

# Ezra 10:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau,

## Analysis

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**Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau.** This trio of names continues the register of covenant violators. Mattaniah and Mattenai both derive from *mattān* (מַתָּן, 'gift'), meaning 'gift of Yahweh.' The repetition of similar names suggests possibly related family members—perhaps brothers or cousins—who fell into the same sin together. Jaasau (also spelled Jaasu) means 'Yahweh has made,' another theophoric name proclaiming divine action.

The clustering of similar names highlights family and peer influence in sin. When covenant compromise spreads through kinship networks, it demonstrates how spiritual failure rarely remains individual. The public recording of these names served as permanent warning against following family into disobedience rather than leading them toward faithfulness.

Theologically, this teaches that covenant identity signified by names doesn't automatically produce covenant obedience. Being 'gift of Yahweh' by name requires corresponding life reflecting that identity. The tragedy is that those whose names proclaimed God's goodness betrayed that calling through forbidden marriages.

## Historical Context

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These names appear in the section listing violators from the 'sons of Nebo' (Ezra 10:43), referring to a specific family clan within the returned community. Nebo was a Babylonian deity, which may indicate this family had deeper syncretistic

tendencies, making them more susceptible to intermarriage with pagans.

The theophoric element in these names ('Yah' or 'Yahweh') shows these families maintained Jewish religious identity through exile. They named children after the covenant God even while living in Babylon. Yet naming practices alone didn't prevent later spiritual compromise.

The resolution required these men to divorce their foreign wives and send away children (Ezra 10:44). Archaeological evidence from Elephantine (Jewish colony in Egypt, 5th century BC) shows mixed marriages were common among diaspora Jews, making Ezra's strict enforcement controversial but necessary for preserving distinct covenant community.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does family influence either strengthen or undermine spiritual faithfulness?
2. What does the gap between theological names and practical disobedience teach about nominal versus genuine faith?
3. How can Christian communities address systemic patterns of sin without scapegoating individuals?

## Interlinear Text

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מַתַּנְיָה	מַתַּנַּי	וַיַּעֲסֹ:
<b>Mattaniah</b>	<b>Mattenai</b>	<b>and Jaasau</b>
H4983	H4982	H3299

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