

1 Chronicles 7:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Machir took to wife the sister of Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name was Maachah;) and the name of the second was Zelophehad: and Zelophehad had daughters.

Analysis

Genealogical Significance: This verse appears within the Northern tribes and their heritage section of Chronicles' genealogical framework. The Hebrew term שֵׁבֶט (shevet) - tribe/scepter 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 All Israel included in God's covenant.

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 Northern tribal genealogies: Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher. 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

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 All Israel included in God's covenant connect to the New Testament revelation of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises?

Interlinear Text

וּמָכִיר	לָקַח	אִשָּׁה	לְחֹפִי יָם	וּלְשֹׁפִי יָם	וְשֵׁם
And Machir	took	to wife	the sister of Huppim	and Shuppim	and the name
H4353	H3947	H802	H2650	H8206	H8034
אָחִיתוֹ	מַעַכָּה	וְשֵׁם	הַשֵּׁנִי	לְצִלְפֶּהָד	
whose sister's	was Maachah	and the name	of the second	and Zelophehad	
H269	H4601	H8034	H8145	H6765	
וּתְהִי נָה	לְצִלְפֶּהָד	בָּנוֹת:			
H1961	and Zelophehad	had daughters			
	H6765	H1323			

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 26:33 (Parallel theme): And Zelophehad the son of Hephher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.
