

1 Chronicles 9:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephathiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah;

Analysis

And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi—this verse lists post-exilic Benjamite residents of Jerusalem with extended genealogies. **Ibneiah** (יִבְנִיָּה 'Yahweh builds'), **Jeroham** (יֶרֶחָם 'cherished' or 'loved'), **Elah** (אֵלָה 'oak' or 'terebinth'), **Uzzi** (עֲזִי 'my strength'), **Michri** (מִכְרִי 'price'), **Meshullam** (מְשֻׁלָּם 'recompensed'), **Shephathiah** (שִׁפְתָּיָה 'Yahweh judges'), **Reuel** (רְעוּיָאֵל 'friend of God'), and **Ibnijah** (יִבְנִיָּה 'Yahweh builds')—the genealogical depth (seven generations: Ibneiah←Jeroham←...←Ibnijah) validates these families' legitimate Benjamite ancestry despite 70 years in Babylon.

The repetition of **Yahweh builds** (יִבְנִיָּה) at both ends of this genealogy creates a theological frame: Yahweh who built ancient Benjamin's families now rebuilds them post-exile. The name **Reuel** ('friend of God') notably appears as Moses's father-in-law's name (Exodus 2:18), suggesting either name recycling or Midianite integration into Israel—a reminder that ethnic Israel included grafted-in strangers who became covenant friends of God, anticipating Gentile inclusion in Christ's body (Ephesians 2:19).

The meticulous preservation of seven-generation genealogies for returning families demonstrates the post-exilic community's concern with legitimacy. Unlike modern individualism, ancient identity was corporate and genealogical—you were your lineage. These names aren't filler; they're validation that Jerusalem's post-exilic population were authentic Israel, not mere squatters in ancestral land.

Historical Context

Chapter 9 lists residents of Jerusalem after Babylonian exile (538+ BC), paralleling Nehemiah 11's register. Babylonian policy mixed deportees from various nations, threatening Jewish ethnic-religious identity. Returning exiles faced challenges from Samaritans and others claiming equal right to the land. These genealogies proved the returnees' legitimate descent from pre-exilic tribal families, crucial for land ownership, temple service, and community leadership. Archaeological evidence shows Jerusalem's post-exilic population remained small (perhaps 1,500 initially) until Nehemiah's repopulation efforts (Nehemiah 11:1-2).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does the name 'Yahweh builds' bracketing this genealogy encourage Christians facing the 'rebuilding' phase after spiritual devastation or church decline?
2. What does the seven-generation genealogical preservation teach about the importance of knowing your spiritual heritage and faith legacy?

Interlinear Text

וִּיבְנֶיָהּ	בֶּן	יֵרוֹחָם	וְאֵלָה	בֶּן	עֻזִּי	בֶּן	מִיכָיִי
And Ibneiah	the son	of Jeroham	and Elah	the son	of Uzzi	the son	of Michri
H2997	H1121	H3395	H425	H1121	H5813	H1121	H4381
וּמִשְׁלָם	בֶּן	שִׁפְתָּיָה	בֶּן	רְעוּיָאֵל	בֶּן	יִבְנֵיָהּ	
and Meshullam	the son	of Shephathiah	the son	of Reuel	the son	of Ibnijah	
H4918	H1121	H8203	H1121	H7467	H1121	H2998	

