

### The Conclusion of the Genealogical Section of 1 Chronicles

#### 1 Chronicles 7-9

##### Background Notes

**1 Chronicles 7** contains the genealogical records of six more of the tribes of Israel. After the division of the united monarchy (under Kings Saul, David and Solomon), these six tribes were all included in the northern kingdom of Israel.

In verses 1-5, we have the record of the descendants of **Issachar**. At the time of David, the tribe of Issachar provided 87,000 courageous warriors for David's army. *"Now their brethren among all the families of Issachar were mighty men of valor, listed by their genealogies, eighty-seven thousand in all"* (v5). Verses 6-12 provide the genealogical records for the tribe of **Benjamin**. We'll see more of these records in chapter 8.

And verse 13 lists the sons of **Naphtali**.

Verses 14-19 list the descendants of **Manasseh** - the half of the tribe of Manasseh that settled on the west side of the Jordan River. Zelophehad and his daughters are mentioned in verse 15. Zelophehad had no sons, so his daughters were allowed inherit their father's property - as long as they married within their tribe. *E't Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "The daughters of Zelophehad speak what is right; you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father's brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them"* (Numbers 27:6-7). And Numbers 36:6: *"This is what the Lord commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, 'Let them marry whom they think best, but they may marry only within their father's tribe, so the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not change hands from tribe to tribe.... but every tribe of the children of Israel shall keep its own inheritance.'" Just as the Lord commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad."*

Verses 20-29 provide the genealogical records of the tribe of **Ephraim**. Here is the lineage of Joshua, the son of Nun (v27). Some towns are listed for both Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh, since they were both sons of Joseph. *"And by the borders of the children of Manasseh were Beth Shean and its towns, Taanach and its towns, Megiddo and its towns, Dor and its towns. In these dwelt the children of Joseph, the son of Israel"* (v29).

Verses 30-40 cover the descendants of the tribe of **Asher**. Again we see that a military purpose was served when these records were originally prepared. *"All these were the children of Asher, heads of their fathers' houses, choice men, mighty men of valor, chief leaders. And they were recorded by genealogies among the army fit for battle; their number was twenty-six thousand"* (v40).

**1 Chronicles 8** provides more genealogical material for the tribe of **Benjamin**, besides what was given in chapter 7.

There are four reasons for this:

1. The tribe of Benjamin was important because Saul, the first king of Israel, came from the tribe of Benjamin.
2. The tribe of Benjamin supported the Davidic dynasty.
3. The tribe of Benjamin became an essential part of the southern kingdom of Judah.
4. Jerusalem and the Temple of the Lord were located within the boundaries of the tribe of Benjamin.

**1 Chronicles 9:1** is a summary statement of the genealogies of all Israel before the time of the captivity. *“So all Israel was recorded by genealogies, and indeed, they were inscribed in the book of the kings of Israel. But Judah was carried away captive to Babylon because of their unfaithfulness.”* By the way, the “book of the kings of Israel” is not the 1 & 2 Kings in the Bible. It consisted of official royal court records that are no longer extant.

Beginning with verse 2, those who came back to the land after the seventy-year captivity in Babylon are mentioned. *“The first inhabitants who dwelt in their possessions in their cities were Israelites, priests, Levites, and the Nethinim. Now in Jerusalem the children of Judah dwelt, and some of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh” (v2-3).*

Some specific names from these tribes are given in verses 4-9. In verses 10-13, the names of the priestly families who returned from the captivity are given. Verses 14-16 list seven families of Levites who returned from Babylon and lived in Jerusalem. In verses 17-27, other Levites who had the special job of guarding the gates to the temple area are mentioned. *“All those chosen as gatekeepers were two hundred and twelve. They were recorded by their genealogy, in their villages. David and Samuel the seer had appointed them to their trusted office. So they and their children were in charge of the gates of the house of the Lord, the tabernacle, by assignment. The gatekeepers were assigned to the four directions: the east, west, north, and south: And their brethren in their villages had to come with them from time to time for seven days. For in this trusted office were four chief gatekeepers; they were Levites. And they had charge over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God. And they lodged all around the house of God because they had the responsibility, and they were in charge of opening it every morning” (v22-27).*

Guarding all the gates in the Temple area was a very important assignment, because this was God’s holy place. Intruders who were not priests must be kept out. Verses 28-34 tell us that some of the Levites who returned had other specific jobs in the service of the Temple.

