

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CHRONICLES 4

In this chapter is a further account of the tribe of Judah, and of some principal families in it, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 4:1-23) and of the tribe of Simeon, their families, cities, and villages, (^{<101>}1 Chronicles 4:24-38) and of the enlargement of their borders, and conquest of the Amalekites, (^{<102>}1 Chronicles 4:39-43).

Ver. 1. *The sons of Judah: Pharez,* etc.] The posterity of Judah in the line of Pharez, for he only is mentioned:

Hezron, and Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal. Hezron was the son of Pharez, and Carmi is supposed to be Chelubai, or Caleb, the son of Hezron; and Hur the son of Caleb; and Shobal was the son of the second Caleb the son of Hur; (see ^{<103>}1 Chronicles 2:5,9,19,50).

Ver. 2. *And Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath,* etc.] Reaiah is the same with Haroeh, (^{<104>}1 Chronicles 2:52) the names are of the same signification:

and Jahath begat Ahumai, and Lahad. These are the families of the Zorathites; who inhabited Zoreah, as the Targum, at least part of it; (see ^{<105>}1 Chronicles 2:53,54).

Ver. 3. *And these were of the father of Etam,* etc.] Or of the prince of Etam: or, as the Targum, these are princes that dwelt in Etam, a place not far from Zorah, (^{<106>}Judges 15:8) and is mentioned with Bethlehem and Tekoa in the tribe of Judah, (^{<107>}2 Chronicles 11:6), namely, which follow:

Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash; these were the sons of the governor of Etam:

and the name of their sister was Hazelelponi; who, perhaps, was a person of great note in those days, though now unknown; indeed, a Jewish chronologer^{f21} tells us, that the mother of Samson was Hazalelponith, of the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 4. *And Penuel the father of Gedor*, etc.] The prince of that place, according to some, and the same with Hareph, (^{<1325>}1 Chronicles 2:51),
and Ezer the father of Hushah: thought to be the same with Shuah, (^{<1341>}1 Chronicles 4:11),

these are the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephratah: Caleb's wife, (^{<1329>}1 Chronicles 2:19) the Targum adds, the same with Miriam; and so other Jewish writers^{f22} say, Miriam had two names, and one was Ephratah; though Josephus makes^{f23} Hur to be her husband, and not her son, as here:

who was the father of Bethlehem; of the inhabitants of that city, at least part of them, or prince of that place, as his grandson Salma also was, (^{<1325>}1 Chronicles 2:51).

Ver. 5. *And Ashur the father of Tekoa*, etc.] A son of Hezron by Abiah, (^{<1325>}1 Chronicles 2:24)

had two wives, Helah and Naarah; as Lamech had, polygamy not being reckoned unlawful in those times.

Ver. 6. *And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hopher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari*, etc.] Of whom we have no account elsewhere:

these were the sons of Naarah; the second wife of Ashur.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Helah*, etc.]] The other wife:

were Zereth, and Zoar, and Ethnan: nowhere else mentioned.

Ver. 8. *And Coz*, etc.] Another son of Helah, and brother of the before mentioned:

begat Anub, and Zobebah; of whom we nowhere else read:

and the families of Aharhel, the son of Harum; these were of the posterity of Coz; the Targum is,

“and the family of Aharhel, this is Hur, the firstborn of Miriam;”

which is not at all probable.

Ver. 9. *And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren*, etc.] The Targum adds,

“and wiser in the law than his brethren;”

or he might be a man of great wealth and riches, or of great strength and courage, all which make a man honourable; or he may be so called, because a praying man, as follows, a man of devotion and religion, a man of God, (see ^{<0005>}1 Samuel 9:6), but who he was is not easy to say, probably a son or brother of Harum, or however that belonged to one of the families of Aharhel, mentioned in the preceding verse; for that he was Othniel, as say the Targumist and other Jewish writers ^{f24}, is not probable, and besides is after spoken of distinct from him, (^{<0043>}1 Chronicles 4:13)

and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, because I bare him with sorrow; either with sorrow for her husband, being dead, or by reason of very sharp pains she endured at the birth of him; he was another Benoni.

