

1 Chronicles Chapter 2

From 2:1 – 7:40: These genealogies reflect the lineage of Jacob/Israel through his 12 sons. The tribe of Judah leads the list, indicating its importance, no doubt because of the Davidic heritage. After Judah, Levi receives the most attention, indicating the importance of their priestly role. Joseph (2:2), is later enumerated in terms of his sons Manasseh and Ephraim. Dan and Zebulun are not mentioned here, although they both are identified in the millennial distribution of land (Ezek. 48:1-2, 26-17). The exact reason for these omissions is unknown. Benjamin is given additional attention (in 8:1-40). The tribes are mentioned as follows:

1. Judah (2:3 - 4:23);
2. Simeon (4:24 – 43);
3. Reuben (5:1 - 10);
4. Gad 5:11 - 22);
5. Manasseh - East (5:23 - 26);
6. Levi (6:1 – 81);
7. Issachar (7:1 - 5);
8. Benjamin (7:6 - 12);
9. Naphtali (7:13);
10. Manasseh - West (7:14 - 19);
11. Ephraim (7:20 - 29);
12. Asher (7:30 - 40).

Verses 1-3: The story of “the sons of Israel” is found (in Genesis 29:32 – 50:26). The tribe of Judah (the kingly line of David), is discussed first, then Levi (the priestly line), and then Benjamin (the line from which Israel’s first king would come). This order focuses on the kingly and priestly roles of Israel. Historically, these three tribes remained more faithful to God than the other tribes.

1 Chronicles 2:1 "These [are] the sons of Israel; Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun,"

Or Jacob, the other son of Isaac, who had the name of Israel given him, because of his power with God (Genesis 32:28), whose twelve sons are here mentioned by name. The first four according to their birth of Leah, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. Then the two sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, Issachar and Zebulun. And between Dan and Naphtali, the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, are placed Joseph and Benjamin, the sons of Rachel.

1 Chronicles 2:2 "Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher."

Dan's undue prominence may, perhaps, be accounted for by his occupying the seventh place in the "blessing of Jacob" (Genesis 49:16).

When these twelve sons were born, their father was using the name Jacob, instead of Israel. Jacob is the name generally used when speaking of the family. Israel is the name used when he and his family became a nation. "Jacob" means trickster. "Israel" means having power with God, or God's fighter. Jacob tricked his brother out of his birthright and received the right hand blessing. Israel fathered the twelve tribes which Moses led out of Egypt to the Promised Land. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun were all sons of Abraham by Leah. I do not know why Dan is mentioned by himself and before Rachel's children, Joseph and Benjamin. Rachel's maid, Bilhah, was the mother of Dan. Naphtali was the second son of Bilhah. Gad and Asher were sons of Leah's maid, Zilpah. These twelve sons of Jacob were the twelve tribes of Israel. God will have Moses lead them out of Egypt and give them their inheritance in the Promised Land. It was this group of people that God entrusted his law to. They were classified as God's people.

1 Chronicles 2:3 "The sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah: [which] three were born unto him of the daughter of Shua the Canaanitess. And Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the sight of the LORD; and he slew him."

Judah's line will eventually lead to David; hence, among the listings of Jacob's sons, Judah's descendants are specially treated. For "Er," Judah's firstborn son (see Gen. 38:7).

"Er" (Gen. 38:2-10), will forever be labeled with a one-word epitaph: "wicked." If the Lord were to write a one-word epitaph for each of us, what would He say?

Perhaps Judah is mentioned first because it will be through this tribe that God will bring the Messiah. He will be the Lion of the tribe of Judah. "Er" means watchful. The mistake that Judah made here, was marrying a Canaanitish woman. Er was killed by God for his sins, probably the worship of the false gods of his mother. Onan refused to marry Tamar, his brother's widow, and raise a child for him. God killed him also. Shelah was the young son which Judah refused to give Tamar to wife.

