

# Luke 3:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

## Analysis

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John challenges those claiming Abrahamic descent: 'Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father.' True repentance produces fruit—observable life change, not mere religious profession. John demolishes confidence in ethnic privilege ('we have Abraham to our father') by declaring 'God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.' Physical descent doesn't guarantee spiritual standing. God can create Abraham's children from stones if necessary—grace and faith, not genealogy, determine covenant membership.

## Historical Context

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First-century Judaism emphasized corporate election—being born Jewish meant belonging to God's covenant people. Pharisees particularly stressed ancestral connection to Abraham as guaranteeing righteousness. John's preaching attacked this presumption, demanding individual repentance and fruit-bearing regardless of ancestry. This prepared for Paul's later theology that true Abraham's children are those who share his faith (Romans 4:16-17, Galatians 3:7-9), not merely his genes. John's raising children from stones may allude to God creating Adam from dust—God creates new life ex nihilo.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does John's demand for fruits worthy of repentance challenge the tendency to rely on religious heritage rather than genuine transformation?
2. What does God's ability to raise up Abraham's children from stones teach about the nature of covenant membership and spiritual identity?

## Interlinear Text

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|                    |                  |               |                    |                      |                      |                |            |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------|------------|
| ποιήσατε           | οὖν              | καρποὺς       | ἀξίους             | τῆς                  | μετανοίας            | καὶ            | μὴ         |
| <b>Bring forth</b> | <b>therefore</b> | <b>fruits</b> | <b>worthy</b>      | G3588                | <b>of repentance</b> | <b>and</b>     | <b>not</b> |
| G4160              | G3767            | G2590         | G514               |                      | G3341                | G2532          | G3361      |
| ἄρξησθε            | λέγω             | ἐν            | ἐαυτοῖς            | Πατέρα               | ἔχομεν               | τὸν            |            |
| <b>begin</b>       | <b>I say</b>     | <b>within</b> | <b>yourselves</b>  | <b>to our father</b> | <b>We have</b>       | G3588          |            |
| G756               | G3004            | G1722         | G1438              | G3962                | G2192                |                |            |
| Ἀβραάμ             | λέγω             | γὰρ           | ὕμῖν               | ὅτι                  | δύναται              | ὁ              | θεὸς       |
| <b>Abraham</b>     | <b>I say</b>     | <b>for</b>    | <b>unto you</b>    | <b>That</b>          | <b>is able</b>       | G3588          | <b>God</b> |
| G11                | G3004            | G1063         | G5213              | G3754                | G1410                |                | G2316      |
| τῶν                | λίθων            | τούτων        | ἐγεῖραι            | τέκνα                | τῷ                   | Ἀβραάμ         |            |
| G3588              | <b>stones</b>    | <b>these</b>  | <b>to raise up</b> | <b>children</b>      | G3588                | <b>Abraham</b> |            |
|                    | G3037            | G5130         | G1453              | G5043                |                      | G11            |            |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 26:20** (Repentance): But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

**Matthew 21:43** (References God): Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

**Romans 9:7** (References Abraham): Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

**Romans 4:16** (References Abraham): Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

**Luke 19:40** (Parallel theme): And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

**Philippians 1:11** (Resurrection): Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

**John 8:33** (References Abraham): They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?