Ver. 10. *And Jabez called on the God of Israel*, etc.] Or prayed to him, as the Targum; though some understand it as a vow, promising what he would do if God would do thus and thus for him; the Syriac and Arabic versions read in the third person, taking it to be what others, his parents and friends, wished for him,

let him bless thee, etc.] but they are doubtless his own words, and a supplication of his to the Lord:

saying, oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed; the Targum adds, with children; but he no doubt prayed for greater blessings than any outward or temporal ones are, even spiritual blessings, covenant blessings, the sure mercies of David, which are solid, substantial, durable, and irreversible:

and enlarge my coast; the Targum is,

“multiply my borders with disciples.”

It may be understood of an enlargement of the borders of his country, by expelling the Canaanites that might dwell in it, and of an increase of his worldly substance for good ends and purposes; or rather of a spiritual enlargement by deliverance from spiritual enemies, and of grace as to exercise; and particularly of spiritual light and knowledge, and of the affections and desires of the soul after divine things, (see ^{<0900>}Psalm 4:1 119:32 ^{<1003>}1 Kings 4:29 ^{<0061>}2 Corinthians 6:11,12)

and that thine hand might be with me; the Targum adds, in business, prospering and succeeding him; the sense may be, that his hand of providence might be with him to protect him, of grace and love to comfort

and help him in every time of need, of wisdom to direct him, and of power to keep him:

and that thou wouldest keep me from evil; from the evil of affliction, and especially from the evil of sin, and from the evil one, Satan, and from all evil men and evil company; the Targum is, ``and make me companions such as I am:”

that it may not grieve me; alluding to his name Jabez, which he had from the sorrow and grief of his mother; and nothing is more grieving to a good man than the evil of sin, so contrary to the nature and will of God, being committed against a God of infinite love, grace, and mercy, whereby the name, ways, and truths of Christ are dishonoured, and the Spirit of God grieved, and saints are bereaved of much comfort; and therefore desire to be kept from it, knowing they cannot keep themselves, but the Lord can and will, at least from the tyranny of it, and destruction by it: the Targum is,

“lest the evil figment (or corruption of nature) should move or provoke me:”

and God granted him that which he requested; as he does whatever is asked in faith, according to his will, and will make for his glory, and the good of his people; (see ^{<1304>}1 John 5:14,15).

Ver. 11. *And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir*, etc.] If Shuah is the same with Hushah, (^{<1304>}1 Chronicles 4:4), then Chelub was the son of Ezer:

which was the father of Eshton; not the prince of a place called Eshton, as Vatablus; for it is the name of a man, the son of Mehir, and who in the next verse is said to beget sons.

Ver. 12. *And Eshton begat Bethrapha*, etc.] Or the family of Rapha:

and Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Irnashah; or the city of Nahash; Tehinnah seems to have been the prince or governor of a city, so called:

these are the men of Rechah; these sons of Eshton dwelt in a place called Rechah; the Targum, without any reason, says, these are the men of the great sanhedrim.

Ver. 13. *And the sons of Kenaz*, etc.] Who was either the son of Chelub, or of Eshton:

Othniel, and Seraiah; the first of these is he who is mentioned, (^{<657>}Joshua 15:17 ^{<613>}Judges 1:13 3:9) and was the first judge in Israel:

and the son of Othniel, Hathath; and the next mentioned.

Ver. 14. *And Meonothai*, etc.] Another son of Othniel:

begat Ophrah; and Seraiah, the brother of Othniel, begat Joab; not David's general, but another of the same name, who lived long before him, (see ^{<15>}1 Chronicles 2:54)

the father of the valley of Charashim: of the inhabitants of the valley, or the prince of them, called the valley of craftsmen, (^{<15>}Nehemiah 11:35) the reason of which is here given:

for they were craftsmen; that dwelt in it, carpenters and smiths, both which the word signifies, men that wrought in stone, wood, and iron.

Ver. 15. *And the sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh*, etc.] Jephunneh is not the same with Hezron, as the Targum, but another son of Kenaz, hence called the Kenezite, (^{<16>}Joshua 14:6) and brother of Othniel; and Caleb his son is the same that was sent one of the spies of the land of Canaan by Moses, (see ^{<16>}Numbers 13:6 14:6)

his sons were Iru, Elah, and Naam; of whom we nowhere else read:

and the sons of Elah, even Kenaz; another Kenaz, or rather it should be read Uknaz; so Jarchi and Kimchi.

