

# 1 Chronicles 7:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, were bands of soldiers for war, six and thirty thousand men: for they had many wives and sons.

## Analysis

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**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

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**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

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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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

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וְעִלֵּיהֶם	לְתִלְדוֹתָם	לְבֵית	אֲבוֹתָם			
H5921	And with them by their generations	after the house	of their fathers			
	H8435	H1004	H1			
גְּדוּדֵי	צָבָא	מִלְחָמָה	שְׁלֹשִׁים	וְשֵׁשֶׁת	אֶלְפֵי	כִּי
were bands	of soldiers	for war	and thirty	six	thousand	H3588
H1416	H6635	H4421	H7970	H8337	H505	
הָרַב וְ	וּבָנִים:	נָשִׁים	וְ	בָנִים:		
men for they had many	wives	and sons				
H7235	H802	H1121				

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