

# CHAPTER 26

## INTRODUCTION TO 1 CHRONICLES 26

In this chapter we have a further account of the disposition and distribution of the Levites, to serve in other offices, as of porters at the several gates of the temple, for which they cast lots, (<sup><130></sup>1 Chronicles 26:1-19) of others, as over the treasures of the house of the Lord, (<sup><130></sup>1 Chronicles 26:20-28), and of others that were appointed judges in the land, to administer justice to the people, (<sup><130></sup>1 Chronicles 26:29-32).

**Ver. 1.** *Concerning the divisions of the porters*, etc.] Or doorkeepers, whose business it was to open and shut the doors of the temple, to keep all impure and improper persons from entering into it, or any of the vessels being carried out of it, and to prevent tumults and riots about it; these, as it seems, David divided into a like number of classes, as the singers, to take their turns in waiting:

*of the Korhites was Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph*; not Asaph the singer, who was a Gershonite, but the same with Eliasaph, (<sup><130></sup>1 Chronicles 6:23,27) a Korhite.

**Ver. 2, 3.** *And the sons of Meshelemiah were, Zechariah the firstborn*, etc.] And six more, who are mentioned in their order:

*Jediael, Zebadiah, and Jathniel, Elam, Jehohanan, and Elioenai.*

**Ver. 4,5.** *Moreover, the sons of Obededom*, etc.] The same at whose house the ark was, before it was brought by David to Zion; his sons were porters also, as himself, (<sup><130></sup>1 Chronicles 15:24 16:38), mention is made of eight sons of his, according to their birth:

*Shemaiah, Jehozabad, Joah, Sacar, Nethaneel, Ammiel, Issachar, Peulthai; for God blessed him*; as with wealth and riches, so with a numerous offspring, and that because of his entertainment of the ark at his house; the great increase of his family is aggravated by the Jews<sup>f107</sup> beyond all credit, that all in his family brought eight at a birth; the Targum here makes them eighty two in all.

**Ver. 6.** *Also unto Shemaiah his son,* etc.] His firstborn, (~~1306~~ 1 Chronicles 26:4)

*were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father;* were heads of families, eminent and principal men:

*for they were mighty men of valour;* which their office sometimes required them to be, to guard the temple at night as well as day from thieves and robbers, and to hinder resolute men entering in, unfit for it, and seize on rioters, and quell tumults raised.

**Ver. 7.** *The sons of Shemaiah,* etc.] The same before mentioned, the firstborn of Obededom:

*Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, and Elzabad, whose brethren were strong men; Elihu and Semachiah;* which may rather denote their valour and courage, as before, though strength of body was needful, particularly to open and shut the doors of the temple, which, Josephus<sup>f108</sup> says, required the assistance of twenty men.

**Ver. 8.** *All these of the sons of Obededom,* etc.] And grandsons:

*they and their sons and their brethren, able men for strength for the service;* men of fortitude of mind and strength of body, as before observed: were

*sixty two of Obededom:* that sprung from him, which the Jews<sup>f109</sup> account for in an extravagant manner, as the effect of miraculous births.

**Ver. 9.** *And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen,* etc.] He had seven sons, (~~1301~~ 1 Chronicles 26:1-3) and therefore must have eleven brethren or kinsmen.

**Ver. 10.** *Also Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons,* etc.] Who was a fellow porter of Obededom's at the ark, (~~1368~~ 1 Chronicles 16:38).

*Simri the chief (for though he was not the firstborn, yet his father made him the chief);* the firstborn being unfit for service, either through want of an intellectual capacity, or of strength of body, or through some defect or another; according to the Syriac version, he was dead; so some understand the words, he, the father, had no firstborn remaining or living.

**Ver. 11.** *Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth; all the sons and brethren of Hosah were thirteen.*] Four sons, and nine brethren or kinsmen.