Ver. 16. *And the sons of Jehaleleel*, etc.] Who probably was the son of Uknaz:

Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel; there were two cities in the tribe of Judah of the name of Ziph, (^{<16>}Joshua 15:24,55), which might be called from these men, or from Ziph in (^{<16>}1 Chronicles 2:42).

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Ezra*, etc.] Who was perhaps the son of Asareel, last mentioned:

Jether, and Mered, and Ephraim, and Jalon; only one of them, Mered, is after mentioned:

and she bare Miriam; which is not the name of a woman, but of a man, as Kimchi observes; and, according to him, his mother was the wife of Mered, which he gathers from the next verse; though she seems to be the wife of Ezra, who bare him other sons:

and Shammai, and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa; a prince of a city in the tribe of Judah, so called, (^{<0650>}Joshua 15:50 21:14).

Ver. 18. *And his wife Jehudijah*, etc.] Another wife of Ezra; or, according to Kimchi, of Mered; a Jewess, as the word is by some rendered, to distinguish her from another wife, an Egyptian, in the latter part of the verse:

bare Jered the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah; who were princes, as Jarchi seems rightly to observe; of several cities of these names in the tribe of Judah, as of Gedor, (see ^{<0658>}Joshua 15:58), of Socoh, (^{<0659>}Joshua 15:35,48), of Zanoah, (^{<0654>}Joshua 15:34), the Targum interprets the names of all these men of Moses, whom Pharaoh's daughter brought up; and so other Jewish writers ^{f25}, into which mistake they were led by what follows:

and these are the sons of Bithiah, the daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took; that is, to wife; this Mered was one of the sons of Ezra, (^{<13017>}1 Chronicles 4:17) the Targum, and other Jewish writers ^{f26}, say this was Caleb, called Mered, because he rebelled against the counsel of the spies; but this contradicts their other notion of Jehudijah, or Bithiah, Pharaoh's daughter, whom he married, the one who brought up Moses, since Moses was elder than Caleb; but Bithiah, whom Mered married, was not a daughter of Pharaoh king of Egypt, but of an Israelite of this name; her sons are supposed to be those in the latter part of (^{<13017>}1 Chronicles 4:17).

Ver. 19. *And the sons of his wife Hodiah*, etc.] Another wife of Mered. Hillerus ^{f27} takes her to be the same with Jehudijah, (^{<13018>}1 Chronicles 4:18), though some ^{f28} take Hodiah to be the name of a man, and read the words, "and the sons of the wife of Hodiah"; which wife of Hodiah was

the sister of Naham; or rather Ahotnaham, we render the sister of Naham, is the name of the first son of Hodiah, as some think ^{f29}:

the father of Keilah the Garmite; prince of the city of Keilah, in the tribe of Judah, (^{<0654>}Joshua 15:44) who sprung from the family of Garmi:

and Eshtemoa the Maachathite; the father or prince of the inhabitants of Eshtemoa, another city in the same tribe, (see ^{<13047>}1 Chronicles 4:17) who sprung from Maachah, (see ^{<1308>}1 Chronicles 2:48).

Ver. 20. *And the sons of Shimon*, etc.] Perhaps another son of Mered by his last wife, or the same with Shammai, (^{<13047>}1 Chronicles 4:17) were

Amnon, and Rinnah, Benhanan, and Tilon; nowhere else mentioned:

and the sons of Ishi: who it may be was the brother of Shimon or Tilon: were

Zoheth, and Benzoheth; of whom we know no more than their names.

Ver. 21. *The sons of Shelah, the son of Judah, were*, etc.] The genealogy of the posterity of Judah, in the lines of Pharez and Zerah, being given, and very largely in that of the former, because of the honour of David, and his kingdom, which sprang from thence, as Jarchi observes, and also the King Messiah, the writer returns to give an account of his posterity by Shelah, a son he had by the daughter of Shuah, (^{<01302>}Genesis 38:2-5) and the only one that had children: which were as follow,

Er the father of Lecah: prince of a city of this name in the tribe of Judah; Shelah gave him the name of Er, in memory of his brother, (^{<01303>}Genesis 38:3),

and Laadah the father of Mareshah; prince of a city of this name in the same tribe, (^{<01354>}Joshua 15:44)

and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen, of the house of Ashbea; which last clause explains what house these families were of, which sprang from Shelah, and were employed in making fine linen; the Targum adds, for the garments of kings and priests, or for the curtains of the tabernacle, as Jarchi; for not with the Egyptians and Greeks only fine linen was made, but among the Hebrews, as Pausanias ^{f30} testifies.

