

## A Monument and a Name: The Primary Purpose of Chronicles' Genealogies

### A. The Purposes of 1 Chronicles 1-9

The genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9 are so extensive—they amount to about twenty percent of Chronicles, in fact—that it is unlikely the Chronicler intended them to do just one thing, to have only one purpose, and scholarly investigations of the work have identified quite a number of things that the genealogies do. Some see them as emphasizing the significance of the Davidides, whose long genealogy in 1 Chronicles 3 stands at the center of Judah's genealogical material.<sup>1</sup> Some see them as having other purposes as well, arguing that the placement of the Levitical genealogies of 5:27-6:66 [6:1-81] at the center of the pre-exilic Israelite genealogical material of

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., Marshall D. Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies with Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus*, SNTSMS 8, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd ed., 1988), 75-76; Manfred Oeming, *Das wahre Israel: Die "genealogische Vorhalle" 1 Chronik 1-9*, BWANT 128 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1990), 129-30; Gary N. Knoppers, "The Davidic Genealogy: Some Contextual Considerations from the Ancient Mediterranean World," *Transeu* 22 (2001): 35-50; Georg Steins, "1 Chr 1-10 als Set up der Chronickbücher" in *Textarbeit: Studien zu Texten und ihrer Rezeption aus dem Alten Testament und der Umwelt Israels*, ed. Klaus Kierow and Thomas Meurer, AOAT 294 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2003), 483-504 (494-96); Deirdre N. Fulton, "What do Priests and Kings Have in Common? Priestly and Royal Succession Narratives in the Achaemenid Era," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 225-41 (231-32).

1 Chronicles 2-8 points to the centrality of the Levites in the Chronicler's thought,<sup>2</sup> that the genealogies underline the importance of Judah and Benjamin within Israel,<sup>3</sup> and/or provide a portrait of Israel,<sup>4</sup> one that includes the North as well as Judah.<sup>5</sup> Some scholars also find

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<sup>2</sup> E.g., Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies*, 69; Oeming, *Das wahre Israel*, 149; William Johnstone, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, JSOTSup 253-254 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 1:12-13; Isaac Kalimi, "The View of Jerusalem in the Ethnographic Introduction of Chronicles (1 Chr 1-9)," *Bib* 83 (2002): 556-62 (560-61); Magnar Kartveit, "Names and Narratives: The Meaning of their Combination in 1 Chronicles 1-9," in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, its Exegesis and its Language*, ed. Moshe Bar-Asher et al. (Jerusalem: The Bialik Institute, 2007), 59\*-80\* (74\*); James T. Sparks, *The Chronicler's Genealogies: Towards an Understanding of 1 Chronicles 1-9*, SBLAB 28 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 31-32.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies*, 52-53; Oeming, *Das wahre Israel*, 90-91, 129-30; Kalimi, "The View of Jerusalem," 560-61; Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 1-9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 12 (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 260-65; John W. Wright, "Remapping Yehud: The Borders of Yehud and the Genealogies of Chronicles," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, ed. Oded Lipschits and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 67-89 (75).

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Thomas Willi, *Chronik*, BKAT 24 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991-), 8-9; Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 8.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., Oeming, *Das wahre Israel*, 166-69; Yigal Levin, "Who was the Chronicler's Audience? A Hint from his Genealogies," *JBL* 122 (2003): 229-45 (245); Steven James Schweitzer, *Reading Utopia in Chronicles*, LHBOTS 442 (New York: T & T Clark International,

geographical rationales for the chapters, arguing they point to the centrality of Jerusalem,<sup>6</sup> portray Israel as at the center of the world,<sup>7</sup> and/or display an interest in the extent of the land that should belong to Israel.<sup>8</sup> Some even see the genealogies as emphasizing the main themes of

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2007), 56-60.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., Magnar Kartveit, *Motive und Schichten der Landtheologie in I Chronik 1-9*, ConBOT 28 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1989), 114-15, 167; Oeming, *Das wahre Israel*, 200; Brian E. Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles*, JSOTSup 211 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 178-79.

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Kartveit, *Motive und Schichten*, 116-17; Oeming, *Das wahre Israel*, 90; Jonathan E. Dyck *The Theocratic Ideology of the Chronicler*, BIS 33 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 134; Gary N. Knoppers, "Shem, Ham and Japheth: The Universal and the Particular in the Genealogy of Nations," in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein*, ed. M. Patrick Graham, Steven L. McKenzie, and Gary N. Knoppers, JSOTSup 371 (London: T & T Clark International, 2003), 13-31 (25-30); Ehud Ben Zvi, "Shifting the Gaze: Historiographic Constraints in Chronicles and their Implications" in *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles*, BibleWorld (London: Equinox, 2006), 78-99 (80-81); Pancratius C. Beentjes, "Adopting and Adapting: Some Rewritten Genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-5," in *Tradition and Transformation in the Book of Chronicles*, SSN 52 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 17-29 (19-22).

<sup>8</sup> E.g., Oeming, *Das wahre Israel*, 121; Thomas Willi, "Late Persian Judaism and its Conception of an Integral Israel According to Chronicles: Some Observations on Form and Function of the Genealogy of Judah in 1 Chronicles 2.3-4.23," in *Second Temple Studies 2: Temple Community in the Persian Period*, ed. Tamara C. Eskenazi and Kent H. Richards, JSOTSup 175 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 146-62 (149); Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology*,

the narrative of 1 Chronicles 10-2 Chronicles 36.<sup>9</sup>

Yet the Chronicler did not need a whole series of genealogies to accomplish any of these goals. It certainly is true that these chapters evince interest in some issues related to geography, but many long lists of personal names are not necessary to demonstrate Jerusalem's importance or to provide an ideal picture of the land of Israel,<sup>10</sup> nor, for that matter, to serve any of the other purposes we have just mentioned, especially as those are all clear enough in the narrative that begins in 1 Chronicles 10. 1 Chronicles 10-2 Chronicles 36 as a whole revolves around the actions of the Davidides and is structured by their reigns, and so the importance of the Davidides is much clearer in the narratives than in the genealogies. The narrative also emphasizes the importance of the people, including Judah and Benjamin, as we shall briefly discuss below. The narrative provides a portrait of Israel, one in which it is clear that the North is as much a part of

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80-81; Wright, "Remapping Judah."

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Johnson, *The Biblical Genealogies*, 56-57; Rodney K. Duke, "A Rhetorical Approach to Appreciating the Books of Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture*, ed. M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 263 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 100-35 (120); John W. Wright, "The Fabula of the Book of Chronicles," in *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture*, ed. M. Patrick Graham and Steven L. McKenzie, JSOTSup 263 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 136-58 (153-54); Beentjes, "Adopting and Adapting," 17-18.

