

1 Chronicles Chapter 8

Verses 1-40

This section enlarges on the genealogy of Benjamin (in 7:6-12), most likely because of that tribe's important relationship with Judah in the southern kingdom.

Thus, these two tribes taken in captivity together and the Levites make up the retuning remnant (in 538 B.C.).

This more extensive genealogy of "Benjamin" reminds readers that Saul, the first king of Israel, descended from the line of Benjamin.

1 Chronicles 8:1 "Now Benjamin begat Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, and Aharah the third,"

This list expands that of (7:6-12), listing Benjamites in various localities (verses 1-32), and closes with the mention of the family of Saul (verses 33-40).

Benjamin is accorded a final place in the genealogies to prepare the readers of (1 Chronicles), for the narrative concerning Saul (in chapter 10).

Note the similar positioning of the supplemental list of Benjamites in Gibeon from which came Saul, Israel's first king (in 9:35-44).

1 Chronicles 8:2 "Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth."

Nohah is supposed by some to be the same with Becher (1 Chron. 7:6), and by others with Naaman (Gen. 46:21), as Rapha, the same with Rosh there.

These five sons listed here, vary a little from the families of Benjamin (see Numbers 26:38-39).

There are five families in each case however.

There is just a little difference in the fathers of the family's names.

Bela, his firstborn, is the same in both.

He became the father of the Belaites.

Ashbel is the same in Numbers and here.

He was the father of the Ashbelites.

Aharah could be the same as Ahiram in Numbers, who started the Ahiramites.

Nohah and Rapha given here as the fourth and fifth sons, are not mentioned in Numbers.

In Numbers, Shupham, and Hupham are mentioned instead.

I will give you the Scripture on this family from Genesis.

Genesis 46:21 "And the sons of Benjamin [were] Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard."

In the Bible, sons and grandsons are both called sons.

Sometimes, male descendants from many generations down are called sons.

That is why these names are not always the same.

1 Chronicles 8:3-5 "And the sons of Bela were, Addar, and Gera, and Abihud," "And Abishua, and Naaman, and Ahoah," "And Gera, and Shephuphan, and Hiram."

These were all the sons of Bela; one of the name of Naaman is reckoned among the sons of Benjamin (Genesis 46:21), and from this grandson the family of the Naamanites are named (Numbers 26:40).

And Ahoah is by some thought to be the same with Ehi, mentioned (in Genesis 46:21), as one of Benjamin's sons.

Some take the three last to be the sons of Ehud, spoken of in the next verse; but Shephuphan and Hiram seem to be the same with Shupham and Hupham (Num. 26:39).

The first of these is thought to be the same with Ard, mentioned among the sons of Benjamin (Genesis 46:21), but was one of his grandsons (see Num. 26:40), as Gera also was.

There are nine sons listed here, and only three of them are listed in Numbers.

We must remember, that this chronicle was put together many years after the fact.

So many of these names are similar to others and it is easy for such seemingly errors.

I believe that what really happened was that some of them died early, and were not included in some of the lists.

As we said earlier, some may be grandsons, as well.

1 Chronicles 8:6 "And these [are] the sons of Ehud: these are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba, and they removed them to Manahath:"

Not he that was a judge in Israel (Judges 3:15), but perhaps a son of Hiram the last mentioned.

For not the three last are his sons, as some think, but the three following in the next verse; what follows being to be read in a parenthesis.

“These are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba”:

A city in the tribe of Benjamin (Joshua 18:24).

Namely, those sons of Ehud, after mentioned, were principal men in that tribe, and chief of the inhabitants of the city of Geba.

“And they removed them to Manahath”:

The name of a country referred to (in 1 Chron. 2:52), according to Jarchi, which was in the tribe of Judah.

Geba being too small, either the inhabitants of Geba removed them, or they removed themselves, or their fathers removed them (1 Chron. 8:7).

Or it may be read impersonally, they were removed thither for the sake of a better habitation.

The Targum adds, "to the land of the house of Esau," to Edom; which is not likely.

1 Chronicles 8:7 "And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and begat Uzza, and Ahihud."

Or, to wit, Naaman, etc., so the words are to be connected with these are the sons of Ehud, in the preceding verse.