1 Chronicles 2:4 "And Tamar his daughter in law bare him Pharez and Zerah. All the sons of Judah [were] five."

See (Genesis 38:13-30), for the full story of how "Tamar" gave birth to the children of her father-in-law.

We must remember how this happened. Tamar's husband died, and his brothers should have married her and given her a son by their brother. It was really the father, Judah's place, to see that they did what they were supposed to. When they did not, she disguised herself as a harlot and slept with Judah. These two sons are from that union. The lineage to David goes through her son, Pharez. Pharez's twin was Zerah. Zerah's descendants were called Zarhites, Ezrahites, and Izrahites.

1 Chronicles 2:5 "The sons of Pharez; Hezron, and Hamul."

One of the above twins, born to Judah: Hezron and Hamul (see Genesis 46:12).

The lineage leads through Hezron, known also as Esrom. "Hamul" means pitied, or spared. Very little is known of him.

1 Chronicles 2:6 "And the sons of Zerah; Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara: five of them in all."

Here for the first time, the writer of Chronicles draws from sources not otherwise known to us, recording facts not mentioned in the earlier Scriptures. Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, sons of Zerah, are only known to us from this passage, since there are no sufficient grounds for identifying them with the "sons of Mahol" (marginal reference).

There is little known in the Bible of these five sons of Zerah.

1 Chronicles 2:7 "And the sons of Carmi; Achar, the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the thing accursed."

"Achar", like Er, was known for the evil he perpetuated. Achar (known as Achan elsewhere in the Old Testament), means "One Who Brings disaster". He disobeyed God at the battle of Jericho by taking spoil, a sin that resulted in Israel's defeat at Ai (Joshua Chapter 7).

It is assumed from the trouble that came on the sons and daughters of Achar that this line died out.

Joshua 7:24-25 "And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor." "And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones."

1 Chronicles 2:8 "And the sons of Ethan; Azariah."

Including his posterity (see Gen. 46:23), the posterity of the other three sons of Zerah are not mentioned, either because the writer could not find the genealogy of them, as Kimchi. Or rather, as he thinks, he cuts short the genealogy of Zerah, because the kingdom did not proceed from him, and returns to the genealogy of Hezron, from whence it did, or perhaps they had no children.

This line ends with Azariah, because there is no further mention of him.

1 Chronicles 2:9 "The sons also of Hezron, that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and Ram, and Chelubai."

The Hezronites, who were sons of Pharez (1 Chron. 2:5), and their three lines of descent, Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai.

"Jerahmeel": God pitieth.

"Ram": Called Aram in our Lord's genealogy (Matt. 1:3). The two names are synonyms, both meaning high, and are used interchangeably (in Job 32:2; Ram), and (Genesis 22:21; Aram).

"Chelubai": Strictly, the Chelubite or Calebite, a gentilic term formed from Caleb (1 Chron. 2:18). This seems to show that we are concerned here not so much with individual sons of Hezron as with families or clans of Hezronites.

Hezron was the father of the Hezronites. He was also called Esrom. The lineage that leads to David goes through his son, Ram. "Jerahmeel" means whom God loves, or God will be compassionate. His descendants are called Jerahmeelites. Chelubai is elsewhere called Caleb. "Ram" means high. In the New Testament, he is called Aram.

1 Chronicles 2:10 "And Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon, prince of the children of Judah;"

Ram is the same with Aram (Matt. 1:3), the genealogy is carried down from him to Jesse in the same order as there, and in (Ruth 4:19). Only here Nahshon the son of Amminadab is called the prince of the children of Judah. Which Kimchi and Jarchi say is written for the honor of David, who descended from him; and Salmon his son is here called Salma.

Sometimes Amminadab is spelled with just one m. The lineage continues through Amminadab. "Amminadab" means people of liberality. His daughter Elisheba, was married to Aaron. Nahshon is sometimes spelled Naasson. He was called captain. He was a prince of Judah since God was King.

Verses 11-12: The inclusion of "Boaz" would have reminded ancient audiences of David (Ruth 4:21). It recalls his descendant, Jesus (Matt. 1:5-6), for contemporary readers.

