

1 Chronicles 2:54

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The sons of Salma; Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites,
Ataroth, the house of Joab, and half of the Manahethites, the
Zorites.

Analysis

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

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

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

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

Interlinear Text

בְּנֵי י	שְׁלֹמֹה א	בֵּית י	לְחֵם	וְנֹט וּפְתֵי י	עֶטְרוֹת	בֵּית י
The sons	of Salma	H0	Bethlehem	and the Netophathites	Ataroth	H1004
H1121	H8007		H1035	H5200	H5852	
יֹאֲבָב	וְחֶצֶי	הַמְּנַחֲתִי	הַצֹּרִי:			
H3097	and half	of the Manahethites	the Zorites			
	H2677	H2680	H6882			

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 12:28 (Parallel theme): And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathi;

Nehemiah 7:26 (Parallel theme): The men of Beth-lehem and Netophah, an hundred fourscore and eight.

Ezra 2:22 (Parallel theme): The men of Netophah, fifty and six.