

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO 1 CHRONICLES 6

This chapter begins with the fathers and heads of the tribe of Levi, (^{<3161>}1 Chronicles 6:1-3), and reckons up the high priests in the line of Eleazar, to the Babylonish captivity, (^{<3161>}1 Chronicles 6:4-15) gives an account of the families of the sons of Levi, (^{<3166>}1 Chronicles 6:16-30) and of those Levites that were employed as singers, and in other ministrations in the sanctuary in the times of David and Solomon, (^{<3161>}1 Chronicles 6:31-49), then follows a repetition of the sons of Aaron in the line of Eleazar, to the said times, (^{<3161>}1 Chronicles 6:50-53), and a recital of the dwelling places of the Levites in the several tribes, (^{<3164>}1 Chronicles 6:54-81).

Ver. 1. *The sons of Levi*, etc.] After an account of the chief of the tribes of Judah and Simeon, of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, follows that of Levi, and his posterity; the kingdom being given to Judah, the birthright to Joseph, and the priesthood to Levi: the immediate sons of Levi were

Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; as in (^{<0461>}Genesis 46:11 ^{<0166>}Exodus 6:16), from these sprung the three families of the Levites.

Ver. 2. *And the sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel*, etc.] Given in the same order as in (^{<0168>}Exodus 6:18), ((See Gill on "^{<0168>}Exodus 6:18"))).

Ver. 3. *And the children of Amram, Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam*, etc.]. Very memorable persons: Aaron was the high priest, Moses the prophet and lawgiver, and Miriam a prophetess, (see ^{<0304>}Micah 6:4),

the sons also of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar; the two first were destroyed by fire from heaven for offering strange fire, (^{<0301>}Leviticus 10:1,2) and the third succeeded his father in the high priesthood; the line of which is drawn from Aaron through him unto the Babylonish captivity, from hence to the end of the fifteenth verse, where it ends: Jehozadak is the same with Josedech, (^{<3101>}Haggai 1:1) who went young into Babylon, and whose son Joshua, born in the captivity, came out

of it on the proclamation of Cyrus, (^{<100>}Ezra 2:2 3:2). According to Josephus^{f53}, and other Jewish writers^{f54}, in the times of Uzzi, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:6) the priesthood was translated into the family of Ithamar, of which Eli was the first high priest; where it continued to the times of Solomon, when it was restored to Zadok, of the line of Eleazar. It is particularly observed of Azariah, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:10) that he it was that executed the priest's office in the temple built by Solomon; not that he was the first that officiated in it, that was Zadok; but this seems to be Azariah, who was the high priest in the times of Uzziah, who opposed him when he would have offered incense in the temple, (^{<100>}2 Chronicles 26:17,18), which may be the reason why he is so particularly taken notice of here; though some think this is to be understood of Johanan, the father of Azariah, supposed to the same with Jehoiada, who, in the times of Athaliah, was the instrument of preserving both church and state, (^{<100>}2 Kings 11:4-12), the temple in which he ministered is described as built by Solomon, because at the time of the writing of this there was another temple built, or building, by Zerubbabel.

Ver. 16-19. *The sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.*] Which is repeated from (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:1) for the sake of their posterity, whose names are given in the three following verses, in the same manner as in (^{<100>}Exodus 6:17-19).

Ver. 20, 21. *Of Gershon, Libni his son,* etc.] Whose genealogy runs thus, Jahath, called Jehiel, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 23:8). Zimmah, between whom was Shimei, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:42). Joah, the same with Ethan, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:42). Iddo, called Adaiah, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:41). Zerah, Jeaterai, whose name was also Ethni, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:41), the posterity of Shimei, the brother of Libni, are omitted.

Ver. 22-28. *The sons of Kohath, Amminadab,* etc.] The same with Izhar, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:2,18,38) the posterity of his brethren, Amram, Hebron, and Uzziel, are omitted; and his genealogy is carried to a considerable length, for the sake of Samuel the prophet, who sprang from him: it stands thus, Korah, Assir, Elkanah, Ebiasaph, Assir, Tahath, Uriel, called Zephaniah, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:36) Uzziah, the same with Azariah, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:36). Shaul, whose name is Joel, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:36) then through the sons of Elkanah, before mentioned, Amasai, Ahimoth, called Mahath, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:35) another Elkanah, Zophai, or Zuph, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:35). Nahath, the same with Toah, (^{<100>}1 Chronicles 6:34) and

Tohu, (^{<0001>}1 Samuel 1:1), Eliab, called Eliel, (^{<0364>}1 Chronicles 6:34), and Elihu, (^{<0001>}1 Samuel 1:1), Jeroham, another Elkanah, the father of Samuel the prophet, whose firstborn was Vashni, and whose name also was Joel, (^{<0363>}1 Chronicles 6:33 ^{<0082>}1 Samuel 8:2) and so here it is read in the Syriac and Arabic versions:

and his second son Abiah.

Ver. 29, 30. *The sons of Merari; Mahli,* etc.] The posterity of his brother Mushi are omitted; his genealogy is drawn thus, Libni, Shimei, Uzza, Shimea, Haggiah, Asaiah.