1 Chronicles 2:11 "And Nahshon begat Salma, and Salma begat Boaz,"

Boaz is a major figure in the Book of Ruth in the Bible. The term is found 24 times in the Scriptures, being two in Greek. The root בועז, just used in the Bible in relation to "Boaz", perhaps expresses "quick".

Salma is the same as Salmon. He married Rahab and had a son named Boaz. "Boaz" means fleetness. He is, also, called Booz of Rachab. He marries Ruth the Moabitess. They are the great-grandparents of David.

1 Chronicles 2:12 "And Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse."

In the canon of the Hebrew Bible, Obed was a son of Boaz and Ruth, the father of Jesse, and the grandfather of David. He is one of Jesus' ancestors in the genealogies found in the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke.

The name "Obed" means worshipper. The neighbors of Naomi gave Obed his name. Jesse is called a Bethlehemite, and an Ephrathite. Jesse had eight sons. His youngest was David.

1 Chronicles 2:13-15" And Jesse begat his firstborn Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third," "Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth," "Ozem the sixth, David the seventh:"

“And Jesse begat his firstborn Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third, Nathanael the fourth, Raddai the fifth, Ozem the sixth, David the seventh”. But Jesse had eight sons (1 Sam. 16:10), one of them therefore is not reckoned, either because he was by another woman, and the writer only mentions those that were of the same mother with David. This is the opinion of Aben Ezra and Kimchi; some say he was dead before David came to the kingdom. Kimchi mentions a Midrash, or exposition of theirs, according to which his name was Elihu, and was younger than David, who is mentioned in (1 Chron. 27:18). And Jarchi observes, that the writer, having found the pearl (David), reckons not the eighth son Elihu. Though the Syriac and Arabic versions have inserted him in this order, "Elihu the seventh, David the eighth". Some take the eighth to be a grandson of Jesse, Jonathan the son of Shimea (2 Sam. 21:21), the third son of Jesse, here called Shimma, as he is Shammah (1 Sam. 16:9).

In (1 Samuel 16:10), Jesse had eight sons, so one of them is left out here. It is possibly because one of the sons had died early. Or he was left out, because he never married or had children. Eliab was the first son shown to Samuel to choose a king from among Jesse's sons. He was also one of the brothers at the front line when David killed Goliath. His daughter, Abihail, married Rehoboam and they had three children. Abinadab was also at the front line. He too, had been shown to Samuel, and turned down by the prophet. In fact, all of the sons of Jesse were turned down by Samuel until David. David was anointed king. Shimma was also at the battlefront. He was known as Shimeah, Shammah, and Shimea. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is directly descended from him. There is very little known of the others. David of course, is the eighth, and he is in the direct lineage of Jesus. "David" means beloved of God. David was the second king of the united twelve tribes of Israel.

David's sister "Zeruiah" is remembered as the mother of David's most capable supporters (compare 2 Sam. 2:18-32).

"Abigail" (the daughter of Nahash, the sister of Zeruiah), gave birth to Absalom's commander, "Amasa" (2 Sam. 17:25).

Verses 16-17: The sons of "Zeruiah" were not known by their father's name but by their mother's. The unusual inclusion of women like her and "Abigail" in this genealogy shows that God preserved His people in unexpected ways. For more about "Joab" (see 1 Kings 2:28-34).

1 Chronicles 2:16 "Whose sisters [were] Zeruiah, and Abigail. And the sons of Zeruiah; Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three."

Because David trusted the Lord to give him the throne, he would not let "Abishai" kill the sleeping King Saul (1 Sam. Chapter 26). Exercising patience and trust allows the Lord to fulfill His purposes on His timetable unhindered.

1 Chronicles 2:17 "And Abigail bare Amasa: and the father of Amasa [was] Jether the Ishmaelite."

Who was Absalom's general, afterwards reconciled to David, and designed to be made general of his army, but was slain by Joab (see 2 Sam. 17:25), and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite. He is called an Israelite, and so in the Targum here, he being either a proselyte, or else he was an Israelite by birth, but called an Ishmaelite, because he had dwelt among the Ishmaelites some time, as Obed-edom is called the Gittite for the like reason; so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it.