<sup>10</sup> It is true that some of the ancestral names also double as geographical names in Israel and Judah (Wright, "Remapping Judah" provides some helpful examples of this), but this is the case for only a small minority of the Israelite personal names, and so hardly explains the vast extent of the genealogies we find.

Israel as Judah is, from the narrative's beginning (as in 1 Chronicles 12, where each tribe is mentioned by name as sending troops to David and supporting his right to the throne) to its end (as in 2 Chr 30:1-9, where Hezekiah insists the North should also worship in Jerusalem). The narrative is clear as to the importance of the Levites as well, making them the centerpiece of David's preparations for the temple cult in 1 Chronicles 23-26 and providing them in these and other chapters with central duties in the cult (e.g. 1 Chr 15:11-16:42; 2 Chr 29:34; 30:16; 35:10-11) and in civic administration (2 Chr 17:7-9; 19:8-11). Strong cases have been made that the genealogies truly are structured to emphasize the importance of the Davidides and the Levites, and to provide a portrait of Israel that includes the North, but the fact of the matter is the genealogies in and of themselves are not necessary to make these points since the narrative does so perfectly well on its own; the narrative does so, in fact, in a much more straightforward fashion than the genealogies can. It would seem the Chronicler had some other purpose for the genealogies in mind, a purpose that could not be accomplished without them and, in constructing the genealogies to fulfill this primary purpose, structured them to also serve the secondary ones we have just discussed. Of all of the purposes scholars have identified for the genealogies, the only one that would actually seem to demand the presence of long lists of pre-exilic ancestors is the establishment of pedigree for members of the Chronicler's audience, but as we shall see below these chapters really do very little to provide pedigree for fourth century Judeans. So what do the genealogies do that the narrative cannot? What, in short, is the primary purpose of the genealogies?

As many commentators have argued, the Chronicler's narrative of the monarchic past in 1 Chronicles 10-2 Chronicles 36 implies a change for its fourth century readers' future;

specifically, it appears that the Chronicler works to prepare readers for Davidic rule of Judah,<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> For examples of just some of the works that have made such arguments, see Gerhard von Rad, *Das Geschichtsbild des Chronistischen Werkes*, BWANT 54 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1930), 119-32; G. Johannes Botterweck, “Zur Eigenart der chronistischen Davidgeschichte,” *ThQ* 136 (1956): 402-35; Adrien M. Brunet, “La theologie du Chroniste: Theocratie et messianisme,” *SacPag* 1 (1959): 384-97; David Noel Freedman, “The Chronicler’s Purpose,” *CBQ* 23 (1961): 436-42; Jacob M. Myers, “The Kerygma of the Chronicler: History and Theology in the Service of Religion,” *Int* 20 (1966): 259-73 (266-67); James D. Newsome, “Toward a New Understanding of the Chronicler and his Purposes,” *JBL* 94 (1975): 201-17 (208-15); Magne Saebø, “Messianism in Chronicles? Some Remarks to the Old Testament Background of the New Testament Christology,” *HBT* 2 (1980): 85-109; Tae-Soo Im, *Das Davidbild in den Chronikbüchern: David als Idealbild des theokratischen Messianismus für den Chronisten*, EUS 23/263 (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 1985), 120-24, 164-79; Martin Noth, *The Chronicler’s History*, tr. H.G.M. Williamson, JSOTSup 50 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 105; Mark A. Throntveit, *When Kings Speak: Royal Speech and Royal Prayer in Chronicles*, SBLDS 93 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 89-107; Oeming, *Das wahre Israel*, 209; Ingeborg Gabriel, *Friede über Israel: Eine Untersuchung zur Friedenstheologie in Chronik I, 10-II, 36*, ÖBS 10 (Klosterneuburg: Verlag Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1990), 202-203; Frank Moore Cross, “A Reconstruction of the Judaeen Restoration,” in *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 151-72 (169-70); Gary N. Knoppers, “Israel’s First King and ‘the kingdom of Yhwh in the hands of the sons of David’: The Place of the Saulide Monarchy in the Chronicler’s Historiography,” in *Saul in Story and Tradition*, ed. Carl S.

even if the Chronicler might foresee the Davidides functioning, like the Phoenician kings, as clients within a Persian or early Hellenistic empire.<sup>12</sup> Some argue that the Chronicler hoped for a future theocratic rule of temple personnel or was justifying their current leadership,<sup>13</sup> although

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Ehrlich, FAT 47 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 187-213 (192).

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of the authority wielded by the Phoenician client monarchs in the Persian period, see Vadim Jigoulov, “Administration of Achaemenid Phoenicia: A Case for Managed Autonomy,” in *Exile and Restoration Revisited: Essays on the Babylonian and Persian Periods in Memory of Peter R. Ackroyd*, ed. Gary N. Knoppers and Lester L. Grabbe, LSTS 73 (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 138-51.

<sup>13</sup> Again, for examples of just some of the works that have made such arguments, see Wilhelm Rudolph, *Chronikbücher*, HAT 21 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1955), xxiii-xxiv; André Caquot, “Peut-on parler de messianisme dans l’oeuvre du Chroniste?” *RTP* 16 (1966): 110-20; Ulrich Kellermann, *Nehemia: Quellen, Überlieferung und Geschichte*, BZAW 102 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1967), 96-97; Rudolf Mosis, *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes*, FTS 92 (Freiburg: Herder, 1973), 93-94; Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and its Place in Biblical Thought*, BEATAJ 9 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1989), 499-504; Rodney K. Duke, *The Persuasive Appeal of the Chronicler: A Rhetorical Analysis*, JSOTSup 88, BLS 25 (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1990), 49-51; Ernst Michael Dörrfuss, *Mose in den Chronikbüchern: Garant theokratischer Zukunftserwartung*, BZAW 219 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 115-18; Louis Jonker, “Reforming History: The Hermeneutical Significance of the Books of Chronicles,” *VT* 57 (2007): 21-44; Timothy D. Goltz, “The Chronicler as Elite: Establishing an Atmosphere of Perpetuity in Jerusalemite Yehud,” in *The Function of Ancient Historiography in Biblical and Cognate Studies*, ed. Patricia

this is far less likely.<sup>14</sup> Whatever the case, the primary purpose of these long lists of ancestral names is to assuage doubts readers might have about the polity and leadership the work promotes, whether this is the Davidides' return to power—the most likely scenario—or theocratic rule. To understand this, however, we need to understand the significance fourth century Judeans would have attributed to these many lists of names of pre-exilic dead. As we shall see in the next section, in most cases the dead in Judah quickly lost their individual identity as their names were forgotten and they were absorbed into an anonymous group of ancestors. This was not the case, however, for the ancestors of the elite, those at the very top of the socio-economic ladder, who were able to maintain their individuality and names long after death,

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G. Kirkpatrick and Timothy D. Goltz, *LHBOTS 489* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2008), 91-110.

