

Have you ever tried to trace your family tree?  
How far back can you go?

Most of my ancestors can be traced back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.  
The Wallaces have a very clear root in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

In other words, I can get back 800 years.  
(And that’s with all the benefits of modern communication and technology.)

Tonight we are looking at nearly 1500 years of Judah’s genealogy.  
It will be clear at times that the record was pretty spotty.  
Some lines of the family were obviously incomplete.  
“We know that we are connected to Ram back there somewhere”

But the story we are telling tonight is the story of God’s faithfulness to his beloved son.  
Last time we looked at chapter 1  
and saw that God was faithful to Esau – the one he hated.  
I pointed out that if God is faithful to the one he hated,  
how much more will he faithful to the one he loves!

As we go through all these details of Judah’s family genealogy,  
keep in mind that the Chronicler is recounting a story of God’s faithfulness  
through fifteen hundred years – day-by-day for half a million days!

One challenge in the genealogy of 1 Chronicles 1-9  
is that the Chronicler is not trying to give us a modern genealogy!

If you go to ancestry.com, or a host of other genealogical sites,  
there are certain rules for “how to do” genealogy.

Ancient rules for genealogy are often quite different from modern rules!  
And it would not be fair for us to expect the Chronicler to conform to modern rules.

So when the Chronicler omits generations,  
or provides a different relationship than we were expecting from other sources,  
don’t be surprised!

And don’t get worried when he provides materials from divergent sources  
without explaining how they all fit together!

Chapters 2-3 form a chiasm.  
The whole story is focused on the three sons of Hezron  
Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai.

The line of Ram in verses 9-17 is designed to show how we get to David.  
Then we hear about Caleb and his immediate family (verses 18-24)  
and then about Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron (verses 25-33).  
Verse 33 makes it sound like we are finished with Jerahmeel,  
but verse 34 picks up again with the line of Jerahmeel!  
Then in verse 42 we go back to the descendents of Caleb,  
and finally in chapter 3 we return the line of Ram

Indeed, chapter 4 could even be seen as part of the chiasm,  
as it returns to parallel the overview of Judah found in 2:1-8.

Indeed, 4:21-23 concludes the section with the sons of Shelah –  
the last of the sons of Judah mentioned in 2:3.

But we'll only cover 2 chapters tonight!

### **1. The Sons of Israel (2:1-8)**

<sup>1</sup>*These are the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, <sup>2</sup> Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. <sup>3</sup> The sons of Judah: Er, Onan and Shelah; these three Bath-shua the Canaanite bore to him. Now Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death. <sup>4</sup> His daughter-in-law Tamar also bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all.*

The order of the twelve sons of Israel appears to be taken from Genesis 46 –  
the only passage that presents them in anything like this order.

The Chronicler does not cover up the ugliness in the line of Judah.  
He mentions both Er's wickedness (in Hebrew Er is "evil" spelled backwards!),  
and the problematic relationship between Judah and Tamar

(Although it is worth pointing out that in Babylonian law,  
if there were no brothers-in-law,  
then it fell to the father-in-law to make sure that the line continued.  
Tamar's actions were entirely in keeping with local custom and practice.  
That is why Judah acknowledged: "She is righteous, not I" in Genesis 38).

<sup>5</sup>*The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul. <sup>6</sup>The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, five in all. <sup>7</sup>The son of Carmi: Achan, the troubler of Israel, who broke faith in the matter of the devoted thing; <sup>8</sup>and Ethan's son was Azariah.*

The sons of Zerah are particularly interesting:  
Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara are known to have lived during the monarchy –  
in other words many centuries after Judah!  
*Probably*, the Chronicler is reporting on their distant ancestry –  
explaining where these famous Israelites connect back to Judah.

Ethan and Heman are spoken of elsewhere in Scripture as “Ezrahites” – Ps 88/89  
(which may refer to Zerah, their ancient ancestor –  
but may also refer to the location of where they were from).  
Heman, Calcol and Darda are also called “sons of Mahol” – 1 Kings 5:11  
(which could refer to their immediate ancestor –  
but may refer to being musicians – “sons of dancing” as it were –  
since the same word is used in Psalm 150 and elsewhere  
to refer to dancing before the LORD).

Why are they here?

