—twelve in all.

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

1 Chronicles 26:1–19

Genealogical Based List of Gatekeepers

1 The divisions of the gatekeepers: From the Korahites: Meshelemiah, son of Kore, one of the sons of Asaph.

2 Meshelemiah's sons: The firstborn Zechariah, the second Jediahel, the third Zebadiah, the fourth Jathniel,

3 the fifth Elam, the sixth Jehohanan, and the seventh Elihoenai.

4 Obed-Edom's sons: The firstborn Shemaiah, the second Jehozabad, the third Joah, the fourth Sakar, the fifth Nethanel,

5 the sixth Ammiel, the seventh Issachar, and the eighth Peullethai. (Indeed, God blessed Obed-Edom.)

6 His son Shemaiah also had sons, who were leaders of their families, for they were highly respected.

7 The sons of Shemaiah: Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad. His relatives Elihu and Semakiah were also respected.

8 All these were the descendants of Obed-Edom. They and their sons and relatives were respected men, capable of doing their responsibilities. There were sixty-two [*or sixty-eight, 1 Chr 16:38*] of them related to Obed-Edom.

9 Meshelemiah had sons and relatives who were respected—eighteen in all.

10 Hosah, one of the descendants of Merari, had sons: The firstborn Shimri (he was not actually the firstborn, but his father gave him that status),

11 the second Hilkiah, the third Tebaliah, and the fourth Zechariah. All of Hosah's sons and relatives numbered thirteen.

Responsibilities of the Gatekeepers

12 These divisions of the gatekeepers, corresponding to their leaders, had assigned responsibilities, like their relatives, as they served in the LORD's temple.

13 They cast lots, both young and old, according to their families, to determine which gate they would be responsible for.

14 The lot for the east gate went to Shelemiah. They then cast lots for his son Zechariah, a wise adviser, and the lot for the north gate went to him.

15 Obed-Edom was assigned the south gate, and his sons were assigned the storehouses.

16 Shuppim and Hosah were assigned the west gate, along with the Shalleketh gate on the upper road. One guard was adjacent to another.

17 Each day there were six Levites posted on the east, four on the north, and four on the south. At the storehouses they were posted in pairs.

18 At the court on the west there were four posted on the road and two at the court.

19 These were the divisions of the gatekeepers who were descendants of Korah and Merari.

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

1 Chronicles 26:20–32

Treasurers and Storehouses

20 Their fellow Levites were in charge of the storehouses in God's temple and the storehouses containing consecrated items.

21 The descendants of Ladan, who were descended from Gershon through Ladan and were leaders of the families of Ladan the Gershonite, included Jehieli

22 and the sons of Jehieli, Zetham and his brother Joel. They were in charge of the storehouses in the LORD's temple.

23 As for the Amramites, Izharites, Hebronites, and Uzzielites:

24 Shebuel son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was the supervisor of the storehouses.

25 His relatives through Eliezer included: Rehabiah his son, Jeshaiiah his son, Joram his son, Zikri his son, and Shelomith his son.

26 Shelomith and his relatives were in charge of all the storehouses containing the consecrated items dedicated by King David, the family leaders who led units of a thousand and a hundred, and the army officers.

27 They had dedicated some of the plunder taken in battles to be used for repairs on the LORD's temple.

28 They were also in charge of everything dedicated by Samuel the prophet, Saul son of Kish, Abner son of Ner, and Joab son of Zeruiah; Shelomith and his relatives were in charge of everything that had been dedicated.

Other Officials

29 As for the Izharites: Kenaniah and his sons were given responsibilities outside the temple as officers and judges over Israel.

30 As for the Hebronites: Hashabiah and his relatives, 1,700 respected men, were assigned responsibilities in Israel west of the Jordan; they did the LORD's work and the king's service.

31 As for the Hebronites: Jeriah was the leader of the Hebronites according to the genealogical records. In the fortieth year of David's reign, they examined the records and discovered there were highly respected men in Jazer in Gilead.

32 Jeriah had 2,700 relatives who were respected family leaders. King David placed them in charge of the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh; they took care of all matters pertaining to God and the king.