Ver. 31. *And these are they,* etc.] Who follow; the account of whom begins (^{<0363>}1 Chronicles 6:33),

whom David set over the service of the song in the house of the Lord: whom he appointed chief musicians, and masters of the chorus, to manage and conduct that part of divine service in the sanctuary, singing the praises of God, both with vocal and instrumental music:

after the ark had rest; which was when it was brought from the house of Obedom to the city of David, and was placed in a tabernacle he provided for it, (^{<0082>}2 Samuel 6:12-17), where it remained until the temple was built, when and which was the only time it was removed, whereas before it had been removed from place to place, and so till now had no rest; though some understand this of the ceasing or silence of the oracle over the ark, which was neither consulted by Solomon and his successors, nor any of the high priests afterwards ^{f55}.

Ver. 32. *And they ministered before the dwelling place of the tabernacles of the congregation with singing,* etc.] Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; this service they performed before the ark, which was in a tent or tabernacle David pitched for it; and which the Targum here calls the tabernacle of time, or a temporary tabernacle:

until Solomon had built the house of the Lord in Jerusalem; the temple there:

and then they waited on their office according to their order; performed it in the manner prescribed by David, (see ^{<0370>}1 Chronicles 25:1-31).

Ver. 33-38. *And these are they that waited with their children,* etc.] They and their posterity, who officiated in the service of singing psalms in the

sanctuary: the three heads of them were of the three families of the Levites, as follow:

of the sons of the Kohathites, Heman a singer; the chief of the singers, and who composed psalms and hymns, which are in the book of Psalms:

the son of Joel, the son of Shemuel; or Samuel. This Heman was grandson of Samuel the prophet; for whose sake his genealogy is traced up to Jacob or Israel in the following verses, and stands thus; after Samuel, Elkanah, Jeroham, Eliel, Toah, Zuph, Elkanah, Mahath, Amasai, Elkanah, Joel, Azariah, Zephaniah, Tahath, Assir, Ebiasaph, Korah, Izhar, Kohath, Levi, Israel.

Ver. 39-43. *And his brother Asaph*, etc.] That is, Heman's brother; so Asaph was, as he was a descendant from the same original ancestor Levi, yet in the line of Gershon; and as being of the same office, a precentor, or chief singer:

who stood on his right hand; he was next to Heman; Heman stood in the middle, which was the most honourable ^{f56}, and Asaph on his right hand, and Ethan, after mentioned, on his left; even Asaph, whose name is often met with in the book of Psalms; and his genealogy here stands thus, as traced up to Levi, viz. Berechiah, Shimea, Michael, Baaseiah, Malchiah, Ethni, Zerah, Adaiah, Ethan, Zimmah, Shimei, Jahath, Gershon, Levi.

Ver. 44-47. *And their brethren, the sons of Merari*, etc.] Who were the brethren of the Kohathites and Gershonites, descending from the same ancestor Levi: stood

on the left hand; that is, of Heman, (see ~~<1369>~~ 1 Chronicles 6:39), the chief of whom was Ethan, sometimes called Jeduthun, (~~<1364>~~ 1 Chronicles 16:41 25:1,3,6) and often in the book of Psalms; his genealogy is traced up to Levi thus; Kishi, called Kushaiah, (~~<1357>~~ 1 Chronicles 15:17) Abdi, Malluch, Hashabiah, Amaziah, Hilkiah, Amzi, Bani, Shamer, Mahli, Mushi, Merari, Levi.

Ver. 48. *Their brethren also the Levites*, etc.] Who were not skilled in singing, and employed in that service, even the rest of the Kohathites, Gershonites, and Merarites:

were appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God; some were porters at the gates; others had the care of the vessels;

others slew the beasts for sacrifices, flayed them, and cut them up, and brought the pieces to the altar of burnt offerings, for the priests to offer.

Ver. 49-53. *But Aaron and his sons*, etc.] Those that descended from him, though of the same tribe of Levi were all priests:

and they offered upon the altar of burnt offerings; the daily sacrifice, and all the offerings of the people brought to them:

and on the altar of incense; they burnt incense night and morning: and were appointed

for all the work of the place most holy; such as were high priests of the line of Eleazar, whose work it was to go into the most holy place once a year:

to make atonement for all Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God commanded; in (~~4860~~Leviticus 16:1) which see; and on mention of this, a list of the high priests from Aaron, in the line of Eleazar, is given, to the times of Solomon, in the four following verses, just in the same order as in (~~1360~~1 Chronicles 6:4-8).

Ver. 54-81. *Now these are their dwelling places*, etc.] The dwelling places of the priests and Levites, assigned and given to them in the several tribes of Israel; and the account of them agrees with that in (~~620~~Joshua 21:1) with some few variations of names of places, which have been there observed: see the notes there; only in (~~1357~~1 Chronicles 6:57-60) two cities are omitted, Juttah and Gibeon, through want of care in transcribing, since they are said to be “thirteen”, as they should be, whereas eleven only are mentioned. The Jews say ^{f57}, the cities of the suburbs (those here mentioned) ceased from the time the first temple was destroyed; and yet Ezra, who lived after the captivity, and the building the second temple, here gives a very particular account of them; the suburbs belonging to every city, which he particularly mentions, were 2000 cubits, both to the cities of refuge, and the rest, (~~485~~Numbers 35:5) Hebron, the first city mentioned in the next verse, was a city of refuge, and had suburbs of such a space; and it is remarkable, that some of the temples with the Heathens, which were asylums, or places of refuge, had the space of 2000 paces assigned them for the same sanctity and privilege ^{f58}.