<sup>14</sup> The Chronicler has much more to say about royal figures and their actions than about the temple personnel, and the narrative is structured by royal reigns; it is, as John Wright puts it, “a thoroughly royalist document” (“The Fabula in the Book of Chronicles,” 150). Surely if the Chronicler had meant to promote a theocracy he or she would have chosen to rewrite parts of the Pentateuch that focus on the importance of the cultic personnel rather than parts of Samuel-Kings where monarchs are the main actors. Moreover, the Chronicler presents the covenant with David as eternal and still in effect; see e.g., Kelly, *Retribution and Eschatology*, 160-61; H.G.M. Williamson, “Eschatology in Chronicles,” in *Studies in Persian Period History and Historiography*, FAT 38 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 162-95 (184-85); Gary N. Knoppers, “Changing History: Nathan’s Oracle and the Structure of the Davidic Monarchy in Chronicles,” in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, its Exegesis and its Language*, ed. Moshe Bar-Asher et al. (Jerusalem: The Bialik Institute, 2007), 99\*-123\* (107\*-108\*).

thereby separating them from the amorphous mass of the nameless dead. Having the financial and/or cultural resources to do this, indeed, is one of the things that made them elite. By providing such long lists of names of Israel and Judah's pre-exilic dead before the narrative of the pre-exilic period begins in 1 Chronicles 10, the Chronicler makes the people of Israel and Judah elite. In 1 Chronicles 1-9, the people's dead are no less important than the Davidic ancestors (or, for that matter, those of the temple personnel). By creating a textual monument that names far more ancestors of the people than of the kings, the work predisposes readers to see Israel/Judah as just as important as royalty, and thereby assures them even before they reach the beginning of the historical narrative of their own importance; 1 Chronicles 1-9 implies, then, that there will be a notable rise in status for the people upon a restoration of the Davidides in the post-exilic context. The only way to create a monument to the people's ancestors in a text, however, is to name them, and this is what makes the genealogies indispensable. This is what they do that the narrative cannot; it is the genealogies' primary purpose, even though the Chronicler has also constructed them to fulfill the secondary purposes scholars have already identified.

If readers believe that, in the pre-exilic past, the people were just as important as the kings, they might well be more inclined to be open to the prospect of a Davidic restoration, one based on the political arrangements of that pre-exilic past (as the Chronicler presents it), and less likely to fear that this restored pre-exilic polity would oppress them rather than treat them as equals or near-equals. (The point stands as well if one believes the Chronicler is writing in support of a future or already-existing theocratic rule. In these cases, the Chronicler can be seen to use the genealogies to persuade readers that their dead are no less important than those of the temple personnel, and thus that they are as important as their present or future leadership.) One

could certainly argue that the narrative maintains the importance of the people even without the presence of the genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9; the people are, for example, involved in making various Davidides king (1 Chr 11:1-3; 29:20-22; 2 Chr 10:1; 22:1; 26:1; 33:25; 36:1) and in important cultic actions undertaken by kings. David receives the people's agreement before he separates the ark from the tabernacle (1 Chr 13:1-4) and they act with him in the movement of the ark to Jerusalem (15:28), while "all the assembly" accompanies Solomon to the tabernacle (2 Chr 1:3) and is present at the temple's inauguration (5:2-6). Yet because the narrative overwhelms readers with actions driven by royal decisions, the people frequently slip into the background; by prefacing the history with the genealogies that amount to a fifth of the work's length, the Chronicler first overwhelms readers with a complementary picture of pre-exilic Israel and Judah in which the people's ancestors are as important as and more prominent than the royal dead.

To understand why the Chronicler would use long genealogies to convince readers of the high status of the people under a monarchy, we need to consider how fourth century Judean readers would react to this great textual monument to the ancestral dead that opens the work. But before we turn to a consideration of Judean attitudes toward the naming of the dead, we need to consider the scholarly proposal that the author uses 1 Chronicles 1-9 to establish pedigree for fourth century readers, or at the very least for fourth century Davidides,<sup>15</sup> the one previously

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<sup>15</sup> Scholars who see the genealogies as providing pedigree often argue that the Chronicler particularly emphasizes it in the cases of the Davidides. See, e.g., Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies*, 71; John Jarick, *1 Chronicles*, Readings (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 9-12; Fulton, "What Do Priests and Kings?" 233-35. Knoppers, on the other hand, understands the genealogies as a whole to provide pedigree (*1 Chronicles 1-9*, 250-53).

proposed use of genealogies that would actually appear to demand the presence of long lists of names. Once we understand what pedigrees actually are, however, it is not clear that 1 Chronicles 1-9 does much to provide them. Raymond Geuss writes that a pedigree legitimates or valorizes a person, institution, or thing, and it depends on an origin that is of positive valuation, followed by steps in an unbroken line that preserve or enhance the value.<sup>16</sup> For philosophers, says Geuss, a genealogy is often thought of as being quite different than this, and for Nietzsche, he argues, genealogies do not legitimate anyone or anything, nor do the steps between origin and end enhance the thing or person's value, and genealogies tend to make the case that there is no single origin of the people or thing in question.<sup>17</sup> We could conclude with Geuss that genealogies and pedigrees are two different things, or we can simply say that pedigree is a subset of genealogy—that is, all pedigrees are genealogies but not all genealogies are pedigrees—but at any rate it is important to recognize that a genealogy does not always function to provide pedigree, a fact that is obvious enough in the Chronicler's genealogies of Israel.

For one thing, a genealogy must have an unbroken line of succession, or else there is no clear connection between its origin and those who stand at the end, and thus no proof that the value of origin has passed to those at the end of the genealogy, yet there are many cases in 1 Chronicles 1-9 where the Chronicler has failed to connect parts of tribal genealogies to the material that precedes it. If we were to assume that belonging to Israel depends on guaranteeing unbroken descent from one of Israel's sons, then there are many cases in the genealogies where the Chronicler fails to provide this guarantee for Judah and Benjamin, the tribes that composed

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<sup>16</sup> Raymond Geuss, "Nietzsche and Genealogy," *European Journal of Philosophy* 2 (1994): 274-92 (274-76).

