
1CHRONICLES 27: 1 Now the children of Israel after their number, the heads of fathers' households and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and their officers who served the king, in any matter of the divisions which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year—of every division were twenty-four thousand.

An account of the twelve captains who were over the monthly course of twenty-four thousand men; each captain serving one month in turn, 1Chr 27:1. The names of the twelve, and the months in which they served, 1Chr 27:2-15. The names of the rulers of the twelve tribes, 1Chr 27:16-22. The reasons why the whole number of Israel and Judah had not been taken, 1Chr 27:23, 1Chr 27:24. The persons who were over the king's property, treasures, fields, flocks, etc., 1Chr 27:25-31. His officers of state, 1Chr 27:32-34.

Verse 1

The chief fathers and captains of thousands - The patriarchs, chief generals, or generals of brigade. This enumeration is widely different from the preceding. In that, we have the orders and courses of the priests and the Levites in their ecclesiastical ministrations; in this, we have the account of the order of the civil service, that which related simply to the political state of the king and the kingdom. Twenty-four persons, chosen out of David's worthies, each of whom had a second, were placed over twenty-four thousand men, who all served a month in turn at a time; and this was the whole of their service during the year, after which they attended to their own affairs. Thus the king had always on foot a regular force of twenty-four thousand, who served without expense to him or the state, and were not oppressed by the service, which took up only a twelfth part of their time, and by this plan he could at any time, when the exigency of the state required it, bring into the field twelve times twenty-four thousand, or two hundred and eighty-eight thousand fighting men, independently of the twelve thousand officers, which made in the whole an effective force of three hundred thousand soldiers; and all these men were prepared, disciplined, and ready at a call, without the smallest expense to the state or the king. These were, properly speaking, the militia of the Israelitish kingdom. See Calmet.

1CHRONICLES 27: 2 Over the first division for the first month was Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

Verse 2

First course for the first month - Instead of mentioning first, second, third, etc., month, the Targum names them thus: First month, Nisan; second, Aiyar; third, Sivan; fourth, Tammuz; fifth, Ab; sixth, Elul; seventh, Tishri; eighth, Marchesvan; ninth, Cisleu; tenth, Tebeth; eleventh, Shebat; twelfth, Adar. No mention is made of a veadar or intercalary month.

1CHRONICLES 27: 3 He was of the children of Perez, the chief of all the captains of the army for the first month.

1CHRONICLES 27: 4 Over the division of the second month was Dodai the Ahohite, and his division; and Mikloth the ruler: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

1CHRONICLES 27: 5 The third captain of the army for the third month was Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, chief: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

Verse 5

Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest - Why should not this clause be read as it is in the Hebrew? "Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, a captain; and in his course," etc. Or, as the Targum has it, "The third captain of the host for the month Sivan was Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, who was constituted a chief." He is distinguished from Benaiah, the Pirathonite, who was over the eleventh month. Some think that the original word הכהן *hacohen*, which generally signifies priest, should be translated here a principal officer; so the margin has it. But, in the Old Testament, כהן *cohen* signifies both prince and priest; and translating it by the former removes the difficulty from this place, for we well know that Benaiah never was a priest.

1CHRONICLES 27: 6 This is that Benaiah, who was the mighty man of the thirty, and over the thirty: and of his division was Ammizabad his son.

1CHRONICLES 27: 7 The fourth captain for the fourth month was Asahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

Verse 7

Asahel the brother of Joab - This verse proves that the division and arrangement mentioned above were made before David was acknowledged king in Hebron; for Asahel, the brother of Joab, who was fourth captain, was slain by Abner, while Ishbosheth reigned over Israel at Mahanaim, 2Sam 2:19-23.

1CHRONICLES 27: 8 The fifth captain for this fifth month was Shamhuth the Izrahite: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

1CHRONICLES 27: 9 The sixth captain for the sixth month was Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

1CHRONICLES 27: 10 The seventh captain for the seventh month was Helez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

1CHRONICLES 27: 11 The eighth captain for the eighth month was Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the Zerahites: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

1CHRONICLES 27: 12 The ninth captain for the ninth month was Abiezer the Anathothite, of the Benjamites: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

1CHRONICLES 27: 13 The tenth captain for the tenth month was Maharai the Netophathite, of the Zerahites: and in his division were Twenty-four thousand.

