

Ezra 7:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar,
the son of Aaron the chief priest:

Analysis

The son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest—the genealogy reaches its climax, connecting directly to **Aaron** (אַהֲרֹן), Israel's first high priest. This establishes Ezra's credentials beyond dispute. **Eleazar** (אֶלְעָזָר, 'God has helped') was Aaron's third son who succeeded him after Nadab and Abihu died for offering unauthorized fire (Leviticus 10).

Phinehas (פִּינְחָס) holds special significance—his zealous defense of God's holiness (Numbers 25:7-13) earned God's covenant of perpetual priesthood. God declared: 'Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace... because he was zealous for his God' (Numbers 25:12-13). Ezra descended from this zealous line, explaining his bold reforms against intermarriage (Ezra 9-10).

The designation **chief priest** (הַכֹּהֵן הָרִאשׁוֹן, hakohen harosh) emphasizes Aaron's foundational role. Ezra's sixteen-generation connection to Aaron legitimized his authority to teach Torah and lead reform. This wasn't mere traditionalism but divine authorization through covenant succession.

Historical Context

Aaron received his priesthood directly from God at Sinai (Exodus 28-29), making him the archetype of all legitimate priests. His sons and descendants alone could serve as priests—this exclusivity maintained covenant holiness. The genealogy's emphasis on this connection shows post-exilic concern with proper worship order.

Phinehas's covenant (Numbers 25:13) promised lasting priesthood to his line, which indeed continued through Zadok to Ezra and beyond. The high priesthood remained in this family until the Hasmonean period, when political machinations disrupted the succession. Ezra lived before this corruption, representing authentic Aaronic priesthood.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Phinehas's zeal for God's holiness inform understanding of Ezra's reforms against syncretism?
2. What does the Aaronic connection teach about the importance of divine authorization versus self-appointed religious leadership?
3. How does the priestly genealogy pointing to Aaron foreshadow Christ as the ultimate High Priest (Hebrews 7-9)?

Interlinear Text

בֶּן	אַבִּישׁ וֶעֶ	בֶּן	פִּינְחָס	בֶּן	אֶלְעָזָר	בֶּן
The son	of Abishua	The son	of Phinehas	The son	of Eleazar	The son
H1121	H50	H1121	H6372	H1121	H499	H1121
אֶהָרָא	הַכֹּהֵן	הָאֵשׁ:				
of Aaron	priest	the chief				
H175	H3548	H7218				