<sup>17</sup> Geuss, "Nietzsche and Genealogy," 276-77.

the post-exilic community. And, in fact, while Manasseh and Ephraim receive genealogies in 1 Chr 5:23-26 and 7:14-29, the Chronicler never actually demonstrates that either one of these figures is descended from Israel, the founding ancestor of the people. Readers would assumedly know of the old tribal traditions, but the Chronicler presents no unbroken succession between Israel and these two tribal ancestors, and so does not demonstrate pedigree for their descendants. And in regard to Judah, 1 Chr 2:47, for example, refers to the descendants of Jahdai, but there is no mention of Jahdai's parentage. The context of 1:42-50a suggests that Jahdai is to be understood as a son of Caleb, but the Chronicler does not demonstrate an unbroken line of succession from Judah through Caleb to Jahdai. Nor does the Chronicler provide evidence that Jabez in 4:9-10 is actually descended from Judah, and the same is true for Koz and his descendants in 4:8, Kenaz and his descendants in 4:13-14, Caleb the son of Jephunneh and his descendants in 4:17-18, Hodiah's wife and her descendants in 4:19, Shimon and his descendants in 4:20a, and Ishi and his descendants in 4:20b. There is no unbroken chain of Judeans between them and the tribal ancestor, and so it is not clear that they are actually descended from Judah and Israel. The genealogy, that is, does not provide valuation for them as descendants of Israel and so cannot be said here to be a pedigree or to provide these figures and their descendants with pedigree. Benjamin was also part of post-exilic Judah, and its genealogy of 1 Chronicles 8<sup>18</sup> is full of sections where individuals, and so also their descendants, are not connected to the tribal ancestor; this is the case for Ehud and his descendants in 8:6-7 and Shaharaim and his descendants in 8:8-28. Even the long genealogy of 8:29-40, which includes Saul, begins with

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<sup>18</sup> There is also a genealogy for Benjamin in 7:6-12, perhaps a recognition on the Chronicler's part that in the pre-exilic period Benjamin was part of the North—the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 7 are of the Northern tribes—just as in the post-exilic period it was part of Judah.

“the father of Gibeon”<sup>19</sup> for whom the Chronicler provides no information that would link him to Benjamin or to any other preceding figure in the genealogy. As it turns out, Benjamin’s genealogy of 1 Chronicles 8 provides evidence of Israelite origin—pedigree, in other words—for only a small minority of the names in the chapter.

Moreover, none of the genealogies except for that of the Davidides extends past the beginning of the exile, so Chronicles provides no pedigree for any non-Davidide of the fourth century. Steven Schweitzer suggests that the Chronicler provides the genealogies as a way for disenfranchised groups in post-exilic Judah to claim descent from the national and tribal ancestors and so to claim a position within Israel,<sup>20</sup> and while it is certainly not impossible that some fourth century Judeans did look to names in this material and claim some of these figures as ancestors, they would have had to construct genealogies to link themselves to those pre-exilic names in order to create pedigrees. The Chronicler him or herself, however, does not create such links and so cannot be said to be providing pedigrees, at least for non-Davidides. This is a much different situation than that in Athens mocked by Plato when he writes of those who trace their descent for twenty five unbroken generations from themselves to Heracles (*Theaet.* 175a-b), or

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<sup>19</sup> The genealogy of 8:29-40 is repeated in 9:35-44 as an introduction to Saul’s narrative in 1 Chronicles 10, and there “the father of Gibeon” is identified as Jeiel (LXX<sup>L</sup> has added “Jeiel” to 8:29 to have the two lists correspond), but the Chronicler provides no information that would link Jeiel to the tribal ancestor.

<sup>20</sup> Steven Schweitzer, “The Genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1-9: Purposes, Forms, and the Utopian Identity of Israel,” in *Chronicling the Chronicler: The Book of Chronicles and Early Second Temple Historiography*, ed. Paul S. Evans and Tyler F. Williams (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 9-27 (16-24).

that of the pedigrees constructed for the Spartan kings Leonidas and Leutyichides that Herodotus recites, each directly linking the king to Heracles through a course of twenty continuous generations of descent (7.204; 8.131).<sup>21</sup> The only situation in Chronicles that seems anything like this Greek tradition of pedigree is that provided for the Davidides, for 1 Chronicles 3 does trace an unbroken line from David to his descendants in the fourth century, and so could be understood as providing pedigree for the Davidides of the Chronicler's time. The same cannot be said, however, of the genealogy of the head of the Aaronide ancestral house in 5:27-41 [6:1-15],<sup>22</sup> for it ends at the beginning of the exile and so provides no evidence for any fourth century figure hoping to use it as validation for his role in the office. Such a figure might claim descent from Jehozadak, the final Aaronide of this list, but the point is that the list itself does not provide proof for such a claim. This is the problem posed by claims that these genealogies functioned as

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<sup>21</sup> For an introduction to Greek genealogies, see Rosalind Thomas, "Genealogy and the Genealogists" in *Greek and Roman Historiography*, ed. John Marincola, ORCS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 72-99.

<sup>22</sup> As Gary Knoppers has shown ("The Relationship of the Priestly Genealogies to the History of the High Priesthood in Jerusalem," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, ed. Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003], 109-33), this is not a list of high priests, since it begins with Levi, who was not recognized as a priest by the Chronicler, and it omits names of high priests who appear in the Chronicler's narrative. It is possible that the Chronicler understood this to be a list of the heads of the Aaronide ancestral house, figures who, in the Chronicler's understanding, sometimes but not always also filled the office of high priest. On the importance of the heads of the post-exilic ancestral houses, see below.

pedigrees: pedigrees only work if they can link one directly to the original source of value, just as the Greek genealogies did. The very fact that the Chronicler includes genealogical sections that do not link figures to Israel at all suggests pedigree is not his or her interest in this section, and the choice to end all non-Davidic genealogies before the exile points to the same conclusion. And if pedigree is not the Chronicler's interest in these chapters then we will have to search for another rationale for the inclusion of such long lists of pre-exilic Israelites. These extensive lists of names point to a positive valuation of Judah/Israel's ancestors in general and of their individual names, but to understand why this is important we will need to understand the importance of naming the ancestral dead in fourth century Judah.

#### *B. Naming the dead in Judah*

As I have already suggested, the point of providing so many individual ancestral names is to positively dispose readers to the pro-monarchic narrative they will encounter, to persuade them that, in the pre-exilic monarchic era, their ancestors were just as important as the kings were, and thus to convince them that they would have nothing to fear from a Davidic restoration that reestablished something like the pre-exilic polity as Chronicles describes it. To understand this, however, we need to understand the importance of naming the dead in ancient Judah. Most discussions of the ancestral dead in ancient Israel and Judah are part of a debate concerning whether or not ancestral worship was practiced there, but this is not a question that we need to resolve. Our focus instead is on the differences between the treatment of the elite and non-elite dead in Judah, particularly in terms of how the individuality and names of the elite ancestors were maintained. In the genealogies, the Chronicler provides long lists of names of the dead of the elite and non-elite alike, and this would have sent an important message to readers.