These were probably step-sisters of David. They probably had the same mother and different fathers. They were daughters of Nahash, and not Jesse. Zeruiah was the mother of three of David's generals, Abishai, Joab, and Asahel. Abigail is not the same Abigail who married David after David killed her husband, Nabal, who had insulted him. Amasa is David's nephew. Amasa joined Absalom in the rebellion against David. Joab killed Amasa.

Verses 18-24: Caleb's line is the second significant line listed (2:18-24). This is not the "Caleb" mentioned (in Numbers 13).

1 Chronicles 2:18 "And Caleb the son of Hezron begat [children] of Azubah [his] wife, and of Jerioth: her sons [are] these; Jeshur, and Shobab, and Ardon."

This is not "Caleb" the son of Jephunneh, who was Joshua's assistant (Josh. 14:6; 1 Chron. 45).

This is returning back earlier to Caleb, or Chelubai. It appears that Jerioth and Azubah are the same person. Nothing much is known of these sons.

1 Chronicles 2:19 "And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him Ephrath, which bare him Hur." Ephrathites were people who lived in Bethlehem.

The Targum is, "Miriam, who was called Ephrath". But, according to Josephus, it was his son Hur that was the husband of Miriam the sister of Moses: which bare him Hur (see Exodus 17:10).

The notices concerning this person appear confused in our version. In (1 Chron. 2:19), he is said to be the father of Hur, whereas in (1 Chron. 2:50), he is called "the son of Hur." The words in

this latter passage have been transposed in the copying, and should be read thus, "Hur the son of Caleb."

1 Chronicles 2:20 "And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat Bezaleel."

See (Exodus 31:2), which states that: "Bezaleel, son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah," was divinely qualified for building the Tent of Meeting. Bezaleel is no doubt a person, but Hur is probably a Calebite clan, established at "Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem" (Gen. 35:19).

Hur was grand-father, and Uri was the father of Bezaleel. The Bible tells us that God empowered Bezaleel to do the work in the construction of the tabernacle and all of its beautiful work. Aholiab was his assistant. In (Exodus chapter 31 through chapter 37), we read more about all that he did. Here is just a little about that.

Exodus 31:2-5 "See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah:" "And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship," "To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass," "And in cutting of stones, to set [them], and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship."

1 Chronicles 2:21 "And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married when he [was] threescore years old; and she bare him Segub."

Which Machir was the son of Manasseh, and Gilead was his grandson (Num. 26:29), the Targum is, "but he enticed a virgin, the daughter of Machir"; suggesting that he committed fornication with her, though he afterwards married her. Her name is not mentioned, but to me it seems to be Abiah, (1 Chron. 2:24), and whom the Targum there calls the daughter of Machir.

Whom he married when he was sixty years old; this seems to be his last wife.

"And she bare him Segub": The same name with the youngest son of Hiel, who rebuilt Jericho (1 Kings 16:34).

This reverts back again to Hezron. This is speaking of Abiah, the sister of Gilead. Machir, her father, was Manasseh's oldest son. At the age of 60 years, Hezron and Abiah had a son named Segub.

1 Chronicles 2:22 "And Segub begat Jair, who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead."

Which according to Kimchi, he inherited in right of his wife, which he says he took out of the land of Gilead. But they seem to be rather what he took by force of arms from the former inhabitants (see Num. 32:41).

Moses counts Jair as being from the tribe of Manasseh. He settled in Argob bordering on Gilead. It appears that he was involved in taking 60 of the towns, but he is allotted 23 for his family.

1 Chronicles 2:23 "And he took Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them, with Kenath, and the towns thereof, [even] threescore cities. All these [belonged to] the sons of Machir, the father of Gilead."

