

Luke 3:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan,
which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan,
which was the son of David,

Analysis

Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David —Here the genealogy reaches David (Δαυίδ), the critical juncture for messianic claims. However, Luke traces through **Nathan** (Ναθάν), David's son by Bathsheba (2 Samuel 5:14; 1 Chronicles 3:5), not through Solomon who received the throne.

This genealogical choice is theologically profound: Solomon's line received the promise of eternal dynasty (2 Samuel 7:12-16) but fell under God's judgment through Jeconiah (Jeremiah 22:30—"no man of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David"). By tracing through Nathan (Mary's lineage) while maintaining legal connection to Solomon's line through Joseph's adoption, Jesus fulfills Davidic prophecy without inheriting the curse. The Greek *huios* (son) could mean biological son, legal heir, or descendant—allowing both genealogies to be true simultaneously.

Historical Context

David reigned 1010-970 BC, establishing Jerusalem as capital and receiving God's covenant promise of eternal dynasty. His son Nathan is mentioned in Scripture primarily in genealogical records, contrasting with Solomon's prominence—yet God's redemptive plan worked through the obscure line, not just the famous one.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's use of Nathan's obscure line rather than Solomon's royal line demonstrate His values contrasting worldly success?
2. What does the genealogical solution to Jeconiah's curse teach about God's ability to fulfill promises despite apparent impossibilities?
3. How should Jesus's descent from David through the 'lesser' line inform your understanding of God's kingdom priorities?

Interlinear Text

τοῦ

Μελεὰ

τοῦ

Μαϊνάν

τοῦ

G3588

Which was the son of Melea

G3588

which was the son of Menan

G3588

G3190

G3104

Ματταθὰ

τοῦ

Ναθὰν,

τοῦ

which was the son of Mattatha

G3588

which was the son of Nathan

G3588

G3160

G3481

Δαβὶδ,

which was the son of David

G1138

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 3:5 (Parallel theme): And these were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shimea, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, four, of Bath-shua the daughter of Ammiel:

2 Samuel 5:14 (Parallel theme): And these be the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon,

1 Chronicles 14:4 (Parallel theme): Now these are the names of his children which he had in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon,

Zechariah 12:12 (References David): And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart;

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