

LESSON TWELVE 25-26

THE APPOINTMENT OF MUSICIANS DOORKEEPERS AND STEWARDS OF THE TEMPLE TREASURY

17. THE TEMPLE SINGERS (Chapter 25)

INTRODUCTION

David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, showed real interest in the musical program of the Temple. The instrumentalists and the singers were equipped and appointed. The physical matters such as guards and treasurers were also attended to by David.

TEXT

Chapter 25:1. Moreover David and the captains of the host set apart for the service certain of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of them that did the work according to their service was: 2. of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and Asharelah, the sons of Asaph, under the hand of Asaph, who prophesied after the order of the king. 3. Of Jeduthun; the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, and Zeri, and Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun with the harp, who prophesied in giving thanks and praising Jehovah. 4. Of Heman; the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romanti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, Mahazioth. 5. All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer in the words of God, to lift up the horn. And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. 6. All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of Jehovah, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God; Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman being under the order of the king. 7. And the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in singing unto Jehovah, even all that were skillful, was two hundred fourscore and eight. 8. And they cast lots for

their offices, all alike, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar.

9. Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph: the second to Gedaliah; he and his brethren and son were twelve: 10. the third to Zaccur, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 11. the fourth to Izri, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 12. the fifth to Nethaniah, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 13. the sixth to Bukkiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 14. the seventh to Jesharelah, his sons and his brethren twelve: 15. the eighth to Jeshaiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 16. the ninth to Mattaniah, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 17. the tenth to Shimei, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 18. the eleventh to Azarel, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 19. the twelfth to Hashabiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 20. for the thirteenth, Shubael, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 21. for the fourteenth, Mattithiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 22. for the fifteenth to Jeremoth, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 23. for the sixteenth to Hananiah, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 24. for the seventeenth to Joshbekashah, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 25. for the eighteenth to Hanani, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 26. for the nineteenth to Mallothi, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 27. for the twentieth to Eliathah, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 28. for the one and twentieth to Hothir, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 29. for the two and twentieth to Giddalti, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 30. for the three and twentieth to Mahazioth, his sons and his brethren, twelve: 31. for the four and twentieth to Romanti-ezer, his sons and his brethren, twelve.

PARAPHRASE

Chapter 25:1. David and the officials of the Tabernacle then appointed men to prophesy to the accompaniment of zithers, harps, and cymbals. These men were from the groups of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun. Here is a list of their names and their work: 2. Under the leadership of Asaph, the king's private prophet, were his sons Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and

Asharelah. 3. Under Jeduthun, who led in giving thanks and praising the Lord (while accompanied by the zither), were his six sons: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiiah, Shime-i, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah. 4, 5. Under the direction of Heman, the king's private chaplain, were his sons: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Geddalti, Romanti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazi-oth. (For God had honored him with fourteen sons and three daughters.) 6,7. Their music ministry included the playing of cymbals, harps, and zithers; all were under the direction of their father as they performed this ministry in the Tabernacle. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman reported directly to the king. They and their families were all trained in singing praises to the Lord; each one—288 of them in all—was a master musician. 8. The singers were appointed to their particular term of service by coin-toss, without regard to age or reputation.

9-31. The first toss indicated Joseph of the Asaph clan; The second, Gedaliah, along with twelve of his sons and brothers; The third, Zaccur and twelve of his sons and brothers; The fourth, Izri and twelve of his sons and brothers; Fifth, Nethaniah and twelve of his sons and brothers; Sixth, Bukkiah and twelve of his sons and brothers; Seventh, Jesharelah and twelve of his sons and brothers; Eighth, Jeshaiiah and twelve of his sons; Ninth, Mattaniah and twelve of his sons and brothers; Tenth, Shime-i and twelve of his sons and brothers; Eleventh, Azarel and twelve of his sons and brothers; Twelfth, Hashabiah and twelve of his sons and brothers; Thirteenth, Shuba-el and twelve of his sons and brothers; Fourteenth, Mattithiah and twelve of his sons and brothers; Fifteenth, Jeremoth and twelve of his sons and brothers; Sixteenth, Hananiah and twelve of his sons and brothers; Seventeenth, Joshbekasha and twelve of his sons and brothers; Eighteenth, Hanani and twelve of his sons and brothers; Nineteenth, Mallothi and twelve of his sons and brothers; Twentieth, Eliathah and twelve of his sons and brothers; Twenty-first, Hothir and twelve of his sons and brothers; Twenty-second, Giddalti and twelve of his sons and brothers; Twenty-third, Mahazi-oth and twelve of his sons and