**Ver. 12.** *Among these were the divisions of the porters, even among the chief men,* etc.] These before named were the principal men of the porters, among which was a division or distribution of them into classes or courses, in which they served weekly in turn:

*having wards one against another, to minister in the house of the Lord;* meaning either to watch in, as on the north against the south, and the east against the west, and “vice versa”. The Jews say <sup>f110</sup>, the priests kept ward in three places in the house of the sanctuary; in the house of Abtines, in the house of Nitzotz, and in the house of Moked; and the Levites in twenty one places, five at the five gates of the mountain of the house, four at the four corners of it within, five at the five gates of the court, four at the four corners of it without, one at the chamber of the offering, one at the chamber of the vail, and another behind the house of atonement, the holy of holies; but rather the sense is, that they had wards or courses answerable to those of the priests, and the other Levites, the singers, and were distributed into twenty four classes or courses as they, which are thus reckoned by Kimchi; at the east six, at the north four, at the south four, at Asupim two and two, which were four, at the west four, and at Parbar two; lo, twenty four; (see <sup><1347></sup>1 Chronicles 26:17,18).

**Ver. 13.** *And they cast lots,* etc.] To determine at which gate each should stand, who at this gate, and who at the other, etc.

*as well the small as the great, according to the house of their fathers, for every gate;* meaning, not little ones and grown persons in a family, but the smaller and poorer families, and the larger and richer ones, had their places assigned them at the several gates, as the lot directed; they did not go according to the dignity and precedence of their families, but according to lot.

**Ver. 14.** *And the lot eastward fell to Shelemiah,* etc.] The same with Meshelemiah, (<sup><1348></sup>1 Chronicles 26:1,2,9) he by lot was placed at the eastern gate, called afterwards the gate Shushan, the city Shushan being portrayed upon it <sup>f111</sup>:

*then for Zechariah his son (a wise counsellor);* and who was his firstborn, (<sup><1349></sup>1 Chronicles 26:2) a man of great parts and learning: for they were not

mean persons that were employed in this office, nor was the office a mean one, like that of our porters; but men of considerable rank and figure, and of knowledge and learning, were in it; some of them were judges, (<sup><1379></sup>1 Chronicles 26:29) and their places were places of great trust, they had much treasure committed to them, as appears by (<sup><1330></sup>1 Chronicles 26:20),

*they cast lots, and his lot came out northward*; where was a gate in later times, called Teri or Tedi, which differed from other gates in this, that it had no threshold, only one stone was laid upon another, and was not commonly used<sup>f112</sup>.

**Ver. 15.** *To Obededom southward*, etc.] Where were two gates in later times, called the gates of Huldah<sup>f113</sup>:

*and to his sons, the house of Asuppim*; the word has the signification of gathering, hence some take it to be a council house, where the sanhedrim or elders gathered together, and sat; and others, rather a treasure house, where things of value were collected and laid up, since Obededom had the charge of gold and silver, and the vessels of the house, (<sup><1423></sup>2 Chronicles 25:24), but Dr. Lightfoot<sup>f114</sup> is of opinion, that

“Asuppim were two gates in the western wall, which stood most south, or nearest to Jerusalem; “and the house of Asuppim” was a large piece of building that ran between them, which was a treasury, or various rooms for treasuring or laying up something for the use of the temple;”

though L’Empereur thinks<sup>f115</sup> it was the chamber Korban, which is not so probable.

**Ver. 16.** *To Shuppim and Hosah the lot came forth westward*, etc.] Of Shuppim no mention is before made; of Hosah, (see <sup><1360></sup>1 Chronicles 26:10,11) their lot was to be placed at the gates on the western wall, where were four; the two more southward being assigned to the sons of Obededom, whose lot also was southward, are taken notice of under the division in the preceding verse; Parbar was another, (<sup><1308></sup>1 Chronicles 26:18), and another follows here:

*with the gate Shallecheth, by the causeway of the going up*; this gate was in later times called Coponius, from the name of a Roman commander, in the times of Herod, who might give it this name on his account; it might have the name of Shallecheth either from “sending out”, or carrying out the

filth of the temple through it; or rather from “casting up the causeway”, as here expressed, which was the going up, or ascent, Solomon made, by which he went up to the temple, (<sup><1216></sup>1 Kings 20:5) and which agrees with the description Josephus <sup>f116</sup> gives of one of the gates on the western wall, that it led to the royal palace, the valley between being filled up for the passage; on each side of which causeway, it is said, grew oaks and teil trees, (see <sup><2163></sup>Isaiah 6:13) which served both to keep up the causeway, and to make a fine, pleasant, shady walk for the king to pass through to the temple; all which are observed by Dr. Lightfoot <sup>f117</sup>:

*ward against ward*; for as the gates answered one another, so the wards or watches at them.

