

1 Chronicles 1:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel; Bela the son of Beor: and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

Analysis

Genealogical Significance: This verse appears within the Primeval and patriarchal genealogies section of Chronicles' genealogical framework. The Hebrew term **תולדות** (toledot) - generations is central to understanding this passage's purpose. The Chronicler, writing to post-exilic Israel (c. 450-400 BCE), uses these genealogies not merely as historical records but as theological statements about covenant continuity and divine faithfulness.

The genealogical structure serves multiple purposes:

1. establishing Israel's connection to God's creation plan from Adam
2. legitimizing post-exilic community's claim to covenant promises
3. emphasizing Judah and Levi's special roles in God's redemptive plan,
4. demonstrating that despite exile, God's covenant purposes continue.

The selection and arrangement of names is intentional, highlighting God's sovereign plan through chosen lineage.

Chronicles diverges from Genesis and Samuel-Kings in its genealogical presentation, reflecting the Chronicler's distinct theological agenda. Where earlier texts focus on narrative history, Chronicles emphasizes continuity, legitimacy, and hope for restoration. This verse contributes to the larger argument that the post-exilic community is the rightful heir of God's ancient covenant promises.

Historical Context

Post-Exilic Context: The Chronicler wrote during the Persian period (450-400 BCE) to a community returned from Babylonian exile, struggling with identity and purpose. These genealogies answered crucial questions: Who are we? What is our relationship to ancient Israel? Do God's promises still apply to us?

The historical setting influences the text's emphasis on Genealogies from Adam to Edom - establishing covenant continuity. Ancient Near Eastern cultures valued genealogies for establishing land rights, royal legitimacy, and tribal identity. Chronicles' genealogies served similar functions while adding theological depth. The inclusion of specific names and details reflects the author's access to temple archives, royal records, and earlier biblical texts.

Archaeological evidence from Persian-period Judah shows a small, struggling community centered around Jerusalem and the rebuilt temple. The genealogies reinforced their connection to the glorious past and provided hope for future restoration through God's covenant faithfulness.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does understanding genealogies as theological statements rather than mere historical records change your reading of Chronicles and other biblical genealogies?
2. What does this verse teach about God's faithfulness across generations, and how does that apply to your own family's spiritual legacy?

3. How does God's sovereign plan through chosen lineage connect to the New Testament revelation of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵלֶּה	מְלָכֵי	אֲשֶׁר	מָלְכוּ	בְּאֶרֶץ	אֶדֹם	לִפְנֵי
H428	Now these are the kings	H834	reigned	in the land	of Edom	before
	H4428		H4427	H776	H123	H6440
מָלְכוּ	מְלָכֵי	בְּנֵי	יִשְׂרָאֵל	בֵּלַע		
reigned	Now these are the kings	over the children	of Israel	Bela		
H4427	H4428	H1121	H3478	H1106		
בְּנֵי	בְּעֹר	וְשֵׁם	עִירוֹ	דִּנְהָבָה:		
over the children	of Beor	and the name	of his city	was Dinhabah		
H1121	H1160	H8034	H5892	H1838		

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