The Chronicler is very interested in worship and liturgy.  
And every Israelite, as they hear this genealogy,  
would say, “Ah, that’s how these great liturgists are related to Judah!”

But what about the other one?

Zimri?

Zimri is probably a corruption of Zabdi,  
which was the name of the father of Carmi (verse 7) from Joshua 7.

You may note that in verse 7, there is no clear explanation of how Carmi is related to Judah.

But of course, everyone who has read Joshua 7 knows that Achan  
was the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah.

And Achan was the troubler of Israel,  
the one who took some of the devoted things from the plunder of Jericho –

what was it that Achan took?

Gold, silver, and a cloak from Shinar (a priestly robe!),  
which he took and hid in his tent.

By claiming things devoted to God, Achan was guilty of idolatry.  
After all, those things were supposed to be given to God –  
by taking them for himself, he was claiming to be god!

Perhaps we should reflect on that when we think of Jesus’ words:

“Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s,  
but unto God the things that are God’s.”

If you claim for yourself that which belongs to God,  
then you are a troubler of God’s people,  
and you will be destroyed!

So right here, in the introduction to the genealogy of Judah,

we have the contrast clearly stated:

Judah is the father of the great worship leaders of Israel;

Judah is also the father of the first idolater in Israel!

The seeds of glory and the seeds of destruction both descend from Judah.

The rest of our passage is summarized in verse 9.

## **2. The Sons of Hezron (2:9-3:24)**

### **A. The Sons of Ram (v9-17)**

<sup>9</sup>*The sons of Hezron that were born to him: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai.*

Verse 9, sets out the threefold pattern of the genealogy that follows in the three sons of Hezron: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai.

Chelubai is almost certainly a different spelling of Caleb (as the sons of Caleb are given below). But the sons of Hezron are nowhere else named in scripture.

Ram is identified in Ruth 4 as a son of Hezron (the same genealogy as verses 10-12 here).

But Caleb is portrayed in Joshua 14-15 as the son of Jephunneh, a Kenizzite!

The Kenizzites were descended from Kenaz, one of the chiefs of Edom (see 1:53), and were said in Genesis 15 to be one of the nations that Israel would dispossess.

(If it seems odd to you that the Kenizzites would be referred to in Genesis 15, before their ancestor was born, don't let it bug you – Genesis frequently talks about the land of Abraham's day, in terms of the way it would have appeared in Moses' day).

Caleb was one of the two faithful spies in Numbers 13.

He was one of the leaders of the tribe of Judah.

But at least on his father's side, he was not a Judahite, but a Kenizzite – a descendent of Esau.

Jerahmeel also has an interesting history!

In 1 Samuel 27:10 the Jerahmeelites are compared to the Kenites and the Judahites as three peoples whom David pretended to attack!

Likewise in 1 Samuel 30:29 they are again compared to the Kenites as friendly tribes to David – but *not* considered part of Judah!

How can the Chronicler call them sons of Hezron?

Well, first of all, if Hezron was a grandson of Judah, then he was born in Egypt a couple hundred years before the birth of Caleb.

So Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai would not necessarily be his biological sons.  
They are his descendents.

While they were descended from non-Israelite fathers,  
they became part of Judah – by faith, and probably by marriage.  
Jerahmeel and Caleb may have been descended from Hezron through their mothers –  
or they may merely have been adopted into the clan by the sons of Hezron,  
and thus these non-Israelites became part of the tribe of Judah.

But we can't stop there.

Because the Chronicler says that they were *born* Hezron.

Since the Chronicler seems to assume that you know this history  
why does he say that that these three were *born* to Hezron?

The Chronicler wants to make another point.

These non-Israelite sons of Judah are *truly* part of the family.  
They are rightful heirs – not interlopers!

Remember what Ezekiel said?

The sojourner shall have an inheritance with the native born (Ezek 47:22).

The Chronicler no doubt knew what Ezekiel had said,  
and so he reminds Israel that this had been true from the start!

Remember Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite?

He was a son of Hezron.

Remember the Jerahmeelites who submitted to the LORD our God  
and were joined to the tribe of Judah by faith and marriage?

They also are sons of Hezron!

I told you last week that the genealogies of Chronicles

are *your* story –

not just because you are included in the table of nations in chapter 1,

but because you have been adopted into the family of God.

God's family includes you.

And it's not just by "adoption."