Ver. 22. *And Jokim*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version is,

and he that made the sun to stand: as if Joshua was meant; and in the Talmud it is ^{f31} said Jokim, this is Joshua, who confirmed the oath to the Gibeonites; and the Targum here is,

“and the prophets of the scribes that sprang from the posterity of Joshua;”

but Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim, and not of Judah; though some interpret it of Elimelech, as Lyra observes ^{f32}, of whom the fable is, that the sun stood still at his prayers, as it did in Joshua's time, to convert the men of Bethlehem; but Jokim is no doubt the proper name of some famous man or family that descended from Shelah:

and the men of Chozeba: which signifies a lie; and the Targum interprets it of the Gibeonites, who lied to Joshua; but those were Canaanites, and not of the posterity of Shelah, and tribe of Judah; Chezib, or Achzib, a city in the tribe of Judah, very probably is meant, as Kimchi, the very place where Shelah was born, (^{QEB5}Genesis 38:5) and where dwelt some of his posterity:

and Joash and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab; some render the word, "which married in Moab"; and so the Targum interprets it of Mahlon and Chilion, who took wives of the daughters of Moab; but rather it is to be understood of some who were governors in Moab in the times of David, when Moab was subdued by him, (^{QBE2}2 Samuel 8:2) or however were such, who, at one time or another, made war with Moab, and overcame them:

and Jashubilehem: which the Targumist understands of Boaz, prince of the wise men of the school of Bethlehem, and the Talmudists ^{f33} of Ruth, that dwelt in Bethlehem; and may be interpreted of some of the inhabitants of that place which sprang from Shelah; or rather is the name of a single man, famous in his time, though not now known:

and these are ancient things; an account of persons that lived in ancient times, and which the writer of this book gives not on his own knowledge, but by tradition, or rather by inspiration.

Ver. 23. *These were the potters*, etc.] Or are the potters; the posterity of those men, who were so famous in their day, are now of mean employments: some of them made earthen pots; and some of them

dwelt among plants and hedges; or were employed in planting gardens and orchards, and making fences for them; or, as others think, "dwelt in Netaim and Gadara", cities in the tribe of Judah:

there they dwelt with the king for his work; to make pots, plant gardens, and set hedges for him; either for the king of Judah, or it may be for the king of Babylon, where they were carried captive, and now chose to

remain, doing those servile works for the king, without the city, in the fields.

Ver. 24. *The sons of Simeon*, etc.] The account of whom, next to the tribe of Judah, is given before Reuben, because its inheritance lay in the tribe of Judah, (^{<0690>}Joshua 19:1) his sons were Nemuel, the same with Jemuel, (^{<0460>}Genesis 46:10)

and Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul; who, in the place referred to, is said to be the son of a Canaanitish woman; and Jarib and Zerah are the same with Jachin and Zohar there: and Obed is here omitted, it may be because he died without issue; (see ^{<0462>}Numbers 26:12,13).

Ver. 25. *Shallum his son*, etc.] The son of Shaul, and Mibsam was the son of Shallum, and Mishma the son of Mibsam.

Ver. 26. *And the sons of Mishma*, etc.] These were Hamuel, Zacchur, and Shimei.

Ver. 27. *And Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters*, etc.] None of which are mentioned by name:

but his brethren had not many children: Hamuel and Zacchur:

neither did all their family multiply like to the children of Judah: to show the fruitfulness and great increase of which tribe, the genealogical account of it, in this and the two preceding chapters, is given.

