

The Chronicler's Genealogies of Ephraim

Gershon Galil - Haifa

The genealogical text in 1 Chr. 7:20-27 is divided into three paragraphs: 1. 20-21a; 2. 21b-24; 3. 25-27. The origin of par. 2, that describes in an ethnological language a chapter in the history of the settlement of the tribe, is unknown. Yet we may assume that it is based on reliable sources¹. On the other hand, the schematic nature of pars. 1 and 3 is very clear: Nun, Joshua's father, is presented as the son of Elishama, son of Ammihud, who is mentioned in the Pentateuch as the head (Nasi') of the Ephraimites (Num. 1:10; 7,48); and names were reiterated by the author twice or even three times, building up a clear structure in par. 1: in its center he placed the name of Eladah; before and after it he enumerated Tahath; and the name of Shutelah is located in the third place before and after Eladah². We may suppose that pars. 1 and 3 were composed by the Chronicler on the basis of the names of the families of Ephraim mentioned in Num. 26:35-37, using his typical pattern: "The sons of A: B, C his son, D his son, etc."³. The Chronicler inserted par. 2 between pars. 1 and 3, and reconstructed two symmetrical genealogies of ten generations each. The first includes ten generations from Ephraim son of Joseph to Ezer and Elead who were killed by the men of Gath "that were born in the land" (see Table); and in the second genealogy, he probably draws a line of ten ge-

1 Z. KALLAI, *The Settlement Traditions of Ephraim: A Historiographical Study*, ZDPV 102 (1986), 68-74, esp. 72f.

2 For the possibility that the form "Zabad" was derived from "and Bered" see E.L. CURTIS and A.A. MADSEN, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles (ICC)*, Edinburgh 1910, 153; cf. S.E. LOEWENSTAMM, 2. Bered, *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, II, Jerusalem 1954, 337.

3 This pattern and the pattern: "The sons of A: B his son, C his son, etc." are mentioned in the Bible only in the book of Chronicles (1 Chr. 3:10ff; 16-17; 4:25-26; 5:4-5; 6:22ff etc.). We may assume that at least some of these lists were composed by the Chronicler, and do reflect his own style, e.g., the list of the kings of Judah in Ch. 3; the genealogy of Samuel in Ch. 6:22-28, etc.

nerations from Ephraim to Joshua⁴. We may assume that according to the Chronicler's view the Ephraim who lived in Canaan is not Ephraim son of Joseph, just as Shutelah son of Ephraim is not Shutelah son of Zabad, Tahath son of Bered is not Tahath son of Eladah etc.⁵. Similarly the Chronicler reconstructed the pedigrees of Samuel (1 Chr. 6:22-28) and of Heman the Singer (1 Chr. 6:33-38). It is evident that both are variations of one common list based on the genealogies of Elkanah (1 Sam. 1:1) and of the sons of Levi (Ex. 6:13-30)⁶.

Why did the Chronicler reconstruct the genealogies of Ephraim? There are scholars who suppose that he intended to deny the Exodus and the Conquest⁷. This attitude, however, is absolutely mistaken. In an article published recently I pointed out that the Chronicler did not draw a different picture of the pre-Davidic period. Rather he shifted the emphasis from the election of the people of Israel to the choice of the Temple site, the city, and the dynasty, and from the Exodus and the Lawgiving at Sinai in the days of Moses to the Kingdom of the House of David and the Temple built by Solomon in Jerusalem⁸. In reconstructing the genealogies of Ephraim by the artificial combination of various sources, the Chronicler probably intended to point out that there is no contradiction between par. 2 and the traditions of the Pentateuch and the Former Prophets⁹. Another aim of the rewriting of the genealogies of