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

1 Chronicles 27

The Commanders of the Monthly Relays

1 What follows is a list of Israelite family leaders and commanders of units of a thousand and a hundred, as well as their officers who served the king in various matters. Each division was assigned to serve for one month during the year; each consisted of 24,000 men.

2 Jashobeam son of Zabdiel was in charge of the first division, which was assigned the first month. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

3 He was a descendant of Perez; he was in charge of all the army officers for the first month.

4 Dodai the Ahohite was in charge of the division assigned the second month; Mikloth was the next in rank. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

5 The third army commander, assigned the third month, was Benaiah son of Jehoiada the priest. He was the leader of his division, which consisted of 24,000 men.

6 Benaiah was the leader of the thirty warriors and his division; his son was Ammizabad.

7 The fourth, assigned the fourth month, was Asahel, brother of Joab; his son Zebadiah succeeded him. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

8 The fifth, assigned the fifth month, was the commander Shamhuth the Izrahite. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

9 The sixth, assigned the sixth month, was Ira son of Ikkesh the Tekoite. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

10 The seventh, assigned the seventh month, was Helez the Pelonite, an Ephraimite. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

11 The eighth, assigned the eighth month, was Sibbekai the Hushathite, a Zerahite. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

12 The ninth, assigned the ninth month, was Abiezer the Anathothite, a Benjaminite. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

13 The tenth, assigned the tenth month, was Maharai the Netophathite, a Zerahite. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

14 The eleventh, assigned the eleventh month, was Benaiah the Pirathonite, an Ephraimite. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

15 The twelfth, assigned the twelfth month, was Heldai the Netophathite, a descendant of Othniel. His division consisted of 24,000 men.

The Officers of the Tribes

16 The officers of the Israelite tribes: Eliezer son of Zikri was the leader of the Reubenites, Shephatiah son of Maacah led the

Simeonites,

17 Hashabiah son of Kemuel led the Levites, Zadok led the descendants of Aaron,

18 Elihu, a brother of David, led Judah, Omri son of Michael led Issachar,

19 Ishmaiah son of Obadiah led Zebulun, Jerimoth son of Azriel led Naphtali,

20 Hoshea son of Azariah led the Ephraimites, Joel son of Pedaiah led the half-tribe of Manasseh,

21 Iddo son of Zechariah led the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, Jaasiel son of Abner led Benjamin,

22 Azarel son of Jeroham led Dan. These were the commanders of the Israelite tribes.

23 David did not count the males twenty years old and under, for the LORD had promised to make Israel as numerous as the stars in the sky.

24 Joab son of Zeruiah started to count the men but did not finish. God was angry with Israel because of this, so the number was not recorded in the scroll called The Annals of King David.

The Stewards of Crown Property

25 Azmaveth son of Adiel was in charge of the king's storehouses; Jonathan son of Uzziah was in charge of the storehouses in the field, in the cities, in the towns, and in the towers.

26 Ezri son of Kelub was in charge of the field workers who farmed the land.

27 Shimei the Ramathite was in charge of the vineyards; Zabdi the Shipmite was in charge of the wine stored in the vineyards.

28 Baal-Hanan the Gederite was in charge of the olive and sycamore trees in the lowlands; Joash was in charge of the storehouses of olive oil.

29 Shitrai the Sharonite was in charge of the cattle grazing in Sharon; Shaphat son of Adlai was in charge of the cattle in the valleys.

30 Obil the Ishmaelite was in charge of the camels; Jehdeiah the Meronothite was in charge of the donkeys.

31 Jaziz the Hagrite was in charge of the sheep. All these were the officials in charge of King David's property.

David's Personal Counselors

32 Jonathan, David's uncle, was a wise adviser and scribe; Jehiel son of Hacmoni cared for the king's sons.

33 Ahithophel was the king's adviser; Hushai the Arkite was the king's confidant.

34 Ahithophel was succeeded by Jehoiada son of Benaiah and by Abiathar. Joab was the commanding general 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 MT¹, Solomon was later crowned for a second time, ostensibly as a more formal sequel to the rather hurried ceremony described in 1 Kings 1:28–40.² 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)."³

¹ The words are lacking in LXX^B 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).

² 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.

³ Selman, 273.