
A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE VII.

A STUDY IN THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS.

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OUTSTANDING and still unsettled questions in regard to the genealogy of Jesus, and differing, not to say opposite, views in regard to the same facts pertaining thereto, have led to the careful and searching study that follows; and it is modestly hoped that some determinative conclusions have been reached that, though hitherto questioned, may henceforth be considered final.

Matthew's and Luke's Gospels have genealogies; Mark's and John's have none. The common notion of a divine superintendence in the production of these writings would seem to carry with it a purpose in these genealogical inclusions and exclusions; and by the same token the fact that two genealogies are given, the assumption would seem to be warranted, if not required, that the two are necessary and also that there is a reason for their differences. To account, reasonably, for these differences, to reconcile what some have been pleased to call their discrepancies — *hic labor, hoc opus est.* But the undertaking is not altogether discouraging.

It is now among the commonplaces of Christian thought — so fully set forth in Gregory's "Why Four Gospels?" — that Matthew wrote for the Jew, Mark for the Roman, Luke for the Greek, John for the Christian; — Matthew's Gospel setting forth Jesus as the King of Israel, the son of David, the Messiah; Mark's, as the wonder-working Servant of Jehovah; Luke's, as the Son of Man; John's, as the Son of God.

Considerations in the two preceding paragraphs seem to have not only adumbration but definite implication in the earlier scripture doctrine of "THE BRANCH," — a matter that

has subtle and yet forceful bearing upon the genealogy question.

In the Old Testament there are 18 Hebrew words translated "branch," but there is one of them, *tsemech,* that has, each of the four times it is so rendered, a very peculiar use.

It first appears in Isaiah iv. 2, "In that day shall the Branch of Jehovah be beautiful and glorious." This manifestly looks on to Isaiah xi. 1, 2, where another word, *netzer,* which is translated "branch," is used: "And there shall come forth a rod [shoot] out of the stem [stock] of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots, and the spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him," etc.

It next appears in Jeremiah xxiii. 5, 6, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign . . . and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD [JEHOVAH] OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jeremiah xxxiii. 15, 16, is to the same import and in almost the same words; and it is in this immediate connection that it is said: "For thus saith the Lord: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel" (xxxiii. 17). Thus far we have the Branch of Jehovah and the Branch of David.

The next time *tsemech* appears is in Zechariah iii. 8, "Behold, I will bring forth my Servant, the Branch"; and the last time it occurs is a little farther on (vi. 12), "Thus speaketh the Lord, saying, Behold, the Man whose name is the Branch."

But this "Branch" is just the Person portrayed in the Gospels! Isaiah's and Jeremiah's "Branch of David," "a king," is Matthew's King of Israel; Zechariah's "Servant the Branch" is Mark's wonder-working Servant of Jehovah; Zechariah's "Man whose name is the Branch" is Luke's Son of Man; and Isaiah's "Branch of Jehovah" is John's Son of God.

That these passages refer to Christ, and that they are Messianic, there is no need to argue. It is obvious.

We have, then, a Branch of David and a Branch of Jehovah, who is one and the same person, and as the Branch of David is

the son of David, so the Branch of Jehovah will be the Son of Jehovah. The son of David is human, and by the same token the Son of Jehovah is Divine. By the Davidic lineage he gets a human nature, and by his Jehovah lineage he gets a divine nature, and so he is at once man-God and God-man; for a branch partakes of the nature of that out of which it grows.

It goes without saying that a person of such importance and filling so important a function, must have proper and adequate genealogical certification.

While what has been said in regard to the nature of the Messiah-Branch being both human and divine is all true, it will hardly do to say that while Matthew's genealogy traces the human lineage of Jesus, it is the object of Luke's genealogy to trace the divine lineage, albeit it does certainly go back to God. Matthew begins with Abraham and the line is traced downward to Jesus, while Luke begins with Jesus and the tracing is backward, not stopping with Abraham, where Matthew begins, but still backward and upward to the first human being, Adam "which was the son of God" (iii. 38). Matthew's is thus strictly Jewish, while Luke's is more than that,— racial.

As we proceed, the necessity for the two genealogies will emerge and the reason of their differences will appear. That we may have all the genealogical facts as to names before us, let there be first put the names which Luke alone has, but using the Revised spelling and reversing his order so as to have a descending line as Matthew has.

1. God; 2. Adam; 3. Seth; 4. Enos; 5. Cainan; 6. Mahalaleel; 7. Jared; 8. Enoch; 9. Methuselah; 10. Lamech; 11. Noah; 12. Shem; 13. Arphaxad; 14. Cainan; 15. Shelah; 16. Eber; 17. Peleg; 18. Reu; 19. Serug; 20. Nahor; 21. Terah.

Next are the names which Matthew and Luke have alike:

1. Abraham; 2. Isaac; 3. Jacob; 4. Judah; 5. Perez; 6. Hezron; 7. Ram; 8. Amminadab; 9. Nahshon; 10. Salmon; 11. Boaz; 12. Obed; 13. Jesse; 14. David.