brothers; Twenty-fourth, Romamti-ezer and twelve of his sons and brothers.

COMMENTARY

As he had done on previous occasions, David gathered all of his counselors (captains of the host) to assist in the appointments of the musicians and singers.¹ This was not a military matter, but it did concern the princes, the heads of tribes and other principal leaders. Three important families among the Hebrews provided the personnel for the corps of musicians. Asaph was a Gershonite Levite. Heman belonged to the Kohathite family. Jeduthun was a Merarite. In these three men all of the tribe of Levi was represented. From these three branches of the tribe of Levi a choir numbering two hundred and eighty eight was selected and trained (verse 7). The specific assignment for the musicians was that they should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals (verse 1). Asaph's sons were Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asharelah. Their ministry is described as "prophesying", Like the seventy elders who assisted Moses by prophesying when Israel murmured against Jehovah (Numbers 11:16-30), so these men were to speak out for Jehovah, to declare His wonder through sacred music and song. In like manner, Jeduthun's six sons (verse 3), who with their father were master harpists "Prophesied in giving thanks and praising Jehovah." Heman's fourteen sons (verse 4) were trained in the use of the horn (or trumpet). These sons were under their father's direction. Heman was also regarded as a seer. Samuel filled this office at the time when Saul sought his father's lost asses (I Samuel 9:9). The seer was able by divine help to give direction to men. All of these men and their sons were trained in "the words of God" (verse 5). Their music was useful only in connection with the "word". Some of the psalms are attributed to Asaph (see Psalms 50, 73-83). Jeduthun's name appears in the titles of some Psalms (see Psalms 39, 62, 77). Several Psalms have the phrase "for the chief musician" in

¹Oehler, Gustave F., *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 375. Archer, Gleason L. Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p. 395.

their titles without naming the chief musician. Perhaps certain songs were to be directed by particular leaders when singing and instrumental accompaniment were first introduced into the Temple liturgy. The sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun were under the direction of their fathers and all of the musicians were under orders from the king who in his own person was "the sweet psalmist of Israel". Music was considered to be a very important part of worship and those who served in this manner were carefully trained (verse 7). The twenty four named above were charged with the training and employment of eleven others in each instance, making a total of two hundred eighty eight musicians. To determine particular appointments, the casting of lots were used. Men with varying talents would serve in each of the twenty-four courses. Verses 9-31 list the details of the courses of the Levitical singers as they were selected by casting the sacred lot. The first lot went to Joseph, Asaph's son. The twenty fourth lot went to Romantiezer, son of Heman. The student is impressed with the careful attention given to these assignments. All of this was set up prior to David's death and before the construction of the Temple was begun.

18. THE GATEKEEPERS (26:1-28)

TEXT

Chapter 26:1. For the courses of the doorkeepers: of the Korahites, Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph. 2. And Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah the first-born, Jediel the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, 3. Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh. 4. And Obededom had sons: Shemaiah the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethanel the fifth, 5. Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peullethai the eighth; for God blessed him. 6. Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled over the house of their father; for they were mighty men of valor. 7. The sons of Shemaiah: Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren were valiant men, Elihu, and Semachiah. 8. All these were of the sons

of Obededom: they and their sons and their brethren, able men in strength for the service; threescore and two of Obed-edom. 9. And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, valiant men, eighteen. 10. Also Hasah, of the children of Merari, had sons: Shimri the chief (for though he was not the first-born, yet his father made him chief), 11. Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah were thirteen.