In the ancient Near East it appears as if the preservation of one's name after death was considered to be important, but few could really hope that their names would be remembered for very long. Even in Mesopotamia, where regular festivals were held to recall the individual names of the family's dead (*šumam zakāru*), and where the head of the household was the *zākir šumim* "recaller/invoker of the name" in the ancestral cult as he literally named the dead,<sup>23</sup> the names of individual ancestors that were recalled sometimes included only one generation of the dead, generally no more than three, and never more than five.<sup>24</sup> Because there were only so many ancestral names that could be remembered—those ancestors who still belonged to "the living dead," as Gardien Jonker puts it<sup>25</sup>—all the other ancestors whose names were no longer recalled belonged to a collective, non-individualized body, the *eṭem kimti* "ghost of the family," invoked simply as "family, kin, and relatives";<sup>26</sup> true death in Mesopotamia occurred when one's name was forgotten.<sup>27</sup> But the Mesopotamian elite had the resources to produce statues and stelae to

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<sup>23</sup> Karel van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria and Israel: Continuity and Change in the Forms of Religious Life*, SHCANE 7 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 52-55.

<sup>24</sup> See Klaus Spronk, *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, AOAT 219 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1986), 107-109 and van der Toorn, *Family Religion*, 54.

<sup>25</sup> Gardien Jonker, *The Topography of Remembrance: The Dead, Tradition and Collective Memory in Mesopotamia*, SHR 68 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 204-205.

<sup>26</sup> See van der Toorn, *Family Religion*, 54 and JoAnn Scurlock, "Ancient Mesopotamian House Gods," *JANER* 3 (2003): 99-106 (104).

<sup>27</sup> Christopher B. Hays, *A Covenant with Death: Death in the Iron Age II and its Rhetorical Uses in Proto-Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2015), 41.

ensure that their names were remembered much longer than three generations.<sup>28</sup> Ancient Mesopotamians, like ancient Judeans, believed that the dead could speak about the future when contacted,<sup>29</sup> but while ghosts were thought to normally make no sound at all,<sup>30</sup> the kings could speak forever in their inscriptions, narrated in the first person, of their great deeds during life. Rituals in Mesopotamia and Ugarit involved the naming of dead kings, as texts like the Genealogy of the Hammurapi Dynasty and *KTU* 1.161 attest,<sup>31</sup> thereby ensuring royal names were never forgotten. Elite status and financial resources mattered in preserving one's name after death, and prominent figures at Ugarit and elsewhere in Syria-Palestine utilized these advantages, constructing monumental tombs visible to the living long after their deaths, tombs that also functioned as funerary chapels where the names of the dead could be commemorated for many generations.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Spronk, *Beatific Afterlife*, 107-109.

<sup>29</sup> For texts that provide evidence of this Mesopotamian belief, see Irving L. Finkel, "Necromancy in Ancient Mesopotamia," *AfO* 29/30 (1983/1984): 1-17; for evidence of this belief in Judah, see Deut 18:11; Lev 19:26, 31; 20:6, 27; 1 Samuel 28.

<sup>30</sup> As JoAnn Scurlock ("Ghosts in the Ancient Near East: Weak or Powerful?" *HUCA* 68 [1997]: 77-96 [82-83]) explains, it is because the Mesopotamians believed that ghosts were habitually silent that they saw necromantic rites as necessary in order to contact them.

<sup>31</sup> For discussions of these texts see, e.g., J.J. Finkelstein, "The Genealogy of the Hammurapi Dynasty," *JCS* 20 (1966): 95-118, and Theodore J. Lewis, *Cults of the Dead in Ancient Israel and Ugarit*, HSM 39 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 5-31.

<sup>32</sup> For such structures at Ugarit, see Jean-François Salles, "Rituel mortuaire et rituel social à Ras Shamra/Ougarit," in *The Archaeology of Death in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Stuart

This distinction between elite and non-elite in regard to the preservation of one's name after death existed in Judah as well. One of the best ways to demonstrate this is through the physical evidence of burial. Burial was clearly important in Judah; non-burial (e.g., Deut 28:26; Isa 66:24; Jer 9:22; 16:1-4; 25:33), disinterment (Isa 14:18-20; 34:2-3; Jer 8:1-2), and even a failure to be buried in one's ancestral tomb (1 Kgs 13:22; 2 Chr 21:20; 24:25; 28:27) are portrayed as punishments.<sup>33</sup> From the eighth century until the late Second Temple period, burial in the Judean highlands was accomplished almost solely through bench tombs.<sup>34</sup> These were dug

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Campbell and Anthony Green, *Oxbow 51* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1995), 171-84 (175-76). The stela of Katamuwa at Zincirli was discovered in a funerary chapel where he was recalled after his death; see Eudora J. Struble and Virginia Rimmer Herrmann, "The New Iron Age Mortuary Stela from Zincirli in Context," *BASOR* 356 (2009): 15-49. On pp. 36-42 Struble and Herrmann discuss archaeological evidence for other mortuary chapels from the region, a luxury they conclude was reserved for the elite (pp. 40-41).

<sup>33</sup> See discussions in Herbert Chanan Brichto, "Kin, Cult, Land and Afterlife—A Biblical Complex," *HUCA* 44 (1973): 1-54 (35-38) and Saul M. Olyan, "Some Neglected Aspects of Israelite Interment Ideology," *JBL* 124 (2005): 601-16.

<sup>34</sup> Very few tombs in use during the Persian period have actually been excavated, but there is no evidence that mainstream burial culture moved away from the bench tomb until the first century BCE. Bench tombs were still being dug as late as the Hasmonean period—see Amos Kloner and Boaz Zissou, *The Necropolis of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period*, ISCR 8 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 87-88—and late Iron Age bench tombs were still in use in the Persian period, and at least one was reused as late as the first century BCE. See Gabriel Barkay, "Excavations at Ketef Hinnom in Jerusalem" in *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed*, ed. Hillel Geva,

to create benches on which the recently deceased were laid with their grave goods. After the flesh decayed, something that would take about a year for burials around Jerusalem,<sup>35</sup> a secondary burial would take place in which the bones of the dead and his or her grave goods would be moved to a repository of bones with those of older ancestors in the same tomb, or collected with other ancestral bones in the rear of the tomb. At this point it becomes impossible to distinguish between the remains of individual ancestors without modern scientific tools. Tombs in use for fifty to one hundred years held the bones of between about fifteen and one hundred individuals from the same family, while some, in use for as long as three centuries, contained the remains of as many as four hundred.<sup>36</sup> The bench tombs were located in cemeteries generally close to but always outside of settlements;<sup>37</sup> this separation between the living and the dead was strictly maintained and, as Jerusalem expanded, already existing tombs that then fell

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(Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, rev. ed., 2000), 85-106 (106) and Ronny Reich, “The Ancient Burial Ground in the Mamilla Neighborhood, Jerusalem” in *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed*, ed. Hillel Geva (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, rev. ed., 2000), 111-18 (116-17).

