

1 Chronicles 6:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The sons of Merari; Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son,

Analysis

The sons of Merari—this genealogical expansion traces Merari's descendants through multiple generations. **Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son**—each name carries meaning: Libni (לִבְנִי) 'white' or 'distinguished'), Shimei (שִׁמְעֵי 'famous' or 'renowned'), Uzza (עֹזָה 'strength'). The progression from Mahli ('mild/sick') through Libni ('distinguished') to Uzza ('strength') suggests a theological narrative: from weakness to honor to strength through God's grace.

This Merarite line served as Levitical musicians in David's reorganized temple worship (vv. 31-47). Those whose ancestors hauled heavy tabernacle framework now lifted voices and instruments in praise—from burden-bearing to worship-leading. The transformation illustrates how faithful service in 'lesser' roles prepares for greater kingdom assignments (Matthew 25:21).

The genealogical precision demonstrates the Chronicler's emphasis on legitimate, traceable lineage for temple servants. In post-exilic restoration, when many couldn't prove their ancestry (Ezra 2:59-63), such detailed genealogies validated returning Levites' right to resume sacred duties.

Historical Context

This genealogy spans from Moses's era (Exodus-Numbers accounts of Merari's duties) through David's temple preparations (1000 BC) to the Chronicler's post-exilic audience (450-400 BC). David transformed Levitical roles from primarily

transporters to musicians, singers, and gatekeepers—a liturgical revolution that elevated all Levitical clans. The Merarites, once heavy laborers, now include Ethan the Ezrahite (v. 44), a wisdom sage credited with Psalm 89.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the name progression from 'mild' to 'distinguished' to 'strength' encourage you about God's transformative work through generations of faithfulness?
2. What 'burden-bearing' season in your life has God transformed into a 'worship-leading' season?

Interlinear Text

בָּנִים	בָּנָה	שָׁמָעַ	בְּנָה	בָּנִי	מָחָלָה	לְבָנִי	מָכָרָה	בָּנָה	בָּנִים	בָּנָה	בָּנִים	בָּנָה
The sons	of Merari	Mahli	Libni	The sons	Shimei	The sons	Uzza					

בָּנִים

The sons

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Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 6:19 (Parallel theme): The sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi. And these are the families of the Levites according to their fathers.