**Ver. 17.** *Eastward were six Levites*, etc.] The eastern gate, being the way of entrance into the temple, required more porters:

*northward four a day*; in the daytime, or every day, where was the gate Teri or Tedi, (<sup><1354></sup>1 Chronicles 26:14), southward four a day: at the two gates of Huldah, (<sup><1355></sup>1 Chronicles 26:15) and toward Asuppim two and two; which were two gates, two at each gate, (<sup><1355></sup>1 Chronicles 26:15).

**Ver. 18.** *At Parbar westward*, etc.] A gate at the western wall; the Jewish writers generally interpret it an outward place, but Dr. Lightfoot <sup>f118</sup> thinks it is the same with Parvar, which signifies suburbs, (<sup><1231></sup>2 Kings 23:11), and which agrees with the description Josephus <sup>f119</sup> gives of one of the western gates, that it led to the suburbs:

*four at the causeway*; by which was the gate Shallecheth, (<sup><1356></sup>1 Chronicles 26:16)

*and two at Parbar*; the gate before mentioned.

**Ver. 19.** *These are the divisions of the porters among the sons of Kore, and among the sons of Merari*.] For among those Levites which descended from Kore, a grandson of Kohath, and which sprung from Merar, a brother of Kohath, the porters only wore; (see <sup><1320></sup>1 Chronicles 26:1,10).

**Ver. 20.** *And of the Levites*, etc.] The rest of the Levites, as the Gershonites, Amramites, Izharites, and Hebronites, (<sup><1320></sup>1 Chronicles 26:21,23).

*Ahijah was over the treasures of the house of God*; as the tithes, vessels, vestments, wine, and oil, and other things; such an one was Phinehas at the

time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian, who being taken, showed and delivered the priests' garments, and many other precious things and sacred ornaments under his care<sup>f120</sup>: and over the treasures of the dedicated things; voluntarily devoted for sacrifices and repairs of the temple; and this Ahijah had the care of each of those at first, which afterwards were divided, and put under the care of different persons.

**Ver. 21.** *As concerning the sons of Laadan*, etc.] The same with Libni, (see <sup><1217></sup>1 Chronicles 23:7)

*the sons of the Gershonite Laadan*; so called, to distinguish him from another Laadan, as Kimchi thinks:

*chief fathers, even of Laadan the Gershonite*; that sprung from him: were Jehieli; and his sons next mentioned.

**Ver. 22.** *The sons of Jehieli: Zetham, and Joel his brother*, etc.] Both sons of Jehieli: which were

*over the treasures of the house of the Lord*; that part of the trust which before was committed to Ahijah, which concerned provisions for sacred uses, before observed.

**Ver. 23.** *Of the Amramites and the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites*.] Who sprang from the four sons of Kohath, Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, (<sup><1188></sup>Exodus 6:18) with respect to the concerns they severally had in the trust of the treasures, the account follows, all but the Uzzielites, who are not after mentioned.

**Ver. 24.** *And Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was ruler of the treasures*.] This is the first time that any of the posterity of Moses are taken notice of, as being in any office of honour, authority, and trust; by the Targum he is said to be Jonathan, spoken of in (<sup><1181></sup>Judges 18:30) but very wrongly; this man, according to Jarchi and Kimchi, had all the treasures and treasurers under him.

**Ver. 25.** *And his brethren by Eliezer*, etc.] His kinsmen that descended from Eliezer, the brother of Gershom, the ancestor of Shebuel, whose descent from him in succession were

*Rehabiah, Jeshaiiah, Joram, Zichri, and Shelomith*.

**Ver. 26.** *Which Shelomith*, etc.] The last mentioned in the lineage from Eliezer, the younger son of Moses:

*and his brethren*; or kinsmen:

*were over all the treasures of the dedicated things*; which had been devoted for the service of God, and of the temple particularly:

*which David the king had dedicated*; out of the spoils he took in war, (see <sup><1081></sup>2 Samuel 8:11),

*the chief fathers*; princes of tribes, and heads of families:

*the captains over thousands and hundreds*; in the several tribes of the kingdom, and were concerned in the administration of justice to the people:

*and the captains of the host, had dedicated*; of the army, out of the spoils in victory that came to their share, (see <sup><06148></sup>Numbers 31:48,50) as follows.