-
- 4 Is there any connection between this pattern of ten generations and the schematic note in Gen. 15:13 on four hundred years of servitude in Egypt? For the ideal model of "table of ancestors" based on a fixed ten-generation depth see A. MALAMAT, *Tribal Societies: Biblical Genealogies and African Lineage Systems*, Archives Européennes de Sociologie 14 (1973), 126-136.
- 5 Cf. L. MAZOR, *The Origin and Evolution of the Curse upon the Rebuilder of Jericho*, *Textus* 14 (1988), 1-26. MAZOR's reconstruction of the text in 1 Chr. 7:20-27 is mistaken.
- 6 Cf. J. LIVER, *Chapters in the History of the Priests and Levites*, Jerusalem 1968, 26f, 98f; G. GALIL, *The Sons of Judah and the Sons of Aaron in Biblical Historiography*, VT 35 (1985), 488f; G.A. RENDSBURG, *The Internal Consistency and Historical Reliability of the Biblical Genealogies*, VT 40 (1990), 195-206.
- 7 S. JAPHET, *Conquest and Settlement in Chronicles*, JBL 98 (1979), 205-218; K.W. WHITELAM, *Israel's Traditions of Origin: Reclaiming the Land*, JSOT 44 (1989), 32-36.
- 8 G. GALIL, *The Pre-Davidic Period in Chronicles*, Zion 55 (1990), 1-26 (Hebrew), with earlier literature.
- 9 For a similar view see C.F. KEIL, *Chronik, Esra, Nehemia und Esther* (Biblischer Commentar über das Alte Testament), Leipzig 1870, 100f, esp. 102. In his opinion the Chronicler reconstructed one genealogy (from Ephraim son of Joseph to Joshua) by combining three different passages. This proposal, however, should be rejected. 1) Firstly, it contradicts his own

Ephraim was probably to point out the importance of Joshua, the person, by presenting him as the descendant of Elishama son of Ammihud, the head of the Ephraimites in the days of the wandering in the Desert. In the same way David is presented as the descendant of Nahshon son of Amminadab, the head of the Judahites (1 Chr. 3:10-17 = Ruth 4:18-22).

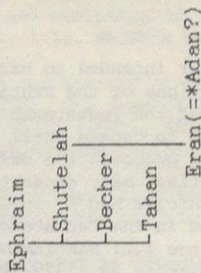
The Chronicler's attitude toward his sources is inconsistent. Sometimes he cited his sources without any modification: he copied the ancient records with great responsibility and caution, preserving them very carefully, even without understanding their exact meaning and even though they were frequently corrupt and obscure. One of the best examples for this attitude is the genealogy of Judah cited in Chs. 2 and 4¹⁰. On the other hand, however, as we have seen in the forgoing discussion, the Chronicler reconstructed artificial genealogies, which are based on broken pieces of poor evidence, harmonizing his sources with his own notions. The explanation for this inconsistency is probably the nature of the source, and its accordance with the Chronicler's historical and theological views. This inconsistency obliges the scholar to inspect each genealogy or historical description in the Book of Chronicles on its own, and to avoid deducing from the historicity of one chapter in this book the historical value of the others.

suggestion that the Chronicler intended to harmonize the genealogical story in vv. 21b-24 with the traditions of the Pentateuch. It is well known that according to the traditions of the Pentateuch and of the Former Prophets the Israelites did not return to Canaan until the period of Moses and Joshua. Yet according to KEIL's proposal the descendants of Ephraim came back to Canaan and built there cities, many generations before the days of Joshua. 2) It is clear that the Chronicler had no intention of arguing with the facts of Israel's history presented in the Pentateuch. For the Chronicler's attitude towards the Pentateuch see I.L. SEELIGMANN, *The Beginings of Midrash in the Books of Chronicles*, Tarbiz 49 (1979-1980), 19f, 24f, 32 (Hebrew); Cf. T. WILLI, *Thora in den Biblischen Chronikbüchern*, *Judaica* 36 (1980), 102-105, 148-151.

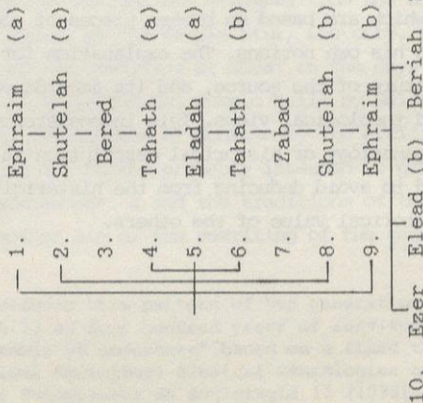
¹⁰ For the genealogy of Judah in 1 Chr. 2:3-4:23 see G. GALIL, *The Genealogies of Judah* (Ph.D. Thesis), Jerusalem 1983 (Hebrew).

The Genealogies of Ephraim

The Families of Ephraim
Num. 26:35-37



List I
1Chr. 7:20-24



List II
1Chr. 7:25-27