"He removed them":

To the above place, that is, either Gera, or rather Ehud.

He advised them, directed and enjoined them to go there, as being most convenient for them.

"And he begat Uzza, and Ahihud":

After he had removed his other sons.

There is no other mention of this in the Bible.

Again, we must realize that this could be speaking of any of the thousands of descendants.

Sons do not always mean sons, as we speak of, but as grandsons or even descendants.

It almost seems they have added sons that are like adopted sons.

1 Chronicles 8:8 "And Shaharaim begat [children] in the country of Moab, after he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara [were] his wives."

Who was either a son of Ahihud, or rather a brother of his, another son of Ehud.

"Begot children in the country of Moab":

Whither he might go on account of the famine, as Elimelech did (Ruth 1:1), after he had sent them away.

Which some understand of those that were removed from Geba to Manahath (1 Chron. 8:6), but a different word is here used.

And besides Shaharaim seems to be one of those that were removed.

Kimchi takes Shilhootham, we render "had sent them away", to be the name of his first wife, of whom he begat children in Moab.

But it seems best to render and interpret the words in connection with what follows: he begat children in Moab.

"After he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara were his wives":

After he had divorced them, for some reasons he had.

He begat children of another wife, later mentioned.

The only thing that is known of Shaharaim is that he was a Benjamite.

It seemed that he had children in the land of Moab by Hushim and Baara.

1 Chronicles 8:9-10 "And he begat of Hodesh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham," "And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. These [were] his sons, heads of the fathers."

That "he" begat, namely Shaharaim.

The Targum makes this Hodesh to be the same with Baara, called so because she was newly espoused; but wrongly.

The sons begotten of her were the seven following.

Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcham, Jeuz, Shachia, and Mirma.

These were his sons; the sons of Shaharaim by his wife Hodesh.

Before he sent her away, or divorced her (1 Chron. 8:8).

"Heads of the fathers":

Of the houses or families of their father.

1 Chronicles 8:11 "And of Hushim he begat Abitub, and Elpaal."

The offspring of Shaharaim by Hushim before her divorce.

In other words, two offshoots of the clan Shaharaim settled in the vicinity of Lod or Lydda (1 Chron. 8:12), which took no part in the immigration to Moab.

All of the aforementioned people are not spoken of further in the Bible.

There were very few records kept of Benjamin after God allowed them to be killed for their sins.

They had taken the concubine of the Levite and assaulted her and killed her.

All of the other tribes of Israel came against Benjamin, and killed all but 600 men.

That is probably why there is much confusion of his descendants.

These 600 men had to steal wives, because the other tribes would not give their daughters to them for marriage.

Read it (in Judges Chapters 19, 20, and 21).

1 Chronicles 8:12 "The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and Misham, and Shamed, who built Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof:"

Besides those in (1 Chron. 8:14).

"Who built Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof":

Not Shamed, but Elpaal his father, so the Targum; and the Talmudists say, these were walled cities from the days of Joshua the son of Nun.

And were destroyed in the days of the concubine in Gibeon, and Elpaal came and rebuilt them.

They were inhabited by the Benjamites, upon their return from the Babylonish captivity (Nehemiah 11:35).

They were near to each other; according to a Jewish person who studied historical records to establish the dates of past events.

It was three miles from the one to the other.

Lod is the same with Lydda (in Acts 9:32).

1 Chronicles 8:13 "Beriah also, and Shema, who [were] heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who drove away the inhabitants of Gath:"

These were sons of Elpaal.

"Who were heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon":

Which, though in the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:42), might afterwards come into the possession of Benjamin.

Or this may be another place of the same name in Benjamin.

Or, however, might be inhabited by Benjamites, upon the return from captivity, who descended from those men.

"Who drove away the inhabitants of Gath":

Dispossessed them of their city, in revenge for what they had done to the Ephraimites (see 1 Chronicles 7:21).

Aijalon was located on the boundary of both Judah and Benjamin.

This Beriah was a Benjamite.

Beriah and Shema drove away Gath together.

