

1 Chronicles 8:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal.

Analysis

Genealogical Significance: This verse appears within the Benjamin and Saul's failed kingship section of Chronicles' genealogical framework. The Hebrew term בִּנְיָמִין (Binyamin) - son of the right hand 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 God's sovereign choice of leadership.

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 Benjamin's genealogy and Saul's lineage. 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

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

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 God's sovereign choice of leadership connect to the New Testament revelation of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises?

Interlinear Text

וְנֵר	הוּלַיִד	אֶת	יִשְׁיָק	יִשְׁיָק	הוּלַיִד	אֶת	וְשָׂא וְל	וְשָׂא וְל
And Ner	begat	H853	Kish	Kish	begat	H853	Saul	Saul
H5369	H3205		H7027	H7027	H3205		H7586	H7586
וְלַיִד	אֶת	יְהוֹנָתָן	וְאֶת	מַלְכִּישׁוּעַ	וְאֶת	אֲבִינָדָב	וְאֶת	
begat	H853	Jonathan	H853	and Malchishua	H853	and Abinadab	H853	
H3205		H3083		H4444		H41		
וְשָׂבַעַל:								
and Eshbaal								
H792								

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 9:1 (Parallel theme): Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power.

1 Samuel 31:2 (Parallel theme): And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, Saul's sons.

2 Samuel 2:8 (Parallel theme): But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim;