

2 Samuel 8:16-18 – ¹⁶ *Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army, and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder, ¹⁷ and Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar* were priests, and Seraiah was secretary, ¹⁸ and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and David's sons were priests.*

Joab commanded the army throughout David's reign. He was David's nephew and was loyal to David. His brothers were Abishai and Asahel, who were also mighty warriors and loyal supporters of David. Joab was very violent. Against David's wishes, he murdered Abner, Absalom, and Amasa (2 Sam. 3; 18; 20). Joab later supported Adonijah over Solomon. Solomon ordered his execution for the murders he committed.

Zadok and **Abiathar*** were the highest-ranking priests. Zadok was of the line of Eleazar, and Abiathar was of the line of Ithamar. Zadok had been Saul's high priest, while Abiathar began serving David when he was on the run from Saul. Abiathar seems to have been superior under David's reign. Abiathar officiated at Jerusalem; Zadok officiated at Gibeon. There is probably a transcription error in 2 Sam. 8:17 reading "Ahimelech the son of Abiathar." Ahimelech was killed by Saul before David's reign, and Abiathar, his son, fled and joined David. Therefore, the text most likely should read "Zadok son of Ahitub and Abiathar son of Ahimelech were priests" (NCV). Solomon removed Abiathar and promoted Zadok, fulfilling the prophecy against Eli's family and returning the high priestly office to Eleazar's line (1 Sam. 2:27-36; 1 Kings 2:27, 35).

Benaiah was over David's bodyguard (2 Sam. 23:22-23). Benaiah, one of David's renown "thirty," is noted for his valiant accomplishments in 2 Sam. 23:20-23.

The **Cherethites** and the **Pelethites** were David's bodyguard. They are believed have been Philistines who were loyal to David and Solomon. (See Eze. 25:15-16)

David's sons are described as *kohen*, the word for priest. The parallel reads "chief officials" (1 Chron. 18:17). The word seems to be used this way again of another official (2 Sam. 20:26). David was of Judah, not Levi, so his sons could not have served as priests (Heb. 7:14). Jeroboam was condemned for appointing non-Levitical priests (1 Kings 12:31; 13:33). King Uzziah [Azariah] was rebuked and struck with leprosy for entering the temple to burn incense (2 Chron. 26:16-21).

Jehoshaphat was the recorder. His job probably involved recording royal decrees and important historical events.

Seraiah was the scribe. His job probably included writing and sending official documents. He probably also wrote letters at the king's dictation.

Ahithophel was David's counselor until he betrayed David and joined Absalom. **Hushai the Archite**, David's loyal friend, acted as a double agent inside Absalom's cabinet, working with Zadok and Abiathar and their sons. After Absalom followed Hushai's counsel, Ahithophel hanged himself. (2 Sam. 15-17; 1 Chron. 27:33-34)

Another list, following some turmoil and changes, is found in 2 Sam. 20:23-26. When Adonijah challenged Solomon, the loyalties of David's officials are recorded in 1 Kings 1:7-8. Solomon's officials are listed in 1 Kings 4:1-6. An exhaustive list of David's officials and other notable people can be found in 1 Chron. 23-27.