

1 Chronicles 6:78

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan, were given them out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, and Jahzah with her suburbs,

Analysis

Genealogical Significance: This verse appears within the Levitical priesthood and worship section of Chronicles' genealogical framework. The Hebrew term כֹּהֵן (kohen) - priest 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 Mediatorial role of priesthood.

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 Levitical genealogies and priestly lines. 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

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

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 Mediatorial role of priesthood connect to the New Testament revelation of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעַבְדוּ	הַיַּרְדֵּן	יֶרִיחוֹ	לְמִזְבֵּחַ	הַיַּרְדֵּן		
And on the other side	Jordan	by Jericho	on the east side	Jordan		
H5676	H3383	H3405	H4217	H3383		
מִמֶּנִּי הָ		רְאוּבֵן	בְּצֶר	בַּמִּדְבָּר	וְאֶת	
were given them out of the tribe		of Reuben	H853	Bezer	in the wilderness	H853
H4294		H7205		H1221	H4057	
מִגִּבְעֹתֶיהָ:	וְאֶת	יְהִצָּח	וְאֶת	מִגִּבְעֹתֶיהָ:		
with her suburbs	H853	and Jahzah	H853	with her suburbs		
H4054		H3096		H4054		

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 20:8 (Parallel theme): And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.