

# Numbers 26:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The sons of Benjamin after their families: of Bela, the family of the Belaïtes: of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites: of Ahiham, the family of the Ahihamites:

## Analysis

**The sons of Benjamin after their families: of Bela, the family of the Belaïtes: of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites: of Ahiham, the family of the Ahihamites**—Benjamin (בְּנִימִין, 'son of the right hand') had five primary clans, reflecting Jacob's prophetic description of Benjamin as a 'ravenous wolf' (Genesis 49:27)—fierce, numerous, and strategically positioned. Bela (עֲלֵי, 'swallowing/destruction') headed the clan, a name suggesting military ferocity.

Ashbel (אֲשֶׁבֶל, 'man of Baal' or 'fire of Bel') and Ahiham (אֲחִיחָם, 'brother of the exalted') show the clan's ancient roots in pre-monotheistic naming conventions, yet God's covenant preserved them. Benjamin, though smallest tribe (besides decimated Levi), punched above their weight—producing King Saul, the Benjamite 'wolf,' and later Saul of Tarsus who 'ravaged the church' before conversion (Acts 8:3). The census preserves their distinct clans before they nearly perished in the civil war of Judges 19-21.

## Historical Context

Benjamin's territory, though small (roughly 26 x 12 miles), was strategically vital—containing Jerusalem's northern section, Jericho, Gibeon, and the Benjamin plateau controlling access to the highlands. Their position between Joseph and Judah made them kingmakers in future conflicts. This census occurred just before

their greatest military challenge—the Conquest—where their ferocity would prove invaluable.

## Related Passages

---

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

---

1. How does Benjamin's preservation despite their 'ravenous wolf' character demonstrate God's grace toward aggressive, difficult personalities in His covenant people?
2. What does the inclusion of potentially pagan-derived names (Ashbel/'man of Baal') teach about God's patience with His people's incomplete sanctification?
3. How might Benjamin's pattern—small tribe, fierce reputation, producing both King Saul and Apostle Paul—illustrate Romans 11:29 about irrevocable gifts and callings?

## Interlinear Text

---

בְּנֵי י'	בְּנֵימָן	מִשְׁפֵּחַת	לְבָ לַע	מִשְׁפֵּחַת
The sons	of Benjamin	after their families	of Bela	after their families
H1121	H1144	H4940	H1106	H4940
הַבְּלָעִי	לְאַשְׁבֵּל	מִשְׁפֵּחַת	הָאַשְׁבֵּלִי	לְאַחִירָם
of the Belaites	of Ashbel	after their families	of the Ashbelites	of Ahiram
H1108	H788	H4940	H789	H297
מִשְׁפֵּחַת	הָאַחִירָמִי:			
after their families	of the Ahiramites			
H4940	H298			

## Additional Cross-References

---

**1 Chronicles 8:1** (Parallel theme): Now Benjamin begat Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, and Aharah the third,

---

From KJV Study • [kjevstudy.org](http://kjevstudy.org)