

1CHRONICLES 23: 1 Now David was old and full of days; and he made Solomon his son king over Israel.

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David makes Solomon king, 1Chr 23:1. Numbers the Levites, and appoints them their work, 1Chr 23:2-5. The sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath, Merari, and their descendants, 1Chr 23:6-12. The sons of Amram, and their descendants, 1Chr 23:13. The sons of Moses, and their descendants, 1Chr 23:14-24. David appoints the Levites to wait on the priests for the service of the sanctuary, 1Chr 23:25-32.

Verse 1

David was old and full of days - On the phrase full of days, see the note on Gen 25:8.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 2 He gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites.

1CHRONICLES 23: 3 The Levites were numbered from thirty years old and upward: and their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty-eight thousand.

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Verse 3

Thirty years and upward - The enumeration of the Levites made in the desert, Num 4:3, was from thirty years upwards to fifty years. In this place, the latter limit is not mentioned, probably because the service was not so laborious now; for the ark being fixed they had no longer any heavy burdens to carry, and therefore even an old man might continue to serve the tabernacle. David made another ordinance afterwards; see on 1Chr 23:24-27 (note).

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1CHRONICLES 23: 4 David said, "Of these, twenty-four thousand were to oversee the work of the LORD's house; six thousand were officers and judges;

1CHRONICLES 23: 5 four thousand were doorkeepers; and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which I made, for giving praise."

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Verse 5

Four thousand praised the Lord - David made this distribution according to his own judgment, and from the dictates of his piety; but it does not appear that he had any positive Divine authority for such arrangements. As to the instruments of music which he made they are condemned elsewhere; see Amo 6:5, to which this verse is allowed to be the parallel.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 6 David divided them into divisions according to the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

1CHRONICLES 23: 7 Of the Gershonites: Ladan and Shimei.

1CHRONICLES 23: 8 The sons of Ladan: Jehiel the chief, and Zetham, and Joel, three.

1CHRONICLES 23: 9 The sons of Shimei: Shelomoth, and Haziël, and Haran, three. These were the heads of the fathers' households of Ladan.

1CHRONICLES 23: 10 The sons of Shimei: Jahath, Zina, and Jeush, and Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei.

1CHRONICLES 23: 11 Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second: but Jeush and Beriah didn't have many sons; therefore they became a fathers' house in one reckoning.

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Verse 11

Therefore they were in one reckoning - The family of Shimei, being small, was united with that of Laadan, that the two families might do that work which otherwise belonged to one, but which would have been too much for either of these separately.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 12 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four.

1CHRONICLES 23: 13 The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses; and Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons, forever, to burn incense before the LORD, to minister to him, and to bless in his name, forever.

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Verse 13

To bless in his name - To bless the people by invoking the name of the Lord.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 14 But as for Moses the man of God, his sons were named among the tribe of Levi.

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Verse 14

Moses the man of God - "Moses the prophet of God," - T.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 15 The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer.

1CHRONICLES 23: 16 The sons of Gershom: Shebuel the chief.

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Verse 16

To this verse the Targum adds, "The same Jonathan, who became a false prophet, repented in his old age; and David made him his chief treasurer."

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1CHRONICLES 23: 17 The sons of Eliezer were: Rehabiah the chief; and Eliezer had no other sons; but the sons of Rehabiah were very many.

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Verse 17

But the sons of Rehabiah were very many - The Targum says, "On account of the merits of Moses, the posterity of Rehabiah were multiplied to more than sixty myriads."

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1CHRONICLES 23: 18 The sons of Izhar: Shelomith the chief.

1CHRONICLES 23: 19 The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.

1CHRONICLES 23: 20 The sons of Uzziel: Micah the chief, and Isshiah the second.

1CHRONICLES 23: 21 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar and Kish.

1CHRONICLES 23: 22 Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters only: and their brothers the sons of Kish took them as wives.

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Verse 22

Their brethren the sons of Kish took them - This was according to the law made Num 27:1, etc., and Num 36:5-9, in favor of the daughters of Zelophehad, that women who were heiresses should marry in the family of the tribe of their father, and that their estates should not be alienated from them.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 23 The sons of Mushi: Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

1CHRONICLES 23: 24 These were the sons of Levi after their fathers' houses, even the heads of the fathers' houses of those who were counted individually, in the number of names by their polls, who did the work for the service of the LORD's house, from twenty years old and upward.

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Verse 24

Twenty years and upward - It appears that this was a different ordinance from that mentioned 1Chr 23:3. At first he appointed the Levites to serve from thirty years and upward; now from twenty years. These were David's last orders; see 1Chr 23:27. They should begin at an earlier age, and continue later.

This was not a very painful task; the ark being now fixed, and the Levites very numerous, there could be no drudgery.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 25 For David said, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has given rest to his people; and he dwells in Jerusalem forever.

1CHRONICLES 23: 26 Also the Levites will no longer need to carry the tabernacle and all its vessels for its service."

1CHRONICLES 23: 27 For by the last words of David the sons of Levi were numbered, from twenty years old and upward.

1CHRONICLES 23: 28 For their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the LORD's house, in the courts, and in the rooms, and in the purifying of all holy things, even the work of the service of God's house;

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Verse 28

Purifying of all holy things - Keeping all the vessels and utensils belonging to the sacred service clean and neat.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 29 for the show bread also, and for the fine flour for a meal offering, whether of unleavened wafers, or of that which is baked in the pan, or of that which is soaked, and for all kinds of measure and size;

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Verse 29

Both for the shew-bread - It was the priests' office to place this bread before the Lord, and it was their privilege to feed on the old loaves when they were replaced by the new. Some of the rabbins think that the priests sowed, reaped, ground, kneaded, and baked the grain of which the shew-bread was made. This appears to be a conceit. Jerome, in his comment on Mal 1:6, mentions it in these words: "Panis propositionis quos, juxta traditiones Hebraicas, ipsi serere, ipsi demetere, ipsi molere, ipsi coquere debebatis."

For all manner of measure and size - The standards of all weights and measures were kept at the sanctuary, and by those there deposited all the weights and measures of the land were to be tried. See the note on Exo 30:13.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 30 and to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise in the evening;

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Verse 30

To stand every morning - At the offering of the morning and evening sacrifice, they sounded their musical instruments, and sang praises to God.

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1CHRONICLES 23: 31 and to offer all burnt offerings to the LORD, on the Sabbaths, on the new moons, and on the set feasts, in number according to the ordinance concerning them, continually before the LORD;

1CHRONICLES 23: 32 and that they should keep the duty of the Tent of Meeting, and the duty of the holy place, and the duty of the sons of Aaron their brothers, for the service of the LORD's house.

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Verse 32

The charge of the sons of Aaron - It was the priests' business to kill, flay, and dress, as well as to offer, the victims, but being few, they were obliged to employ the Levites to flay those animals. The Levites were, properly speaking, servants to the priests, and were employed about the more servile part of Divine worship.