

1 Chronicles 7:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

All these were the children of Asher, heads of their father's house, choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And the number throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war and to battle was twenty and six thousand men.

Analysis

Genealogical Significance: This verse appears within the Northern tribes and their heritage section of Chronicles' genealogical framework. The Hebrew term שבט (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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

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 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

כָּל	אֵלֶּה	בְּנֵי	אָשֶׁר	יְרֵאִי	בֵּית
H3605	H428	H1121	H836	H7218	H1004
		All these were the children	of Asher	chief	house
הָאָבֻת	בְּרוּרִים	גִּבּוֹרֵי	חֵזְלִים	יְרֵאִי	הַנְּשִׂאִים
H1	H1305	H1368	H2428	H7218	H5387
of their father's	choice	and mighty men	of valour	chief	of the princes
וְהַתִּיחַשׁ	בְּצָבָא	בְּמִלְחָמָה			
H3187	H6635	H4421			
throughout the genealogy	of them that were apt to the war	and to battle			
מִסְפָּר	אֶנְשֵׁי	עֶשְׂרִים	וְשֵׁשׁ	אֶלֶף:	
H4557	H376	H6242	H8337	H505	
And the number		was twenty	and six	thousand	