<sup>35</sup> The rate of decay of flesh is affected by temperature and humidity, and so would vary in different regions of Judah. See Kloner and Zissou *The Necropolis of Jerusalem*, 110.

<sup>36</sup> For a more detailed description, see Elizabeth Bloch-Schmidt, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead*, JSOTSup 123 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 41-52.

<sup>37</sup> See Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices*, 51 and Rüdiger Schmidt, “Rites of Family and Household Religion,” in *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant*, ed. Rainer Albertz and Rüdiger Schmidt (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 429-73 (439).

inside of the new boundaries of the city were relocated outside of them.<sup>38</sup>

So in the Chronicler's time, just as had been the case for many centuries previously, once the flesh decomposed the bones of the dead were indiscriminately mixed with those of other ancestors in the same tomb. We see a cultural shift in this regard only by the Herodian period, when the use of ossuaries, in which secondary burial was accomplished by the placement of the bones of individuals in containers dedicated to their remains alone, became common. By that time, ossuaries were distinguished by individualized decoration and, in some cases, inscriptions with the names of the deceased.<sup>39</sup> This financial or cultural ability to maintain the name or at least the individuality of the ancestor in perpetuity, however, was almost entirely absent earlier in the Second Temple period. While some have argued that texts such as 1 Sam 1:21; 2:19; and 20:6 point to the existence of annual festivals for the dead in ancient Israel and Judah like those in Mesopotamia, such passages never refer to the dead, and so the conclusion remains speculative.<sup>40</sup> This, however, does not mean that ancient Israelites and Judeans did not want their names preserved after death. In one well known biblical example, Absalom erects a pillar or stela

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<sup>38</sup> Kloner and Zissou, *The Necropolis of Jerusalem*, 22.

<sup>39</sup> Helpful studies of the physical evidence of late Second Temple period burial in Judah include Rachel Hachili, *Jewish Funerary Customs, Practices and Rites in the Second Temple Period*, JSJSup 94 (Leiden: Brill, 2005) and Kloner and Zissou, *The Necropolis of Jerusalem*. For discussions of the ossuaries, see Hachili, *Jewish Funerary Customs*, 94-115, 170-93, 235-310.

<sup>40</sup> E.g., Ron Tappy, "Did the Dead Ever Die in Biblical Judah?" *BASOR* 298 (1995): 59-68 (62); Philip S. Johnston, *Shades of Sheol: Death and Afterlife in the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 192-93.

(מצבת) because, he says, “I have no son to recall/invoke my name (הזכיר שמי)” (2 Sam 18:18). We find the Hebrew version of the Akkadian *šumam zakāru* here, and learn that it was expected that a head of a household in ancient Israel, as in Mesopotamia, would invoke the name of his dead father;<sup>41</sup> it tells us, moreover, that someone with means could construct a physical monument to accomplish the same goal of preserving his or her name after death. Gen 35:20 says that Jacob erected a מצבת for Rachel, and in Isa 56:4-5 God says that he will provide “a monument (ג) and a name, better than sons and daughters” for the righteous eunuchs, again showing us that monuments were understood to preserve the name of the dead just as descendants would.<sup>42</sup> And monuments could, of course, preserve the name of an ancestor for a much longer period of time than one’s descendants were able to. 2 Sam 18:18 says that Absalom’s stela “is still called Absalom’s Monument (ג) to this day,” just as Gen 35:20 says that the stela Jacob erected over Rachel’s grave is called “the Stela of the Grave of Rachel to this day.” Erecting a stela or some sort of memorial to preserve an ancestor’s name seems to have been common enough in the Levant, at least among the elite.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> *KTU* 1.17.i.26 suggests that it was the duty of the head of the household at Ugarit to erect a stela for his dead father, although one imagines that this would have been limited to households with extensive financial resources. For analysis of the text, see Lewis, *Cults of the Dead*, 53-71.

<sup>42</sup> For discussions of these biblical examples, see Lewis, *Cults of the Dead*, 118-20; van der Toorn, *Family Religion*, 208; D.W. Van Winkle, “The Meaning of *yād wāšēm* in Isaiah lvi 5,” *VT* 47 (1997): 378-85; Schmitt, “Rites of Family,” 460-62.

<sup>43</sup> Besides *KTU* 1.17.i.26, mentioned above, *KAI* 215 reveals that Barrakib established a

These biblical references suggest that a lengthy preservation of one's name after death was considered as much a cultural good in ancient Israel and Judah as it was elsewhere in the ancient Near East, and the existence of a limited number of costly Iron Age tombs around Jerusalem and Gibeon have been discovered that make the same argument. These graves contained burials of only a few individuals and no repositories of bones of other ancestors, and some even had stone coffins forever guarding the individual remains of the deceased.<sup>44</sup> The most extensive known pre-exilic set of such burials is the Silwan necropolis to the east of the City of David. None of these tombs was constructed with pits or niches for the bones of multiple ancestors,<sup>45</sup> and in some of them the dead were buried in stone sarcophagi or wooden coffins.<sup>46</sup> The tombs, built high into the slope of the City of David, were visible from far away and from the temple.<sup>47</sup> Four or five of the fifty to sixty tombs in this cemetery were monolithic above-ground structures,<sup>48</sup> meaning they functioned as monuments as well as graves. One of these had an inscription that specifically states that only two individuals were buried there, apparently a

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stela to commemorate the name of his royal father, *KAI 1* that Ittobal created a sarcophagus to do the same for his royal father, *KAI 34* that Arish erected a stela for his father, the *rb srsrm* "chief of the brokers," likely a palace official, and so on.

<sup>44</sup> See Elizabeth M. Bloch-Smith, "The Cult of the Dead in Judah: Interpreting the Material Remains," *JBL* 111 (1992): 213-24 (217-18).

<sup>45</sup> David Ussishkin, *The Village of Silwan: The Necropolis from the Period of the Judean Kingdom* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993), 300-302.

<sup>46</sup> Ussishkin, *The Village of Silwan*, 262-66.

<sup>47</sup> Ussishkin, *The Village of Silwan*, 328-31.