It is also by birth!

Adoption is the legal aspect to how you have become a son of God.

But you have also been born again – born from above.

The genealogies of Chronicles frequently will suggest  
that there is something more going on here

than mere biological descent from father to son.

<sup>10</sup> Ram fathered Amminadab, and Amminadab fathered Nahshon, prince of the sons of Judah.

<sup>11</sup>Nahshon fathered Salmon, Salmon fathered Boaz, <sup>12</sup>Boaz fathered Obed, Obed fathered Jesse.

<sup>13</sup> Jesse fathered Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third, <sup>14</sup>Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, <sup>15</sup>Ozem the sixth, David the seventh. <sup>16</sup>And their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three. <sup>17</sup> Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite.

Verses 10-17 recounts the line from Hezron to David.

Note that this is a *linear* genealogy.

Unlike the accounts of Caleb and Jerahmeel,  
the line of Ram has a laser-like focus on how you get  
from Judah to David and his brothers.

The effect of this is that we know of no other descendents of Ram  
except David and his brothers.

There are ten generations from Judah to Jesse – a period of around 500 years.

Nahshon (according to Exodus 6:23 was a contemporary of Moses),  
which leaves only four generations to get from Moses to the birth of David.

Salmon would have been a contemporary of Joshua,  
which leaves only Boaz and Obed for the entire period of the Judges,  
since Jesse was a contemporary of King Saul.

So there are almost certainly gaps in our genealogy.

But when you count the number of names in the genealogy,  
and realize that there are *ten* generations given,  
perhaps you will not be so surprised!

After all, we saw ten generations from Adam to Noah (and his three sons),  
and then ten generations from Shem to Abraham (and his three heirs),

now we see ten generations from Judah to Jesse – and his seven sons!

But wait!

When we went through Samuel, we saw that David was the *eighth* son!  
In Samuel Jesse has seven sons pass by the prophet, but none is chosen;  
and David is the eighth son who is better than the seven sons before him.

But in Chronicles, David is the seventh son.

Why?

Maybe the Chronicler found records of the house of David in Jerusalem  
(he does, after all, list the names of all the brothers).

And maybe Jesse actually had seven sons –

and when the book of Samuel  
says that Jesse had seven sons pass before Samuel,  
it means that Jesse had “all the others” pass before him.

Or maybe Jesse had eight, but the Chronicler could only find the names of seven.  
Or maybe one died before he got married, and so the Chronicler did not include him.

By the way, do you see what I’m doing?

The genealogies of Chronicles are probably one of the biggest challenges  
to the doctrine of inerrancy.

There are numerous places where the text of Chronicles is plainly *different*  
from other portions of scripture.

I could claim that the text is corrupt!

(and most likely it is! Genealogies are *hard* for copyists to get right.

The names are obscure and it would be easy to get mixed up!

In fact, there are a host of textual problems in these chapters,

but the textual problems do not get to heart of the fundamental challenge!)

But claiming the corruption of the text is cheap.

We need to recognize that the inerrancy of these genealogies  
should not be judged by the standards of ancestry.com!

That is why we need to understand the function of genealogies in the ancient world.

The point here is not that Chronicles is trying to give a complete genealogy.

The point here is that this genealogy is connecting the whole of Israel’s history.

All the important people are here – and this is how the whole story fits together.

But you may need to take the word “son” in a rather broad sense.

In ordinary usage, the Hebrew word for son (ben) can mean son or descendent.

But it can also have a meaning that in English might be best translated  
“successor”.

And you see this in Caleb.

### **B. The Sons of Caleb (v18-24)**

<sup>18</sup> *Caleb the son of Hezron fathered children by his wife Azubah, and by Jerioth; and these were her sons: Jeshar, Shobab, and Ardon.* <sup>19</sup>*When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur.* <sup>20</sup>*Hur fathered Uri, and Uri fathered Bezalel.*

It gets really interesting in the “B” sections – verses 18-24 and 42-55.

Allegedly, they are both genealogies of Caleb.

But the only name that appears in both of them is Hur the son of Ephrath!

Where does this material come from?  
Most of it – we have no idea!

Some suggest that Jerioth (v18) is actually the daughter of Caleb,  
and that it should read, “Caleb was the father of Jerioth by his wife Azubah,”  
and that Jerioth had three sons...