12. Of these were the courses of the doorkeepers, even of the chief men, having offices like their brethren, to minister in the house of Jehovah. 13. And they cast lots, as well the small as the great, according to their fathers' houses, for every gate. 14. And the lot eastward fell to Shelemiah. Then for Zechariah his son, a discreet counsellor, they cast lots; and his lot came out northward. 15. To Obed-edom southward; and to his sons the storehouse. 16. To Shuppim and Hosah westward, by the gate of Shallecheth, at the causeway that goeth up, watch against watch. 17. Eastward were six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day and for the store-house two and two. 18. For Parbar westward, four at the causeway, and two at Parbar. 19. These were the courses of the doorkeepers; of the sons of the Korahites, and of the sons of Merari.

20. And of the Levites, Ahijah was over the treasures of the house of God, and over the treasures of the dedicated things. 21. The sons of Ladan, the sons of the Gershonites belonging to Ladan, the heads of the fathers' houses belonging to Ladan the Gershonite: Jehieli. 22. The sons of Jehieli: Zetham, and Joel his brother, over the treasures of the house of Jehovah. 23. Of the Amramites, of the Izharites, of the Hebronites, of the Uzzielites: 24. and Shuebuel the son of Gershon, the son of Moses, was ruler over the treasures. 25. And his brethren: of Eliezer came Rehabiah his son, and Jeshaiiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zichri his son, and Shelomoth his son. 26. This Shelomoth and his brethren were over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which David the king, and the heads of the fathers' houses, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the host, had dedicated. 27. Out of the spoil

won in battles did they dedicate to repair the house of Jehovah. 28. And all that Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruah, had dedicated, whosoever had dedicated anything, it was under the hand of Shelomoth, and of his brethren.

PARAPHRASE

Chapter 26:1. The Temple guards were from the Asaph division of the Korah clan. The captain of the guard was Meshelemiah, the son of Kore. 2, 3. His sergeants were his sons: Zechariah (the oldest), Jedia-el (the second), Zebadiah (the third), Jathni-el (the fourth), Elam (the fifth), Jeho-hanan (the sixth), Elie-ho-enani (the seventh). 4, 5. The sons of Obed-edom were also appointed as Temple guards: Shemaiah (the oldest), Jehozabad (the second), Joah (the third), Sacar (the fourth), Nathanel (the fifth), Ammi-el (the sixth), Issachar (the seventh), Pe-ulleshai (the eighth), What a blessing God gave him with all those sons! 6, 7. Shemaiah's sons were all outstanding men, and had positions of great authority in their clan. Their names were: Othni, Repha-el, Obed, Elzabad. Their brave brothers, Elihu and Semachiah, were also very able men. 8. All of these sons and grandsons of Obed-edom—all sixty-two of them—were outstanding men who were particularly well qualified for their work. 9. Meshelemiah's eighteen sons and brothers, too, were real leaders. 10. Hosah, one of the Merari group, appointed Shimri as the leader among his sons, though he was not the oldest. 11. The names of some of his other sons were: Hilkiah, the second; Tebaliah, the third; Zechariah, the fourth. Hosah's sons and brothers numbered thirteen in all.

12. The divisions of the Temple guards were named after the leaders. Like the other Levites, they were responsible to minister at the Temple. 13. They were assigned guard duty at the various gates without regard to the reputation of their families, for it was all done by coin-toss. 14, 15. The responsibility of the east gate went to Shelemiah and his group; of the north gate to his son Zechariah, a man of unusual wisdom; of the south gate to Obed-edom and his group (his sons were given

charge of the storehouses); 16. of the west gate and the Shallecheth Gate on the upper road, to Shuppim and Hosah. 17. Six guards were assigned daily to the east gate, four to the north gate, four to the south gate, and two to each of the storehouses. 18. Six guards were assigned each day to the west gate, four to the upper road, and two to the nearby areas. 19. The Temple guards were chosen from the clans of Korah and Merari.