**Ver. 27.** *Out of the spoils won in battle did they dedicate to maintain the house of the Lord.*] When it should be built; for as yet it was not; both to repair it when necessary, and to provide sacrifices for it; or to confirm, strengthen, and animate the heart of the king to build it, so some, and put it into the power of his hands to do it; so the Romans dedicated the best of their spoil, and laid it up in the temple of Jupiter Feretrius, after the example of Romulus, their first king <sup>f121</sup>; yea, sometimes out of the spoil they erected temples, as Tarquinius Superbus <sup>f122</sup> did; or repaired and ornamented them, as the temple at Delphos, and others <sup>f123</sup>.

**Ver. 28.** *And all that Samuel the seer*, etc.] Or prophet, won in battle with the Philistines:

*and Saul the son of Kish*; in his wars with the Moabites, Edomites, Amalekites, and Philistines:

*and Abner the son of Ner*: the general of his army, who as such had his share in the spoils:

*and Joab the son of Zeruiah*; the general of David's army, who fought with the Ammonites, Syrians, and others; all of whom

*had dedicated* more or less towards the building of the temple, and the support of it, it being known by them all that God would have a place to put his name in:

*[and] whosoever had dedicated anything, it was under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren:* this man had a great trust committed to him, with his brethren; some, before mentioned, are said to be over the treasures, some over one part, and some over another; but this man was over all of them, he had the superintendency of the whole.

**Ver. 29.** *Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons* were

*for the outward business over Israel,* etc.] Which was done out of the temple, and out of Jerusalem, in the several parts of the country:

*for officers and judges;* to administer justice and judgment, and to take care that the laws of God were observed, both with respect to things civil and religious, and delinquents punished; which is a better sense than what Jarchi and Kimchi put upon this,

*outward business,* as if it lay in taking care to have timber cut down in the forest, and stones dug and hewed in the mountains, for the building of the temple; and that the lands were ploughed, and the vineyards, gardens, and orchards, dressed, which were devoted to sacred uses.

**Ver. 30.** *And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred,* etc.] And supposing the Izharites in the preceding verse to be 1600, these, with those on the other side Jordan, 2700, (~~1332~~ 1 Chronicles 26:32) make up just the 6000 officers and judges, (~~1334~~ 1 Chronicles 23:4) these

*were officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward:* in those parts of the land which were on this side Jordan, to the west of it, yet nearer to it than those meant by Israel in the preceding verse; it may respect those that dwelt more remote from Jordan, though on this side also, towards the Mediterranean sea:

*in all business of the Lord, and in the service of the king; in things* divine and civil, what appertained to the worship of God, and the support of civil government, and to take care that all the laws were observed, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, and that both the Lord was feared, and the king honoured, and both had what was due unto them.

**Ver. 31.** *Among the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even among the Hebronites,* etc.] The posterity of Hebron, the son of Kohath:



*according to the generations of his fathers*; a principal man in the families that descended from his ancestors:

*in the fortieth year of the reign of David*; which was the last year of his reign, in which year all the above things were done; the distribution of the priests into their classes and courses, and so of the Levites, singers, and porters; as well as the appointment of those several judges and officers employed in divers parts of the land: and particularly in this year those

*Hebronites were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour, at Jazer of Gilead*; a city on the other side Jordan, which belonged to the tribe of Gad, (see <sup>4013</sup>Numbers 21:32 32:1,3,35).

**Ver. 32.** *And his brethren, men of valour, were two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers*, etc.] That is, the brethren or kinsmen of Jerijah the Hebronite were so many principal men in their families, and men of fortitude and courage:

*whom King David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh*; all which lay on the other side Jordan; and being so remote from the seat of civil government, and of the worship of God, they were in greater danger of revolting, both from their obedience to their king, and duty to their God; land therefore so large a number was appointed over them, to instruct them and keep them in their duty to both, as follows:

*for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king*; to see that they kept close to the pure worship and service of God; and were faithful and loyal subjects of the king.