Ver. 28. *And they dwelt at Beersheba*, etc.] posterity of Simeon; and this and the other places of their habitation are mentioned in the same order, and with very little variation of names to the end of (^{<1066>}1 Chronicles 4:31), as in (^{<0692>}Joshua 19:2-6) and here, at (^{<1061>}1 Chronicles 4:31) it is added,

these were their cities unto the reign of David; when, according to Kimchi, and other Jewish writers, he expelled them from thence, and restored them to the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 32. *And their villages were Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan, five cities*.] There are but four mentioned in (^{<0697>}Joshua 19:7) one might be added since, or new built, namely, Tochen; these, according to Kimchi, were all that remained for them to dwell in, in the times of David; and therefore they were obliged to seek out for new settlements for themselves and flocks, as in (^{<1069>}1 Chronicles 4:39), etc.

Ver. 33. *And all their villages that were round about the same cities, unto Baal,* etc.] The same with Baalathbeer, (^{<1698>}Joshua 19:8)

these were their habitations, and their genealogy; as before described, until the times of David.

Ver. 34-37. *And Meshobab, and Jamlech,* etc.] These, with those that follow to the end of (^{<1345>}1 Chronicles 4:37) were famous men in the tribe of Simeon, of rank and dignity, and eminent for courage and valour, as the latter part of the chapter testifies, though they are nowhere else taken notice of. Jamlech, as Fabritius ^{f34} observes, is not very different from Jamblichus, the name of a famous Platonic philosopher.

Ver. 38. *These mentioned by [their] names [were] princes in their families,* etc.] The principal men of them, heads of their fathers' houses:

and the house of their fathers increased greatly; by them, so that they were obliged to seek out for new habitations, as follows.

Ver. 39. *And they went to the entrance of Gedor,* etc.] There was a city of this name in the tribe of Judah, (^{<1318>}1 Chronicles 4:18) but this seems to be further off, and perhaps is the same with Gedaris, mentioned by Strabo ^{f35} along with Azotus and Askelon, cities that belonged to the Philistines; since it was inhabited by the posterity of Ham, of whom the Philistines were, as in the following verse:

even unto the east side of the valley; which was near to Gedor, and a suitable place:

to seek pasture for their flocks; their sheep and goats.

Ver. 40. *And they found fat pasture and good,* etc.] In or near the valley of Gedor:

and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable; there was room enough for them and their flocks, and they had no enemies on either side to disturb them:

for [they] of Ham had dwelt there of old; either the Canaanites who descended from Canaan the son of Ham, and had never been expelled from thence; or the Philistines, who were a colony of the Egyptians, the posterity of Ham; and these inhabitants being of this cursed race, the Simeonites scrupled not to dispossess them.

Ver. 41. *And these written by name*, etc.] Before in (~~1306~~1 Chronicles 4:34-37),

came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; as Dr. Lightfoot^{f36} thinks, not within the first fourteen years of his reign, when the Syrian army was abroad, and none dost peep out, but in his last fifteen years, when the army was destroyed and gone:

and smote their tents; the tents of those who dwelt there for the sake of feeding their flocks, and whose pasturage the Simeonites wanted:

and the habitations that were found there; or the Meunaim or Maonites, which the Septuagint Version here calls Mineans, a people sometimes mentioned along with the Philistines, and others: (see ~~0701E~~Judges 10:11,12 ~~1306~~1 Chronicles 26:6,7)

and destroyed them utterly unto this day: to the writing of this book; they had not then recovered their possessions:

and dwelt in their room, because there was pasture there for their flocks; which was the thing they were in search of.

Ver. 42. *And some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men went to Mount Seir*, etc.] In the land of Edom:

having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi; these four captains are said, by the ancient Rabbins, to be of the tribe of Manasseh, as Kimchi observes; (see ~~1304~~1 Chronicles 5:24) but as the five hundred they were at the head of were of the sons of Simeon, the captains, no doubt, were of the same race.

Ver. 43. *And they smote the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped*, etc.] That escaped the sword^{f37} of Saul; though, according to the Jews^{f37}, 100,000 of them were slain by him in one day; and of the sword of David, though he is said not to leave man or woman alive, (~~0278~~1 Samuel 27:8,9)

and dwelt there unto this day; in the cities of the Amalekites, even of the posterity of the above; who were some of the remnant of Israel, that were not carried away by the king of Assyria, and who dwelt here after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, even in the times of Ezra, the writer of this book; (see ~~1480~~2 Chronicles 34:9).