For the rest, they differ, and here is where trouble begins! They may be listed thus:—

MATTHEW.	LUKE.
1. David.	1. David.
2. Solomon.	2. Nathan.
3. Rehoboam.	3. Mattatha.
4. Abijah.	4. Menna.
5. Asa.	5. Melea.
6. Jehoshaphat.	6. Eliakim.
7. Joram.	7. Jonam.
8. Uzziah.	8. Joseph.
9. Jotham.	9. Judas.
10. Ahaz.	10. Symeon.
11. Hezekiah.	11. Levi.
12. Manasseh.	12. Matthat.
13. Amon.	13. Jorim.
14. Josiah.	14. Eliezer.
1. Jechoniah.	1. Jose.
2. Shealtiel.	2. Er.
3. Zerubbabel.	3. Elmadam.
4. Abiud.	4. Cosam.
5. Eliakim.	5. Addi.
6. Azor.	6. Melchi.
7. Sadoc.	7. Neri.
8. Achim.	8. Shealtiel.
9. Eliud.	9. Zerubbabel.
10. Eleazar.	10. Rhesa.
11. Matthan.	11. Joanan.
12. Jacob.	12. Joda.
13. Joseph.	13. Josech.
14. JESUS.	14. Semein.

(Luke) 15. Mattathias; 16. Maath; 17. Naggai; 18. Esli; 19. Nahum; 20. Amos; 21. Mattathias; 22. Joseph; 23. Jannai; 24. Melchi; 25. Levi; 26. Matthat; 27. Heli; 28. Joseph (?); 29. JESUS.

At this point two observations should be made. The first is in regard to this scheme of fourteens. Says Matthew: "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations" (i. 17).

That this arrangement of fourteens is *wholly artificial,* is

evident from the fact that in order to make it, a number of names in the direct line have been omitted. For instance, between Joram and Uzziah (7 and 8) in the second fourteen, the names of three Jewish kings — Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah — have been left out; and also between Josiah (14) and the next one, Jechoniah, Jehoiakim has been omitted. The omission of names in genealogical records has a striking illustration in the case of Ezra, where (see Ezra vii. 1–5 compared with 1 Chron. vi. 3–15) he himself omitted at least six generations in his own genealogy. The first division ends with David and the second begins with David, thus counting him twice. All these names were presumably taken from well-known public and family registers, which were probably destroyed at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A.D. 70, and it is quite likely that this grouping into periods of fourteen was for the purpose of assistance in memorizing. It seems proper and sufficient to say that Matthew's artificial catalog of the number of generations was meant to apply *only to this list given,* and not to the number that had actually existed, and was so made for a purpose then well understood, but which we now do not know. If this be so, then several of our present difficulties should count for very little, if not for nothing.

The second observation is in regard to the use of the word "son." We commonly understand by a son, one begotten by a father and born of a mother. Now, the Hebrew language has no word for grandson, and so, with the Hebrews, a "son" may be a lineal male descendant more than one remove down the line. Daniel, addressing Belshazzar, says: "God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father" (v. 18), "and thou his son, O Belshazzar" (v. 22), although the relation between them was that of grandfather and grandson. And Christ speaks of Zaccheus as "a son of Abraham" (Luke xix. 9), though Abraham lived some two thousand years before. Accordingly, between two names that stand in juxtaposition as father and son, it is possible that a number of names may intervene. If this be so, we have a gateway out of which still other difficulties may alacriously disappear.

Now the question arises, What is the central purpose of these genealogies? The answer is, It is to show that Jesus is the lineal son of David and the legal heir to David's throne. *For this the two genealogies are required.*

Back in 1 Kings ix. 5, Jehovah, at his second appearance to Solomon, said to him, "I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel." God says, Psalm lxxxix. 3, 4, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." And He says, Psalm cxxxii. 11, "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David. . . . Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne"; and it is to this that Peter refers in his sermon at Pentecost, "God hath sworn with an oath to him"— David —"that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts ii. 30).

According to Matthew's genealogy Joseph is in the regular regal line from David. But at the head of his set of fourteen is Jechoniah (Coniah), through whom — a crucial point so often entirely overlooked and that very many scholars seem never to have noticed — succession is forever barred! Jeremiah xxii. 29, 30, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man"—Coniah — "childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David."

If it be objected that, according to the genealogical list, Jechoniah or Coniah did have a child, the answer is ready, for what is added shows in what sense childlessness is to be understood: "No man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David"; i. e. he was to have a "seed," but no *reigning* child.

Joseph had a right to David's throne as being in the royal line through Jechoniah, but even he could not occupy it because of this inhibition.

Thus far, then, in Matthew's genealogy there are two counts against Jesus' eligibility to David's throne: first, he was not the *fruit of David's body* through Joseph; and second, if he was, he could not, as a descendant of Jechoniah, occupy it because of this bar. These two obstacles must be overcome. And how?