<sup>48</sup> Ussishkin, *The Village of Silwan*, 266-67.

married couple, and the man, whose name appears in the inscription, is described as being על הבית “over the house,” a royal steward, in other words.<sup>49</sup> One cannot help thinking here, as the excavator did, of the tomb of Shebna mentioned in Isa 22:15-19: Shebna too is said to be על הבית; like the tombs at Silwan, Shebna’s tomb is מרום “elevated, on high”; like the tombs at Silwan, Shebna’s does not have space for the burial of other ancestors or family members,<sup>50</sup> and so his individuality in death is maintained forever.

Certainly tombs like those of our royal stewards are extremely uncommon in the Judean highlands, so one imagines that even most of the elite could not afford a tomb used for only one or two interments. That the wealthy were willing to spend of their resources to maintain their individuality after death suggests that this in and of itself was desirable, but it was very unlikely to have been an affordable option for most of the population. That the graves of the elite were constructed to be visible from afar, and that the wealthiest constructed monuments suggests that this visibility was also desirable. The hope was likely that one’s name would be remembered by many in perpetuity because the prominent grave or additional monument that marked out the burial of only one person would bring that individual’s name to mind to be passed down from generation to generation, the function served by Absalom’s stela even at the time the Deuteronomistic History (or at least the Succession Narrative) was composed. And it seems that the graves of those at the very top of the socio-economic ladder, the kings, were inside of Jerusalem itself; their prominent placement was apparently considered to be so important that

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<sup>49</sup> For the inscription, see Ussishkin, *The Village of Silwan*, 247-50.

<sup>50</sup> Specifically, God says rhetorically to Shebna in reference to his tomb, “Who of yours is here?,” indicating that he is being buried in a tomb without any other ancestors of his family.

they could violate the taboo against tombs inside of settlements. David was buried inside of Jerusalem (1 Kgs 2:10) as were Solomon (11:43) and the other Davidides until the time of Ahaz.<sup>51</sup> Burial of royalty was obviously important, and even when Jehu assassinates Jezebel, one of Kings's arch-villains, he commands she be buried "because she is the daughter of a king" (2 Kgs 9:34).<sup>52</sup> Ezek 43:7-9 appears to suggest that פגרי מלכיהם "the corpses of their kings" were buried right beside the entrance to the temple, a site of obvious visibility and prominence.<sup>53</sup> And while Tannaitic literature clearly states that graves must not be placed within settlements (m. B. Bat. 2:9), assumedly because burials convey impurity (e.g., m. 'Ohal. 2:3; 17:5; 18:3;

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<sup>51</sup> 1 Kgs 14:31; 15:8, 24; 22:50; 2 Kgs 8:24; 9:28; 12:22 [21]; 14:20; 15:7, 38; 16:20.

<sup>52</sup> Admittedly, in 9:25-26 Jehu kills the Israelite king Joram and denies him burial, but he claims this is in fulfillment of a divine order.

<sup>53</sup> Some read the passage as reacting against a royal cult of the dead, and so understand פגרי here as referring to sacrifices in the cult that commemorated the dead kings through worship. See, e.g., Herbert Niehr, "The Changed Status of the Dead in Yehud," in *Yahwism after the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era*, ed. Rainer Albertz and Bob Becking, STAR 5 (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2003), 136-55 (138-39) and Manfred Dietrich and Oswald Loretz, "'Weißen' ('ly Š) von pgr, Ochsen und Gegenständen in KTU 6.13, 6.14 und 6.62," *UF* 37 (2005): 227-39 (236), but see also, e.g., Johannes C. de Moor, "Standing Stones and Ancestor Worship," *UF* 27 (1995): 1-20 (5-6) and Schmitt, "Rites of Family," 456, who argue that the word simply refers to corpses. Even in the less likely case that פגרי does refer to sacrifices in a royal cult, the passage still indicates that kings' names were being recalled at the temple's entrance.

Ṭehar. 4:5), at least one rabbinic tradition held that David's tomb was still inside Jerusalem (t. B. Bat. 1:11).<sup>54</sup> Certainly in the fourth century BCE the Chronicler exhibits no discomfort in claiming the Davidides were buried inside the city.<sup>55</sup>

We simply do not know how long it took for most of the ancient Judean dead to lose their individuality as their non-elite descendants forgot their names, but the physical evidence from the bench tombs suggests that preserving the individuality of the ancestors was not something Judeans generally had the resources to do for very long. As soon as a bench was needed to accommodate a new body, the bones of the ancestor occupying that space were jumbled together with those of other dead relatives, and the individuality of the dead was lost, at least in that physical sense. It is possible that the distinction between elite and non-elite burial was as much cultural as it was financial; perhaps only kings were allowed to be buried inside Jerusalem and perhaps, before the late Second Temple period, only the very upper strata of society, such as high ranking members of the royal court, were permitted to distinguish themselves in death with monumental tombs the way royal stewards like Shebna did. But whether because of financial ability or cultural norms, the vast majority of Judeans were simply not able to create physical memorials to maintain the individuality and names of their ancestors. It seems that the graves and monuments that only the very elite could afford, or that Judean culture permitted only for them, were meant to cause people to recall their names long after they were dead, and a prominent grave in which only one or two deceased were buried would be far more likely to

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<sup>54</sup> See Kloner and Zissou, *The Necropolis of Jerusalem*, 20-21.

<sup>55</sup> 2 Chr 9:31; 12:16; 13:23 [14:1]; 16:14; 21:1, 20; 24:25; 25:28; 27:9; 28:7. As in Kings, Chronicles explicitly states that kings up until the time of Ahaz are buried inside of Jerusalem, although Chronicles at least suggests that later kings were as well; see 2 Chr 32:33; 35:24.

fulfill this function than one in which scores of dead were interred. On the other hand, the names of the non-elite ancestors, with no monument to bring their memory to mind, would be forgotten within a few generations. Yet even monuments are destroyed and their purpose and names can fade from memory; if Absalom's stela caused people to remember his name "to this day" at the time when his story was recorded in Samuel, he is remembered now because of the text, not the monument. Texts have the ability to preserve names much longer than even prominent physical monuments, but in ancient Judah only the most important names, like those of the kings, would have been so preserved. And this is the primary purpose of the genealogies the Chronicler assembled in the opening chapters: it treats Israel and Judah's pre-exilic ancestors like kings.