And then, because Azubah had borne only a daughter and no sons,  
when Hezron died Caleb took his father’s wife and she bore him Ashhur (v24).

But there is a problem with that storyline!  
We already know from Numbers and Joshua  
that Caleb is the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite!

How can Caleb, the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, also be the son of Hezron?

I would suggest that what we have in verse 24 is *how* Caleb *became* the “son” of Hezron –  
namely, by marrying his widow!

Caleb – the Kenizzite descendent of Esau –  
became son/heir of Hezron by marrying Hezron’s wife.

There are two other stories that we need to connect here:

- 1) in verse 20 we hear how Bezalel, one of the craftsmen of the tabernacle  
was related to Judah.
- 2) in verses 21-23, we hear of how Judah is related to Gilead,  
who elsewhere is connected to Manasseh.

This will become important in the story of David,  
when David enters a marriage alliance with Geshur.

<sup>21</sup>Afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married  
when he was sixty years old, and she bore him Segub. <sup>22</sup>And Segub fathered Jair, who had  
twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead. <sup>23</sup>But Geshur and Aram took from them Havvoth-jair,  
Kenath, and its villages, sixty towns. All these were descendants of Machir, the father of Gilead.  
<sup>24</sup>After the death of Hezron, Caleb went in to Ephrathah, the wife of Hezron his father, and she  
bore him Ashhur, the father of Tekoa.

So, what do we see in the line of Caleb?

We see that the nations are incorporated into the people of God.  
Those who were once outsiders are brought in.

Those who embrace the faith of Abraham become part of the people of God,  
no matter what their background is!

### **C. The Sons of Jerahmeel (v25-33)**

<sup>25</sup>The sons of Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron: Ram, his firstborn, Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah. <sup>26</sup>Jerahmeel also had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam. <sup>27</sup>The sons of Ram, the firstborn of Jerahmeel: Maaz, Jamin, and Eker. <sup>28</sup>The sons of Onam: Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai: Nadab and Abishur. <sup>29</sup>The name of Abishur's wife was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid. <sup>30</sup>The sons of Nadab: Seled and Appaim; and Seled died childless. <sup>31</sup>The son of Appaim: Ishi. The son of Ishi: Sheshan. The son of Sheshan: Ahlai. <sup>32</sup>The sons of Jada, Shammai's brother: Jether and Jonathan; and Jether died childless. <sup>33</sup>The sons of Jonathan: Peleth and Zaza. These were the descendants of Jerahmeel.

### **C'. The Sons of Jerahmeel (v34-41)**

<sup>34</sup>Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters, but Sheshan had an Egyptian slave whose name was Jarha. <sup>35</sup>So Sheshan gave his daughter in marriage to Jarha his slave, and she bore him Attai. <sup>36</sup>Attai fathered Nathan, and Nathan fathered Zabad. <sup>37</sup>Zabad fathered Ephlal, and Ephlal fathered Obed. <sup>38</sup>Obed fathered Jehu, and Jehu fathered Azariah. <sup>39</sup>Azariah fathered Helez, and Helez fathered Eleasah. <sup>40</sup>Eleasah fathered Sismai, and Sismai fathered Shallum. <sup>41</sup>Shallum fathered Jekamiah, and Jekamiah fathered Elishama.

In the middle come the sons of Jerahmeel.

The two genealogies in verses 25-33 and 34-41 connect clearly – but not well!

Sheshan appears in verse 31 as the son of Ishi –  
but in verse 31, Sheshan had a son: Ahlai.

In verse 34, however, we are told that Sheshan had no sons,  
so he gave his daughter in marriage to Jarha his slave,  
and she bore him Attai.

In Hebrew, there is no resemblance between Ahlai and Attai.  
What is going on?

Ahlai is the seventh generation from Jerahmeel

And Elishama is the fourteenth generation from Sheshan.

(Or to put it another way, Elishama is the 20<sup>th</sup> generation from Jerahmeel).

We don't know these people – only one appears elsewhere in scripture.

But what we *do* know is that 20 generations in *David's* line  
(coming up in chapter 3)  
gets you to the exile.

And 2 Kings 25:25 speaks of Elishama as the grandfather of the assassin  
who struck down Gedaliah, the governor appointed by the Babylonians.

