

# 1 Chronicles 2:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

These are the sons of Israel; Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,  
Issachar, and Zebulun,

## Analysis

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**Genealogical Significance:** This verse appears within the Judah's lineage and David's royal line section of Chronicles' genealogical framework. The Hebrew term יהודה (Yehudah) - praise 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 Messianic line through Judah to David.

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

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**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 of Judah and David's lineage - royal line emphasis. 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

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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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 Messianic line through Judah to David connect to the New Testament revelation of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises?

## Interlinear Text

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אֵלֶּה	בְּנֵי יִ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	רְאוּבֵן	שִׁמְעוֹן	לֵוִי	וַיהוּדָה
H428	These are the sons	of Israel	Reuben	Simeon	Levi	and Judah
	H1121	H3478	H7205	H8095	H3878	H3063
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יִשָּׂשכָר	וּזְבֻלֹן:					
Issachar	and Zebulun					
H3485	H2074					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Genesis 32:28** (References Israel): And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

**Genesis 49:2** (References Israel): Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father.

**Genesis 35:18** (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin.