

1 Chronicles

Chapter 8

Ch 8 Here begins a transition to the story of David and the everlasting house promised to him (chs 10–29). The genealogy of Benjamin includes Israel’s first king and David’s predecessor, Saul, with his ancestors and descendants. Though Saul died in disgrace (ch 10), his son Jonathan continued a line that prospered and raised up men of valor. Some of these Benjaminites joined forces with David’s tribe, Judah, to restore the kingdom for David’s grandson Rehoboam (1Ki 12:21). Before the exile, many Benjaminites lived in Jerusalem, “David’s city,” which was home to kings and the temple (Jgs 1:21). After the exile, Benjamin remained important in God’s rule in Jerusalem (Ezr 1:5). This text is a more difficult genealogical record than ch 7; in some cases, it provides otherwise unknown details, and in others, it provides histories that vary from other Benjaminite genealogies. These are “snapshots” of the Benjaminite family at particular times rather than a continuous historical account. (TLSB)

A Genealogy of Saul

Benjamin fathered Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, Aharah the third, 2 Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. 3 And Bela had sons: Addar, Gera, Abihud, 4 Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, 5 Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram. 6 These are the sons of Ehud (they were heads of fathers' houses of the inhabitants of Geba, and they were carried into exile to Manahath): 7 Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera, that is, Heglam, who fathered Uzza and Ahihud. 8 And Shazaraim fathered sons in the country of Moab after he had sent away Hushim and Baara his wives. 9 He fathered sons by Hodesh his wife: Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, 10 Jeuz, Sachia, and Mirmah. These were his sons, heads of fathers' houses. 11 He also fathered sons by Hushim: Abitub and Elpaal. 12 The sons of Elpaal: Eber, Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod with its towns, 13 and Beriah and Shema (they were heads of fathers' houses of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who caused the inhabitants of Gath to flee); 14 and Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth. 15 Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, 16 Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were sons of Beriah. 17 Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, 18 Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab were the sons of Elpaal. 19 Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi, 20 Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, 21 Adaiyah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were the sons of Shimei. 22 Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, 23 Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, 24 Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah, 25 Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak. 26 Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah, 27 Jareshiah, Elijah, and Zichri were the sons of Jeroham. 28 These were the heads of fathers' houses, according to their generations, chief men. These lived in Jerusalem. 29 Jeiel the father of Gibeon lived in Gibeon, and the name of his wife was Maacah. 30 His firstborn son: Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, 31 Gedor, Ahio, Zecher, 32 and Mikloth (he fathered Shimeah). Now these also lived opposite their kinsmen in Jerusalem, with their kinsmen. 33 Ner was the father of Kish, Kish of Saul, Saul of Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab and Eshbaal; 34 and the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal was the father of Micah. 35 The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz. 36 Ahaz fathered Jehoaddah, and Jehoaddah fathered Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri fathered Moza. 37 Moza fathered Binea; Raphah was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. 38 Azel had six sons, and these are their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. All these were the sons of Azel. 39 The sons of Eshek his brother: Ulam his firstborn, Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third. 40 The sons of Ulam were men who were mighty warriors, bowmen, having many sons and grandsons, 150. All these were Benjaminites.

8:1–40 The inclusion of a second and even more extensive genealogy of Benjamin (see note on 7:6–12) reflects both the importance of this tribe and the Chronicler’s interest in Saul. Judah, Simeon and part of Benjamin had composed the southern kingdom (1Ki 12:1–21), and their territory largely comprised the restoration province of Judah in the Chronicler’s own time. The genealogy of Benjamin is more extensive than that of all the other tribes except Judah and Levi. The Chronicler is also concerned with the genealogy of Saul (vv. 29–38) in order to set the stage for the historical narrative that begins with the end of his reign (ch. 10); Saul’s genealogy is repeated in 9:35–44. Several references suggest that this genealogy also originated in the military sphere (vv. 6, 10, 13, 28, 40). (CSB)

8:1–7 Sons of Benjamin and Bela. Listed also in 7:6; Gn 46:21; Nu 26:38–40, though the names vary greatly (some can be reconciled as spelling variations). (TLSB)

8:1–5 Cf. the lists in 7:6–12; Ge 46:21–22; Nu 26:38–41. (CSB)

8:6–27 Unique to Chronicles. (CSB)

8:6 *Ehud*. A judge by that name was the son of Gera (Jgs 3:15). Incidents mentioned here and in the next verses are otherwise unknown. (TLSB)

8:8–27 These names are not recorded anywhere else. None of them are mentioned in the lists of those who returned from Babylon (9:1–9; Ne 11:1–9). (TLSB)

8:8–12 Sons of Shaharaim. Genealogical fragment, unconnected with vv 1–7 except as different branches of the same tribe. (TLSB)

Moab ... Ono ... Lod. Indicates widespread settlements of the Benjaminites—from Moab on the east to an area southeast of Joppa. (TLSB)

8:13–28 Sons of Beriah, Shema/Shimei, Shashak, and Jeremoth/Jehoram. While their extensive genealogy is largely fragmented, two discernible groups are found: one centered on Aijalon, including the brothers Beriah and Shema/Shimei (vv 13–18), the other centered on Jerusalem, including the brothers Jeremoth/Jehoram (vv 19–28). Nothing else is known of these families. (TLSB)

8:28 *lived in Jerusalem*. Before the exile. (TLSB)

8:29–40 More specific genealogy of Saul. Text parallels Saulite genealogy in 9:35–44; it varies slightly from that of 1Sm 9:1–2a. The names of Saul’s sons appear in v 33b and 9:39 as “Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal,” but in 1Sm 14:49 as “Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchi-shua.” (“Ishvi” is a variant of “Eshbaal,” modified to remove the Baalistic ending. The same son is called Ish-bosheth, “Son of Shame” in 2Sm 2–4.) Of Saul’s remaining descendants (8:35–38; 9:40–41), only Merib-baal and Micah are known elsewhere. Merib-baal (or Meri-baal, “Hero of Baal”) and his son Micah appear in 2Sm 9:6, 12, where Merib-baal is known as “Mephibosheth.” The genealogy of Eshek is found only in vv 39–40. (TLSB)

8:29–38 Essentially the same as the list in 9:35–44. (CSB)

8:29 *Gibeon*. C 6 mi NW of Jerusalem, where “the tabernacle of the Lord” was (21:29) and where Solomon worshiped before he built the temple (2Ch 1:3).(TLSB)

8:33 For the sons of Saul see 1Sa 14:49; 31:2. (CSB)

Jonathan. The firstborn and the best known of the sons of Saul, both for his military prowess and for his friendship with David (1Sa 13–14; 18:1–4; 19:1–7; 20:1–42; 23:16–18; 2Sa 21:13–14). (CSB)

Ner ... Kish. According to 1Sm 14:50–51, Ner and Kish were brothers. (TLSB)

8:40 *bowmen.* For their skill in archery, cf 12:2; Jgs 20:15–16. (TLSB)

Ch 8 A Benjaminite genealogy designed specifically for Saul’s family shows that though Saul’s tribe was smaller than others, it received special attention because God called them to service as leaders of Israel. For God’s people, honor and nobility are not products of our strength, but of God’s calling and the character He develops in us. • Consecrate my life and my family, dear Lord, to faithfully fulfill my calling to the honor of Your name. Amen. (TLSB)