So now you can see how the family of Judah produces great heroes  
and godless assassins!

Every part of our family is here –  
the good, the bad, and the ugly.

### **B'. The Sons of Caleb (v42-55)**

<sup>42</sup>The sons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel: Mareshah his firstborn, who fathered Ziph. The son of Mareshah: Hebron. <sup>43</sup>The sons of Hebron: Korah, Tappuah, Rekem and Shema. <sup>44</sup>Shema fathered Raham, the father of Jorkeam; and Rekem fathered Shammai. <sup>45</sup>The son of Shammai: Maon; and Maon fathered Beth-zur. <sup>46</sup>Ephah also, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza, and Gazez; and Haran fathered Gazez. <sup>47</sup>The sons of Jahdai: Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph. <sup>48</sup>Maacah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah. <sup>49</sup>She also bore Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah and the father of Gibeaz; and the daughter of Caleb was Achsah. <sup>50</sup>These were the descendants of Caleb.

Verses 42-49 then give another genealogy of Caleb –  
but this genealogy is *entirely* different from the earlier one.  
Not a single name occurs in both lists.

One possibility is that there are two Caleb's –  
one who was the biological son of Hebron,  
the other the biological son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite.

A better solution is that the Chronicler put the sons of Caleb's wives in the first section,  
and the sons of Caleb's concubines in the second section.

What inclines me to this latter solution,  
is that in verses 50-55 we are told of the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah –  
the same Hur of verse 20,  
even though *his* sons are entirely different from those mentioned in verse 20!

*The sons of Hur the firstborn of Ephrathah: Shobal the father of Kiriath-jearim, <sup>51</sup>Salma, the father of Bethlehem, and Hareph the father of Beth-gader. <sup>52</sup>Shobal the father of Kiriath-jearim had other sons: Haroeh, half of the Menuhoth. <sup>53</sup>And the clans of Kiriath-jearim: the Ithrites, the Puthites, the Shumathites, and the Mishraites; from these came the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites. <sup>54</sup>The sons of Salma: Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth-beth-joab and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites. <sup>55</sup>The clans also of the scribes who lived at Jabez: the Tirathites, the Shimeathites and the Sucathites. These are the Kenites who came from Hammath, the father of the house of Rechab.*

It is also interesting to note that most of Caleb's sons in this section  
have the names of later Jewish towns!  
In other words, from Caleb has come most of Judah's leading cities!

Caleb's line ends with the house of Rechab,  
of whom we hear in 2 Kings 10:15 and Jeremiah 35:2  
that the Rechabites were famous for their devotion to Yahweh.

The misguided assassin of the house of Jerahmeel –  
the devoted Rechabites of the house of Caleb –

all Judah's history is bound up together in this one family tree –  
this one story of the one people of God.

## **A'. The Sons of Ram from David to Today (3:1-24)**

### **1. The Sons of David (v1-9)**

<sup>1</sup> *These are the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the firstborn, Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelite; the second, Daniel, by Abigail the Carmelite, <sup>2</sup>the third, Absalom, whose mother was Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith; <sup>3</sup>the fifth, Shephatiah, by Abital; the sixth, Ithream, by his wife Eglah; <sup>4</sup>six were born to him in Hebron, where he reigned for seven years and six months. And he reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem. <sup>5</sup>These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan and Solomon, four by Bath-shua, the daughter of Ammiel; <sup>6</sup>then Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet, <sup>7</sup>Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, <sup>8</sup>Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine. <sup>9</sup>All these were David's sons, besides the sons of the concubines, and Tamar was their sister.*

Chapter 3 moves a whole lot quicker.

Verses 1-9 provide the 19 sons of David –  
six born in Hebron by six different wives –  
four born in Jerusalem by Bath-shua (Bathsheba),  
and nine born in Jerusalem by other wives,  
besides the sons of his concubines.

### **2. The Descendants of Solomon (v10-24)**

<sup>10</sup>*The son of Solomon was Rehoboam, Abijah his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son, <sup>11</sup>Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son, <sup>12</sup>Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son, <sup>13</sup>Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son, <sup>14</sup>Amon his son, Josiah his son.*

Verses 10-14 then provide a linear genealogy of the line of David  
from Solomon to Josiah (16 generations that cover 400 years),  
relating the kings of Judah, the central characters in the narrative that follows.

