PART ONE

STUDIES OF TEXTS

In this part of the book, attention is given to specific passages and texts from the Book of Chronicles. A number of texts have been selected in order to demonstrate in what way the Chronicler has adopted and adapted existing texts from the Books of Samuel and Kings so that they could articulate his theological and ideological ideas. On the other hand some of his own texts (‘Sondergut’) are analysed, which to a large extent give vent to his specific intentions. No doubt, especially this ‘Sondergut’ focuses on the Chronicler’s literary, theological, and ideological points of view. However, one should always make a precise study of the ‘traditional’ or ‘synoptical’ material too, since the Chronicler is constantly readjusting the ‘classical’ text(s) to his own needs. As this has sometimes been done with the help of minimal changes, the reader should always be on the alert.
CHAPTER ONE

ADOPTING AND ADAPTING: SOME REWRITTEN GENEALOGIES IN 1 CHRONICLES 1–5

INTRODUCTION

By means of genealogies, the first section of the book (1 Chr 1:1–2:2) spans the gap between Adam (1:1) and Israel (2:2). The reader of the Book of Chronicles should be aware that the name of Jacob, the son of Isaac, has consistently been altered into ‘Israel’. Subsequently, in 1 Chr 2:3–9:44 the Chronicler—as we henceforth will refer to the author of the Book of Chronicles—in a circumstantial way brings the sons of Israel/Jacob to the fore. The sequence of this listing in a considerable way deviates from similar lists as found elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. The readers should keep their patience till 1 Chr 5:1–2, for just there the author offers an explanation of why he presents the sons of Israel in a sequence which is different from the usual one.

When one lets the genealogies of 1 Chr 2:3–9:44 sink in, it goes without saying that three ‘sons of Israel’ are dominantly presented: Judah, Levi, and Benjamin. These three ‘sons’, which represent three tribes, remained loyal to the House of David (Judah, Benjamin) and to the Temple (Levi); they constituted the solid framework of the ‘real Israel’ in the post-exilic period, which is the time of the Chronicler himself.

It is absolutely no coincidence that Judah is presented at the opening (2:3–4:23), Benjamin at the end (8:1–9:1), and Levi in the middle.

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1 Paper read at the Third International Conference on Rewritten Bible (20–23 August 2008), Karkku, Finland.
2 The only exception is found in 1 Chr 16:13.17, which is a direct quotation from Ps 105:6.10.
3 E.g. Gen 35:23–26; Ex 1:2–4; Num 26:5–51; Josh 21:4–8.