### *C. Judah in 1 Chronicles 1-9*

Despite all of the purposes scholars have, mainly correctly, understood the genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1-9 to accomplish, none of them demands the presence of the many extensive lists of pre-exilic dead we find there. Yet one imagines that the primary significance of these many, many names would not escape a fourth century Judean reader. An author would have no reason to provide such a quantity of lists of their ancestors were the pre-exilic Judeans and Israelites not as important as the ancestors of the kings and the heads of the priestly and Levitical houses. The readers of Chronicles may have forgotten the identities of all but their most recent ancestors, but the Chronicler has not forgotten even those of long ago, and has created a monument for their names that is just as impressive as that created for the kings in 1 Chronicles 3 and temple personnel in 1 Chronicles 5-6. As far as readers can judge from these chapters, in pre-exilic Israel and Judah the people were just as elite, just as important, as the kings were. It is true that the Davidic genealogy extends beyond the exile where the narrative of 1 Chronicles 10-2

Chronicles 36 ends, and this speaks to the Chronicler's pro-Davidic proclivities, but in 1 Chronicles 9 readers encounter the names of some of their own post-exilic ancestors as well. Moreover, because 1 Chronicles 3 never refers to the Davidides as kings, they are first and foremost Judeans, just as the readers' Judean ancestors in 1 Chronicles 2 and 4 are. That their own dead are remembered by name and distinguished from the anonymous mass of the ancestors to a much broader extent than those of the Davidides signals to readers the elite status of pre-exilic Judah and Israel. 1 Chronicles 2-4 tells Judean readers that there was no real difference between kings and non-royalty in the pre-exilic period. The names of the ancestors of ordinary Judeans are recalled and preserved here just like the names of the royal ancestors, and so the Chronicler tells readers that in that pre-exilic period the people were thought of as if they were of the highest socio-economic class. The Chronicler can then move to prosecute a pro-Davidic agenda in the narrative with the hope that readers enter it with the belief that a monarchic restoration would lead to a rise in their own status and with the belief that, as the post-exilic polity becomes like the pre-exilic one, the people would return to the elite status the genealogies imply they had when the Davidides were in power.

In fact, while the word "king" is absent from the Davidides' genealogy in 1 Chronicles 3 and the word "priest" is missing from the Aaronide genealogy of 5:27-41 [6:1-15], the title of "head," the leadership office of the ancestral house, the basic social organization of post-exilic Judah,<sup>56</sup> is frequently invoked in the genealogies of Israel.<sup>57</sup> If there is one kind of leadership in

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<sup>56</sup> For the ancestral house as the dominant social grouping of the post-exilic period, see H.G.M. Williamson, "The Family in Persian Period Judah: Some Textual Reflections," in *Symbiosis, Symbolism and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel and their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palaestina*, ed. William G. Dever and Seymour Gitin

Israel/Judah that particularly seems to matter in 1 Chronicles 1-9 it is that associated with the ancestral houses themselves; the word “king” appears only twice in these chapters in reference to

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(Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 469-85; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Judaism: The First Phase. The Place of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Origins of Judaism* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2009), 81; Rainer Albertz, “More and Less than a Myth: Reality and Significance of Exile for the Political, Social, and Religious History of Judah,” in *By the Irrigation Canals of Babylon: Approaches to the Study of Exile*, ed. John J. Ahn and Jill Middlemas, LHBOTS 526 (New York: T & T Clark International, 2012), 20-33 (31). In Ezra-Nehemiah we see the “heads” of the ancestral houses responsible for organizing the journey from Babylon to Judah (Ezra 1:1-5) and determining that the Babylonian immigrants alone will be responsible for building the temple (4:2-3). In Ezra 9-10, Ezra convinces the assembly to send away their foreign wives (see 10:12, 14), but does not appear to have the authority to force them to do so; he merely acts as a kind of administrator who has to work with the heads of the ancestral houses in order to accomplish this task (10:16). In Neh 8:13-18 it is the “heads” who study the law and agree that the people must observe Sukkoth. Ezra 8:1-14, a list of migrants to Judah in the time of Ezra, makes specific reference to the heads of the ancestral houses of this group (8:1) and Neh 12:12, 22-23 says that records were kept of past “heads of the ancestors” of the priests and Levites, signaling the importance of such figures. When Chronicles lists groups of people, including temple personnel, it often only refers to the “heads of the ancestors,” and sometimes names those heads (e.g., 1 Chr 9:3-34; 23:9; 24:4, 6, 30; 26:32; 27:1; 2 Chr 17:14-19; 25:5; 31:17; 35:4), rather than referring to any other members of the house.

<sup>57</sup> Specifically, we see references to heads in 4:42; 5:7, 12, 15, 24; 7:2, 3, 7, 9, 11, 40; 8:6, 10, 13, 28; 9:9, 13, 17, 33, 34.

Davidides (4:41; 5:17), and then only within the context of naming individual kings to provide chronological references in stories about the activities of the people. The Chronicler suggests here that the pre-exilic office that mattered is the same one the fourth century community used to govern itself, and thus also suggests to readers that their local leadership will continue to occupy an important position under a restored monarchy.

This reading of the genealogies has not yet said anything about 1 Chronicles 1, a chapter that does not include any Israelite names, but this does not mean it has no role to play in the primary purpose of the genealogies that we have identified. 1 Chronicles 1 is notable, of course, for listing the ancestors of the nations, and while not all fourth century Judeans might have been clear as to where the descendants of Gomer (1:5) or Sheleph (1:20) or Massa (1:30) lived, we might expect that names such as Egypt (1:8, 10), Sidon (1:13), and Assyria (1:17) would have been widely recognized by readers. In the context of 1 Chronicles 1, these are names of individuals, ancestors of the great peoples descended from them, but in the context of 1 Chronicles 1-9 as a whole the name of one pre-exilic Judean or Israelite ancestor is given the same weight and importance as that of an ancestor of a whole empire. There is nothing about 1 Chronicles 1-9 that demands that readers conclude that even Adam or Abraham is more important than a single pre-exilic ancestor of Judah. 1 Chronicles 1 links Judah to the peoples, but 1 Chronicles 1-9 tells readers that they are far more important than all of the nations of the earth put together. A people as important as this would consider themselves to be at the same level as royalty, precisely the status the genealogies say pre-exilic Judah and Israel had.

We can, as others have observed, argue that the Chronicler has structured these chapters to do things such as emphasize the importance of the Davidides and temple personnel and so on, but the Chronicler did not need genealogies to provide such emphasis. The genealogies are

necessary, however, if the Chronicler wished to create a monument to the pre-exilic dead of Judah and Israel that put the pre-exilic population on the same elite level as the kings and temple personnel. Even though the narrative that begins in 1 Chronicles 10 refers to the people's pre-exilic importance in regard to political and religious matters from time to time, with the names of the genealogies that occupy the opening fifth of the work the author literally builds a monument to that importance, and this is the genealogies' primary purpose.