Cities or countries which the Geshurites and Aramaeans, or Syrians, before inhabited. And which he took from them, together with other towns, which, being taken by him, were called after his name. The Targum is, the Geshurites and Aramaeans took the villages of Jair from them; that is, from the sons of Jair in later times (see Joshua 12:5).

"With Kenath, and the towns thereof": Which Jair took by Nobah his general, and called it after his name (Num. 32:42), even sixty cities (see Deut. 3:4).

"All these belonged to the sons of Machir the father of Gilead": Being given him by Moses (Num. 32:40).

It appears, that Jair took these cities from Machir, who was his relative. Machir was his great-grandfather. The cities were actually Machir's sons'.

1 Chronicles 2:24 "And after that Hezron was dead in Caleb-ephratah, then Abiah Hezron's wife bare him Ashur the father of Tekoa."

Supposed to be the same with Bethlehem; and was so called, both from Caleb the son of Hezron, and Ephrath his wife (1 Chron. 2:19).

"Then Abiah, Hezron's wife, bare him Ashur the father of Tekoa": Being left with child by him at his death; the whole verse is paraphrased thus in the Targum, "and after Hezron died in the house of Caleb his son in Ephrath, the wife of Hezron the daughter of Machir was left with child, and she bare to him after his death Ashur the prince of the Tekoites". Whose son gave name very probably to the city of Tekoa (2 Sam. 14:2).

This is two different statements. Hezron died in Caleb-ephratah. His last son by Abiah was Ashur, the father of Tekoa. Ashur was born after the death of his father. Tekoa is probably not a person, but a town in Judah.

Verses 25-41: "Jerahmeel" is the final tribal line emphasized in this chapter. Hezron, Caleb, and Jerahmeel were chosen to show the line of Judah's descendants that culminated in the birth of David.

1 Chronicles 2:25 "And the sons of Jerahmeel the firstborn of Hezron were, Ram the firstborn, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, [and] Ahijah."

The descendants of "Jerahmeel" were associated with David during his flight from Saul (1 Sam. 27:10; 30:29).

Ram above is the nephew of Ram through whom the lineage to David flows. Very little is known of these sons.

1 Chronicles 2:26 "Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name [was] Atarah; she [was] the mother of Onam."

Distinct from his wife before named; or "another woman", which is a phrase for a harlot or concubine (Judges 11:2), which she might be, as Kimchi observes; though the former seems best.

"She was the mother of Onam": And perhaps was the only son she bore to Jerahmeel, of whose sons (see 1 Chron. 2:28).

"Atarah" means crown. Very little else is known of her or Onan.

1 Chronicles Chapter 2 Questions

1. Who were the sons of Israel?
2. What was Israel's name, before it became Israel?
3. What does "Jacob" mean?
4. What does "Israel" mean?
5. Who will lead them to their Promised Land?
6. Who were Judah's three sons by the daughter of Shua?
7. What happened to Er?
8. Why did God kill Onan?
9. Tell how Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law, happened to have two sons by him?
10. Which one of her sons does the lineage to David go through?
11. What is another name for Hezron?
12. What does "Hamul" mean?
13. Which of Hezron's sons does the lineage to David go through?
14. Chelubai is called _____ elsewhere.
15. "Ram" means _____.

16. What is Ram called in the New Testament?
17. What does "Amminadab" mean?
18. Salma is the same as _____.
19. Who was his wife?
20. Who was their son?
21. Who did Boaz marry?
22. What was the name of their son?
23. Who named him?
24. What does "Obed" mean?
25. How many sons did Jesse have?
26. How many do verses 13 and 14 give?
27. Why is there a discrepancy?
28. Who was the most famous son of Jesse?
29. Who were his sisters?
30. Three of Zeruah's sons were David's _____.
31. Who sided with Absalom against David?
32. Who was Bezaleel?
33. Who did Hezron marry, when he was 60 years old?
34. Who had 23 cities in the land of Gilead?
35. Ashur was born _____ the death of his father.
36. What was Tekoa?