1 Chronicles 8:14 "And Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth,"

These were also sons of Elpaal.

1 Chronicles 8:15-16 "And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader," "And Michael, and Ispah, and Joha, the sons of Beriah;"

And all that follow in this and the next verse were the sons of Beriah the son of Elpaal; namely: Arad, Ader, Michael, Ispah, and Joha.

1 Chronicles 8:17-18 "And Zebadiah, and Meshullam, and Hezeki, and Heber," "Ishmerai also, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal;"

These, with those that follow.

"Hezeki, Heber, Ishmerai, Jezliah, and Jobab, were the sons of Elpaal.

1 Chronicles 8:19-21 "And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi," "And Elienai, and Zilthai, and Eliel," "And Adaiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of Shimhi;"

With all the rest in these verses, namely:

"Zichri, Zabdi, Elienai, Zilthai, Eliel, Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath, were the sons of Shimhi, the same with Shema brother of Beriah, and son of Elpaal (1 Chron. 8:13).

1 Chronicles 8:22-25 "And Ishpan, and Heber, and Eliel," "And Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan," "And Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah," "And Iphedeiah, and Penuel, the sons of Shashak;"

And all that follow to the end of these verses.

"Eliel, Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, Hananiah, Elam, Antothijah, Iphedeiah, and Penuel, were the sons of Shashak, another son of Elpaal (1 Chron. 8:14).

1 Chronicles 8:26-27 "And Shamsherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah," "And Jaresiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham."

Who, with those next mentioned:

Shehariah, Athaliah, Jaresiah, Eliah, and Zichri, were the sons of Jeroham, who perhaps is the same with Jerimoth, another son of Elpaal (1 Chron. 8:14), who makes a considerable figure in this genealogy.

Kimchi observes that it is a tradition that this Eliah is Elijah the prophet, who was of the seed of Rachel.

1 Chronicles 8:28 "These [were] heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief [men]. These dwelt in Jerusalem."

All from (1 Chron. 8:14), the sons of Elpaal and their sons.

"These dwelt in Jerusalem":

Part of which always belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (see Joshua 15:63).

All of the names listed above, are Benjamites.

Verse 28 tells us they were heads of the fathers, and they dwelt in Jerusalem.

Not very much more is known of them.

Some families are mentioned once and no more.

This is what we see here.

1 Chronicles 8:29 "And at Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon; whose wife's name [was] Maachah:"

The builder of the city, and prince of the inhabitants of it, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, Joshua 18:25).

Whose name was Jehiel (1 Chron. 9:35).

"Whose wife's name was Maachah; of which name were many (see 1 Chron. 2:48).

The father of Gibeon was Jehiel.

This Maachah is possibly the same as the one mentioned as the wife of Machir, since her same brothers are mentioned in both places.

1 Chronicles 8:30-31 "And his firstborn son Abdon, and Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Nadab," "And Gedor, and Ahio, and Zacher."

That is, Jehiels, the father or prince of Gibeon; other sons follow.

"Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, Gedor, Ahio, and Zacher; called Zechariah (1 Chron. 9:37), and between Baal and Nadab, Ner is placed (1 Chron. 9:36).

And another son is added at the end of (1 Chron. 9:37) Mikloth next mentioned.

In these verses, we have discovered Kish, who is the third son of Jehiel of Gibeon.

1 Chronicles 8:32 "And Mikloth begat Shimeah. And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over against them."

Called Shimeam (1 Chron. 9:38).

"And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over against them":

In another part of the city, right beside them.

These long lists of names in the last few verses, are lists of the leaders of the families who lived in Jerusalem.

1 Chronicles 8:33 "And Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal."

Who also is called Abiel, as the Targum here adds.

For Ner had two names, as other Jewish writers likewise say (see 1 Sam. 9:1).

"And Kish begat Saul":

The first king of Israel, for whose sake chiefly the genealogy of Benjamin is revised and enlarged in this chapter:

"And Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal":

(See 1 Sam. 31:2).

Abinadab is called Ishui (1 Sam. 14:49), and Esh-baal is the same with Ish-bosheth (2 Sam. 2:8).