Verses 35-44 give us the genealogy of King Saul, already given in chapter 8. Why this repetition? It lays the groundwork for the account of the death of Saul in chapter 10, so the kingdom can be turned over to David.

When you compare the genealogical records in 1 Chronicles 1-9 with the genealogical records in other Scriptures covering the same time period, you will notice some slight differences. These are explained by the fact that some genealogies are selective, and move from father to grandson, or even great-grandson. Also, some names may be omitted in some lists because they died young and childless. In other cases, some men had more than one name, and in some cases there are spelling changes. So don't be alarmed if you notice some differences between the genealogical records in 1 Chronicles 1-9 and the genealogies in other Scriptures that cover the same time period.

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. The genealogical records establish the right of Israel as a nation under God.

Throughout Israel's history, right up to the present day, there have been nations that say that Israel does not have a "right to exist." But think about it! Who gives **any** nation the right to exist? **God does!** In Acts 17:26 we read, "*He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times, and the boundaries of their dwellings.*"

In the genealogical records of 1 Chronicles 1-9, we see that **God's established the nation of Israel in history.** The genealogical records go all the way back to Adam. Notice 1 Chronicles 1:34: "*Abraham begot Isaac. The sons of Isaac were Esau and Israel.*" Not Esau and Jacob – Esau and **Israel!** How does anyone dare to say that Israel does not have the right to statehood? **If any nation has the right to exist, Israel does!**

The genealogical records establish the right of Israel as a nation under God.

### 2. The genealogical records prove the faith of Israel as the people of God.

Why did the Jewish people keep all these genealogical records, even when they were captives in Babylon? After all, they had been conquered as a nation. Jerusalem and their Temple had been completely destroyed. They realized they were exiles in Babylon because of their sins. So why not just forget about genealogical records? Why not just throw them out?

The records were kept because of the **continuing faith** of God's chosen people! In spite of their terrible sins and the resulting captivity in Babylon, the Jewish people believed that God would bring them back. They believed the prophecies of promise that predicted their return to the land of Israel. And they didn't throw out the writings of the prophets, even

though the prophets had denounced them for their many sins. The people meticulously kept the genealogical records because **they believed what God had spoken** about them as a nation.

The genealogical records prove the faith of Israel as the people of God.

## **Practical Application**

### **Do your assigned work well!**

1 Chronicles 9:28-34 says that some of the Levites who returned from the captivity had specific jobs. Verses 28-34:  
*“Some of them were in charge of the serving vessels, for they brought them in and took them out by count. Some of them were appointed over the furnishings and over all the implements of the sanctuary, and over the fine flour and the wine and the oil and the incense and the spices. And some of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices.*

*Mattithiah of the Levites, the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the trusted office over the things that were baked in the pans. Some of their brethren of the sons of the Kohathites were in charge of preparing the showbread for every Sabbath.*

*These are the singers, heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites, who lodged in the chambers, and were free from other duties, for they were employed in that work day and night. These heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites were heads throughout their generations. They dwelt at Jerusalem.”*

These Levites had specific assignments, and they did them well - even though many of the jobs like baking showbread were behind the scenes jobs, and weren't as “glamorous” or up-front as the singers.

The practical application is obvious! God has given jobs and assignments to all of us - in our homes and in the church. Some jobs are not glamorous, and many of them may go unnoticed, but **all are important!**

And, as we see from this chapter, God notices! So do your assigned work well!