

1 Chronicles 3:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The third, Absalom the son of Maachah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur: the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith:

Analysis

Genealogical Significance: This verse appears within the Davidic royal succession section of Chronicles' genealogical framework. The Hebrew term מַלְכוּת (malkhut) - kingdom is central to understanding this passage's purpose. The Chronicler, writing to post-exilic Israel (c. 450-400 BCE), uses these genealogies not merely as historical records but as theological statements about covenant continuity and divine faithfulness.

The genealogical structure serves multiple purposes:

1. establishing Israel's connection to God's creation plan from Adam
2. legitimizing post-exilic community's claim to covenant promises
3. emphasizing Judah and Levi's special roles in God's redemptive plan,
4. demonstrating that despite exile, God's covenant purposes continue.

The selection and arrangement of names is intentional, highlighting Eternal covenant with David's house.

Chronicles diverges from Genesis and Samuel-Kings in its genealogical presentation, reflecting the Chronicler's distinct theological agenda. Where earlier texts focus on narrative history, Chronicles emphasizes continuity, legitimacy, and hope for restoration. This verse contributes to the larger argument that the post-exilic community is the rightful heir of God's ancient covenant promises.

Historical Context

Post-Exilic Context: The Chronicler wrote during the Persian period (450-400 BCE) to a community returned from Babylonian exile, struggling with identity and purpose. These genealogies answered crucial questions: Who are we? What is our relationship to ancient Israel? Do God's promises still apply to us?

The historical setting influences the text's emphasis on David's descendants and royal succession. Ancient Near Eastern cultures valued genealogies for establishing land rights, royal legitimacy, and tribal identity. Chronicles' genealogies served similar functions while adding theological depth. The inclusion of specific names and details reflects the author's access to temple archives, royal records, and earlier biblical texts.

Archaeological evidence from Persian-period Judah shows a small, struggling community centered around Jerusalem and the rebuilt temple. The genealogies reinforced their connection to the glorious past and provided hope for future restoration through God's covenant faithfulness.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does understanding genealogies as theological statements rather than mere historical records change your reading of Chronicles and other biblical genealogies?
2. What does this verse teach about God's faithfulness across generations, and how does that apply to your own family's spiritual legacy?

3. How does Eternal covenant with David's house connect to the New Testament revelation of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises?

Interlinear Text

הַשְּׁלִישִׁי	לְאַבְשָׁל וּם	בֶּן	מַעַכָּה	בֵּת	תַּלְמִי י	מֶלֶךְ
The third	Absalom	the son	of Maachah	the daughter	of Talmai	king
H7992	H53	H1121	H4601	H1323	H8526	H4428

גֶּשׁוּר	הָרְבִיעִי י	אֲדֹנִיָּה	בֶּן	חַגִּית:
of Geshur	the fourth	Adonijah	the son	of Haggith
H1650	H7243	H138	H1121	H2294

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