<sup>15</sup>*The sons of Josiah: Johanan the firstborn, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. <sup>16</sup>The descendants of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son;*

Verses 15-16 tell us about the sons of Josiah and his son Jehoiakim.

Chronicles here seems to say that there were two Zedekiahs –  
one was the son of Jehoiakim,  
while the other was the son of Josiah  
and the uncle of Jeconiah (also called Jehoiachin).  
[as in 2 Kings 24:17 and 2 Chronicles 36:10]

The other possibility is that Chronicles refers to Zedekiah as the son of Jeconiah here  
because he came after him on the throne of David.

Ancient king lists often refer to a subsequent king as the “son” of his predecessor

regardless of the actual biological relationship between them.

I would not be at all surprised to discover that this was the case here.

*<sup>17</sup>and the sons of Jeconiah, the captive: Shealtiel his son, <sup>18</sup>Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama and Nedabiah; <sup>19</sup>and the sons of Pedaiah: Zerubbabel and Shimei; and the sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith was their sister; <sup>20</sup>and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-hesed, five. <sup>21</sup>The sons of Hananiah: Pelatiah and Jeshaiiah, his son Rephaiah, his son Arnan, his son Obadiah, his son Shecaniah. <sup>22</sup>The son of Shecaniah: Shemaiah. And the sons of Shemaiah: Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat, six. <sup>23</sup>The sons of Neariah: Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam, three. <sup>24</sup>The sons of Elioenai: Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani, seven.*

Verses 17-24 then provide a segmented genealogy from Jeconiah to the sons of Elioenai.

Each generation recounts a number of sons.

The following generation selects one of the sons and lists his sons.

The most important name in this list is Zerubbabel –  
the governor of Jerusalem in the days of the return from Exile.

Here he is identified as the son of Pedaiah.

Elsewhere (Haggai 1-2, Ezra 3-5, Nehemiah 12) he is identified as  
Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel.

Either this is a different Zerubbabel (which is entirely possible),  
or there was a Levirate marriage involved,  
with Pedaiah and Shealtiel.

The Shenazzar listed in verse 18 as Zerubbabel's uncle  
fits well with what we know from Ezra-Nehemiah  
about the Sheshbazzar who was the leader of the returning exiles  
before Zerubbabel took over for him.

(We actually have inscriptions from ancient Judah that refer to Shelomith  
as the wife of the governor Elnathan,  
as well as other inscriptions on storage jars  
referring to Hananiah and a Baruch, son of Shimei,  
who may well be the son of the Shimei mentioned in v19 –  
since all of these people would have been the ruling elite in Jerusalem.)

The result is that we have an account of eight generations beyond the captivity.  
Given that 16 generations took 400 years,  
it is plausible to argue that 8 generations would be around 200 years,  
which means that this genealogy takes us past 400 B.C.

The names are also important:

Zerubbabel means “offspring of Babylon”  
but his children are:  
Meshuallam – “Restored”  
Hananiah – “Yahweh is merciful”  
Shelomith – “Peace”  
Hashubah – “Yahweh has considered”  
Ohel – “Tent” (with all the tabernacle imagery behind it)  
Berechiah – “Yahweh has blessed”  
Hasidah – “Yahweh has shown covenant love”  
Jushab-hesed – “Covenant love returns”

His father had named him “offspring of Babylon” –  
but from this son of exile – from this son of confusion –  
God restored the names of his covenant people.

Who were the sons of Elioenai?  
If Chronicles was written around 400-350 B.C.,  
then these seven sons of Elioenai  
would still be alive today.

The seven sons of Elioenai parallel the seven sons of Jesse

In other words,  
the house of David was still very obvious and present to the mind of the Chronicler.

The house of David is still with us.

It is not clear that the house of David had any great aspirations for power.  
The sons of Elioenai do not appear to have played any major role in Israel’s history –  
nor did any other descendent of David for another 400 years!

But the sons of Elioenai stand in this record forever  
as a testimony to God’s faithfulness to his promises to his beloved.  
God is faithful –  
and if you need evidence of this,  
go back and read the names.

God had said “the LORD, the LORD, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and mercy,  
...who shows mercy to thousands [of generations]  
of them that love me and keep my commandments.”

Generation after generation the line goes on.  
And his steadfast love endures forever!