

1 Chronicles 23:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Of the sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the chief.

Analysis

Theological Analysis: This passage falls within the section on Levitical divisions and temple service organization. The Hebrew term *עֲבוֹדָה* (avodah) - service/work is theologically significant here, pointing to Ordered worship according to divine pattern. The Chronicler's narrative, while paralleling Samuel-Kings in places, offers a distinct theological perspective emphasizing temple worship, Levitical service, and covenant faithfulness.

Chronicles presents David not primarily as warrior-king but as worship organizer and temple planner. This verse contributes to that portrait by highlighting the spiritual dimensions of Israel's national life. The text demonstrates that true prosperity comes through proper worship and covenant obedience rather than merely military or political success.

Doctrinally, this passage teaches about Ordered worship according to divine pattern. Cross-references throughout Chronicles connect David's reign to the broader redemptive narrative, showing how God's covenant promises advance through faithful human leadership while ultimately depending on divine grace and power. The messianic implications are profound: Priesthood of all believers under Christ.

Historical Context

Historical Background: This section describes events from David's reign (c. 1010-970 BCE) but was written centuries later during the Persian period (c.

450-400 BCE). The Chronicler's selectivity in retelling David's story serves his theological purposes—he omits David's sins (Bathsheba, Absalom's rebellion) while emphasizing David's worship reforms and temple preparations.

The historical setting of Levitical divisions and temple service organization occurred during Israel's united monarchy, when the nation reached its territorial and political zenith. Archaeological evidence from this period shows significant building projects and administrative development. However, the Chronicler writes for a much smaller, struggling post-exilic community, using David's golden age to inspire hope for restoration.

Ancient Near Eastern parallels show that temple construction and royal sponsorship of worship were common across cultures. However, Israel's understanding of worship centered on covenant relationship with the one true God rather than manipulation of capricious deities. This theological distinctiveness shapes the Chronicler's presentation.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does this verse's emphasis on Ordered worship according to divine pattern challenge or affirm your current spiritual priorities and practices?
2. What does Priesthood of all believers under Christ teach you about Jesus Christ and His redemptive work?
3. In what practical ways can you apply the principles of covenant faithfulness and proper worship demonstrated in this passage?

Interlinear Text

בְּנֵי י	גֶרְשֹׁם וּ	שְׁבוּיָ ל	הָרֹאשׁ:
Of the sons	of Gershom	Shebuel	was the chief
H1121	H1647	H7619	H7218

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 26:24 (Parallel theme): And Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was ruler of the treasures.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org