So Baal and Bosheth are used of the same idol of which they are named (Hosea 9:10).

Some Scriptures indicate that Ner was the brother of Kish, instead of his father.

This is not a terribly important point.

It is important to realize that Kish was the father of Saul.

Saul was the first king of Israel.

Jonathan was indeed, the son of Saul, but he is best known for being the best friend of David.

Malchi-shua was slain with his father at the battle of Gilboa.

Abinadab is the same person as Ishui in the book of Samuel.

He was also killed in the battle of Gilboa.

Esh-baal is probably the same as Ish-bosheth.

He reigned for two years over Israel, and was killed in his own bed by two of his captains.

1 Chronicles 8:34 "And the son of Jonathan [was] Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat Micah."

For "Merib-baal" (see the note at 2 Sam. 2:8-11).

Merib-baal is better known as Mephibosheth.

He was crippled.

David sought him out and helped him, because he loved his father so much.

Micah, his son, was known by Michah, Mica and Micha.

1 Chronicles 8:35 "And the sons of Micah [were], Pithon, and Melech, and Tarea, and Ahaz."

The last but one is called Tarea (1 Chron. 9:41), where Ahaz is left out, though supplied in our version.

1 Chronicles 8:36 "And Ahaz begat Jehoadah; and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza,"

Called Jarah (1 Chron. 9:42).

"And Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri":

And Zimri begat Moza; the same account is given in (1 Chron. 9:42).

1 Chronicles 8:37 "And Moza begat Binea: Rapha [was] his son, Eleasah his son, Ezel his son:"

Called Rephaiah (1 Chron. 9:43).

1 Chronicles 8:38 "And Azel had six sons, whose names [are] these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. All these [were] the sons of Azel."

Which make the said number.

"All these were the sons of Azel":

His family was large.

1 Chronicles 8:39 "And the sons of Eshek his brother [were], Ulam his firstborn, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third."

The brother of Azel; who he was is not known, unless he is the same with Elasah, as is conjectured.

"Were Ulam his firstborn, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third":

That is, The brother of Azel, and son of Eleasah (1 Chron. 8:37).

The elder line is first developed.

1 Chronicles 8:40 "And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valor, archers, and had many sons, and sons' sons, an hundred and fifty. All these [are] of the sons of Benjamin."

Men of great fortitude and courage, though their names are not expressed.

"Archers":

Skillful in the use of the bow and arrows, as the Benjamites formerly were famous for slinging stones.

"And had many sons, and sons' sons, a hundred and fifty":

So that the posterity of Jonathan, whose genealogy is drawn down from (1 Chron. 8:34), there, were very great.

And greater still, according to the Vulgate Latin version, in which the number is 150,000 in the edition of Sixtus the fifth, and so in most manuscripts of that version(s).

"All these are of the sons of Benjamin":

And his posterity whose names are given in this chapter.

The things we must remember about all of these names is that they are Benjamites.

They are descended from Saul through Jonathan.

They were mighty warriors.

They were valiant men.

1 Chronicles Chapter 8 Questions

1. What tribe's descendants are dealt with in this lesson?
2. Who was Benjamin's firstborn?
3. What group of people descended from him?
4. Who were the other sons of Benjamin?
5. How do their names differ in other books of the Bible?
6. Who are sometimes called sons in the Bible that are not actually sons?
7. The nine sons of Bela listed, here, are how many in Numbers?
8. How could this happen?

9. Shaharaim begat children in the country of _____.
10. Who were his wives?
11. What happened to the tribe of Benjamin that may account for some of the names not being mentioned more than once?
12. Who is the same as Lod?
13. Where was Aijalon located?
14. The Maachah, in verse 29, is, possibly, the same as whom?
15. What causes us to come to this conclusion?
16. Who does verse 33 say Ner is?
17. Who do many other Scriptures say this is?
18. Why is this not terribly important?
19. Who was the father of Saul?
20. What is something special about Jonathan?
21. What sons of Saul died at Gilboa?
22. Who is Esh-baal?
23. How did he die?
24. Who is the same as Meri-baal?
25. What physical ailment did he have?
26. What must we remember about the people mentioned in this lesson?