20, 21, 22. Other Levites, led by Ahijah, were given the care of the gifts brought to the Lord and placed in the Temple treasury. These men of the Ladan subclan from the clan of Gershom included Zetham and Joel, the sons of Jehieli. 23, 24. Shebuel, son of Gershom and grandson of Moses, was the chief officer of the treasury. He was in charge of the divisions named after Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 25. The line of descendants from Eliezer went through Rehabiah, Jeshai, Joram, Zichri, and Shelomoth. 26. Shelomoth and his brothers were appointed to care for the gifts given to the Lord by King David and the other leaders of the nation such as the officers and generals of the army. 27. For these men dedicated their war loot to support the operating expenses of the Temple. 28. Shelomoth and his brothers were also responsible for the care of the items dedicated to the Lord by Samuel the prophet, Saul the son of Kish, Abner the son of Ner, Joab the son of Zeruiah, and anyone else of distinction who brought gifts to the Lord.

COMMENTARY

The Korahites, or the descendants of Korah, and certain descendants of Merari were charged with the doorkeeping service at the Temple. I Chronicles 26:19 in a summary statement distinguishes these men from other Levites. Verses 1-9 in chapter 26 list eight courses of doorkeepers which were directly related to Korah. The name "Korah" means "baldness" and is well remembered in Hebrew history because of the rebellion led by Korah against Moses and Aaron (Numbers, chapter 16). Two hundred and fifty princes representing all of Israel's tribes joined Korah in challenging the authority of Moses and Aaron. Jehovah prepared "a new thing" in the earthquake which

swallowed these men alive. Korah's sons evidently were not involved in the trouble. In Exodus 6:24 Korah's sons are identified as Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. The Asaph in verse 1 is a shortened form of Abiasaph. Obed-edom entered the history earlier when the ark of the covenant had been taken to his house (II Samuel 6:10). He had an extensive family numbering sixty-two persons in the register used by the chronicler. This number would include sons, grandsons, and others. Obed-edom may well have been among the descendants of Korah. He and his sons served in the south sector of the Temple and in the storehouse (verse 15). Considering the nature of Korah's sin and the divine judgment that followed, it is remarkable that a place of service was reserved for his descendants. Korah was of the Kohathite family of the Levites.

Some of the doorkeepers were selected from among the Merarite Levites (verse 9). In order to determine where each course would serve, the sacred lot was employed. Nothing was left to chance and even such an ordinary matter as service at a gate required Jehovah's sanction. Each of the four sectors from which the Temple could be approached was assigned to a responsible chief doorkeeper. Shelemiah (Meshelemiah, verse 1) and his group kept the east gate. Zechariah was allotted the north sector. Obed-edom was charged to keep the entrances to the south. Shupim and Hosah shared the obligations toward the west. The daily watch at the east entrance required six Levites, while four were required in each of the other sectors. The Temple would face toward the east. The main entrance necessitated additional doorkeepers. While this might appear to be a rather unimportant service, Psalm 84, a psalm of the sons of Korah, beautifully expresses the attitude of these Levites. Verse 10 of this Psalm says, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