There is therefore required another genealogy in which Mary has place. In the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA for January, 1915, the Rev. Dr. H. W. Magoun has a very able paper on "The Two Genealogies of Jesus," but he says: "Some have even gone so far as to say that one genealogy was that of Joseph, while the other was that of Mary. Each is, in fact, the line of Joseph, as the reputed father of Jesus; and it is useless to dodge the conclusion."[1] Oh, no; we are not dodging the conclusion — quite the contrary; but it will itself surely have to do the dodging! Says Professor Moorehead, "The current view of commentators that the genealogies of our Lord given by Matthew and Luke are both in the paternal line, raises difficulties that, it seems to me, are insuperable." Was Mary of "the house of David?" Let us see.

In England the throne-right of succession[2] is through the eldest son, the Prince of Wales. Victoria's son, as the Prince of Wales, ascended the throne as Edward VII. His eldest son, Clarence, became the Prince of Wales, and the succession was therefore through him. But he died leaving no issue, and so the succession went to the next son of Victoria, the Duke of

[1] Says Rev. Dr. George S. Duncan, lecturer in Johns Hopkins University, "The rank and file of New Testament scholars consider the genealogies in Matthew and Luke to be those of Joseph"; with which judgment he concurs.

[2] For this illustration as well as some other thoughts, indebtedness to Wilkinson's "Israel My Glory" is acknowledged. Also indebtedness is acknowledged to the late Professor William G. Moorehead of the United Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Xenia, Ohio, whose ripe scholarship and critical acumen as an exegete gave valuable suggestions, by correspondence, while this study was in progress.

Edinburgh, who has recently ascended the throne as George V.; and his eldest son has become the Prince of Wales.

Now, David's successor was his son Solomon, and Matthew traces the genealogy through Solomon to Joseph; but the bar was put up against him at the time of the captivity and the last king, Jechoniah (i. 11). Luke traces the genealogy, not through Solomon, but through another son of David against whom there was no bar, viz. Nathan (Luke iii. 31; 1 Chron. iii. 5), and so on down to Mary, for only through her was the imposed condition fulfilled that Jesus should be "the fruit of David's body." And it could have been fulfilled only by some one in that line. (Luke i. 32; Acts ii. 30; Rom. i. 3; Acts xiii. 23.) It seems indubitable, therefore,— the "scholars" to the contrary notwithstanding,— that Luke does not trace the royal line of Joseph as does Matthew, but gives the lineage which belongs to Mary. So far, so good.

But the other obstacle: while Mary was of a royal line, she was not of *the* royal lineage — the regular, legal, required lineage through which it was indispensable that descent must course — not of the Prince of Wales line, so to speak, if such an illustrative anachronism can be allowed. How, then, could her son get into that royal line? Why, by her marriage with some one who was in that line! And that is just what took place — the marriage with Joseph.

The absolute necessity for the two genealogies thus seems apparent; but there is a seeming discrepancy which needs to be solved. According to Matthew i. 16, Joseph is the son of Jacob, and according to Luke iii. 23 he is the son of Heli. He could hardly be the son of both.

Joseph was the son of Jacob in the strict sense, for Matthew says: "Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ" (i. 16). But Luke does not say that Heli *begat* Joseph, but says, "Joseph, which was . . . of Heli" (iii. 23), the translators gratuitously putting in the words, "the son." Remembering the omnibus-content of the word "son" before noted, manifestly we need to put into

it the meaning which the situation here calls for, which is *son-in-law;* even as in 1 Samuel xxiv. 16, where Saul says, "Is this thy voice, my son David?" when David was his son-in-law. So, as Joseph could not, by natural generation, be the son of both Jacob and Heli, and as it says that "Jacob begat Joseph" and does not say that Heli begat Joseph, the natural and satisfactory explanation is that Joseph was the son-in-law of Heli.

There is another consideration that seems to add conclusiveness to the foregoing. The Jews, in constructing their genealogical tables, reckoned descent entirely in the line of males, and when the line passed from father to grandson through a daughter, the daughter herself was not named, but her husband was counted as the son of the maternal grandfather. Thus it is plain how Joseph, the actual son of Jacob, who married the daughter of Heli, is, as son-in-law, put in the genealogy as Heli's son.

Joseph's *right* to the Davidic throne was not voided by the Jechoniah inhibition,— only the occupancy of it. Thus Jesus acquired the right to the throne of David through his reputed (step-) father, Joseph, and is eligible to sit on it as David's son through Mary. As Wilkinson puts it: "By that marriage Jesus escapes the two barriers in the genealogy of Matthew, and walks over the one barrier in the genealogy of Luke. The two genealogies were necessary."

It is submitted, therefore, that in this study, while certain outstanding, long-mooted questions have incidentally been settled, the central purpose of these genealogies, viz. to prove that Jesus is the lineal son of David and is the legal heir to David's throne, has been indicated, vindicated, and subserved.