1CHRONICLES 27: 14 The eleventh captain for the eleventh month was Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

1CHRONICLES 27: 15 The twelfth captain for the twelfth month was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel: and in his division were twenty-four thousand.

1CHRONICLES 27: 16 Furthermore over the tribes of Israel: of the Reubenites was Eliezer the son of Zichri the ruler: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maacah:

Verse 16

Over the tribes of Israel - In this enumeration there is no mention of the tribes of Asher and Gad. Probably the account of these has been lost from this register. These rulers appear to have been all honorary men, without pay, like the lords lieutenants of our counties.

1CHRONICLES 27: 17 of Levi, Hashabiah the son of Kemuel: of Aaron, Zadok:

1CHRONICLES 27: 18 of Judah, Elihu, one of the brothers of David: of Issachar, Omri the son of Michael:

1CHRONICLES 27: 19 of Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah: of Naphtali, Jeremoth the son of Azriel:

1CHRONICLES 27: 20 of the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiah:

1CHRONICLES 27: 21 of the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo the son of Zechariah: of Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner:

1CHRONICLES 27: 22 of Dan, Azarel the son of Jeroham. These were the captains of the tribes of Israel.

1CHRONICLES 27: 23 But David didn't take the number of them from twenty years old and under, because the LORD had said he would increase Israel like the stars of the sky.

1CHRONICLES 27: 24 Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but didn't finish; and there came wrath for this on Israel; neither was the number put into the account in the chronicles of king David.

Verse 24

Neither was the number put in the account - Joab did not return the whole number; probably the plague began before he had finished: or, he did not choose to give it in, as he had entered on this work with extreme reluctance; and he did not choose to tell the king how numerous they were.

1CHRONICLES 27: 25 Over the king's treasures was Azmaveth the son of Adiel: and over the treasures in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the towers, was Jonathan the son of Uzziah:

Verse 25

Over the king's treasures - We see from these verses in what the personal property of David consisted: -

1. Treasures, gold, silver, etc.
2. Goods and grain in castles, cities villages, and in the fields.
3. Vineyards and their produce.
4. Olive-trees and their produce.
5. Neat cattle, in different districts.
6. Camels and asses: they had no horses.
7. Flocks, sheep, goats, etc.

1CHRONICLES 27: 26 Over those who did the work of the field for tillage of the ground was Ezri the son of Chelub:

1CHRONICLES 27: 27 and over the vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite: and over the increase of the vineyards for the wine cellars was Zabdi the Shiphmite:

1CHRONICLES 27: 28 and over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that were in the lowland was Baal Hanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil was Joash:

1CHRONICLES 27: 29 and over the herds that fed in Sharon was Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds that were in the valleys was Shaphat the son of Adlai:

1CHRONICLES 27: 30 and over the camels was Obil the Ishmaelite: and over the donkeys was Jehdeiah the Meronothite: and over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagrite.

1CHRONICLES 27: 31 All these were the rulers of the substance which was king David's.

1CHRONICLES 27: 32 Also Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counsellor, a man of understanding, and a scribe: and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni was with the king's sons:

1CHRONICLES 27: 33 Ahithophel was the king's counsellor: and Hushai the Archite was the king's friend:

1CHRONICLES 27: 34 and after Ahithophel was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and the captain of the king's army was Joab.

Verse 34

And after Ahithophel - The Targum is curious: "When they went to war, they asked counsel of Ahithophel; and, after the counsel of Ahithophel, they inquired by Urim and Thummim of Jehoiada, the son of Benaiah, prince of the Sanhedrin, and chief of the priesthood; and from Abiathar, the high priest. And after they had inquired by Urim and Thummim, they went out to battle, well armed with bows and slings; and Joab, the general of the king's troops, led them on." It is worthy of remark, that Obil, an Ishmaelite or Arab, was put over the camels, which is a creature of Arabia; and that Jaziz, a

Hagarene, (the Hagarenes were shepherds by profession), was put over the flocks: nothing went by favor; each was appointed to the office for which he was best qualified; and thus men of worth were encouraged, and the public service effectually promoted.