The Temple became the depository for much of the tangible wealth of Israel. When David had defeated Goliath, the giant's sword was laid up in the Tabernacle. Treasuries and store rooms would be provided in the Temple in which the gold, silver, and precious stones accumulated through Israel's wars and

commerce would be deposited. When Israel went to war, pledges and vows would be made to Jehovah with regard to spoil and prey if Jehovah would grant victory. When the victory came, often tremendous wealth would be brought to the Temple. Verses 20-28 refer to the things so dedicated by David and his captains. Israel at this time was in possession of things so dedicated by Samuel, Saul, Abner, Joab and others. When Joshua and Israel conquered Jericho (Joshua 6), the city was devoted to destruction. Any gold or silver taken in the overthrow was to be laid by in the Tabernacle. Achan died because he disregarded this agreement. He demonstrated selfishness and he failed to glorify Jehovah. David and his people saw in the dedication of these treasures a very appropriate way to thank Jehovah for victory. Ahijah, a Levite, had the chief responsibility for these treasures. Certain Gershonites and Kohathites assisted in this important assignment. The act of dedication was very sacred and involved an unconditional release of all claims on goods given to Jehovah's service. Goods or persons once dedicated could never be reclaimed by the giver. The "spoil" had to do with any kind of useful goods taken in battle. "Prey" was a term used to refer to any living thing taken by conquest, such as persons or animals. The idea of re-dedication was completely foreign to the Hebrew.

19. THE OFFICERS AND THE JUDGES (26:29-32)

TEXT

Chapter 26:29. Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons were for the outward business over Israel, for officers and judges. 30. Of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valor, a thousand and seven hundred, had the oversight of Israel beyond the Jordan westward, for all the business of Jehovah, and for the service of the king. 31. Of the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even of the Hebronites, according to their generations by fathers' houses. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valor at Jazer of Gilead. 32. And his

brethren, men of valor, were two thousand and seven hundred, heads of fathers' houses, whom king David made overseers over the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites, for every matter pertaining to God, and for the affairs of the king.

PARAPHRASE

Chapter 26:29. Chenaniah and his sons (from the subclan of Izhar) were appointed public administrators and judges. 30. Hashabiah and 1,700 of his clansmen from Hebron, all outstanding men, were placed in charge of the territory of Israel west of the Jordan River; they were responsible for the religious affairs and public administration of that area. 31, 32. Twenty-seven hundred outstanding men of the clan of the Hebronites, under the supervision of Jerijah, were appointed to control the religious and public affairs of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. These men, all of whom had excellent qualifications, were appointed on the basis of their ancestry and ability at Jazer in Gilead in the fortieth year of King David's reign.

COMMENTARY

Certain Levites were assigned to attend to civil matters, "the outward business", which had no direct relationship to the Temple. The terms "officers and judges" are used to detail the kind of secular service to be done. These men were chosen from the Izharites and the Hebronites, the direct descendants of Kohath, the son of Levi. Hashabiah, the Hebronite, was assigned 1700 assistants and was charged with all of the territory west of the Jordan River. Jerijah, the head of the Hebronite family, lived in the village of Jazer in Gilead, east of the Jordan River. "The business of Jehovah and the service of the king" were the principal considerations of these men.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS

LESSON TWELVE 25-26

384. Name three of the men who were chief musicians.
385. Identify a Psalm with which each of these names of chief musicians is associated.
386. Is there any relation between prophecy and music (25:2)?
387. Describe the principal musical instruments named here.
388. Identify another Hanani (25:4) in addition to this one.
389. How is Heman described in 25:5? What does this mean?
390. How many skilled singers were appointed?
391. Identify another Gedaliah in the Bible.
392. What other person in the Bible was called Shimei?
393. How many courses of singers were appointed?
394. Who was the original Korah in the Bible?
395. In what connection was an Obed-edom named earlier?
396. Describe a "Man of valor".
397. At what time in Bible history did a priest named Hilkiah find a copy of the Law?
398. What was Zechariah's peculiar talent?
399. From how many sectors were entrances provided for the Temple?
400. Identify another Ahijah in the Bible.
401. What kinds of treasures would be stored in the Temple?
402. How was the spoil taken in battle to be used?
403. Explain the phrase, "the dedicated things".
404. What "affairs of the king" concerned David as these related to the tribes beyond the Jordan.