

Genealogies of Christ

Genealogies of our Lord; see the records of Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38, which have their similarities and their differences. Though the Lucan genealogy goes back to Adam and that of Matthew goes only to Abraham, they are both in absolute agreement in the generations between Abraham and David. It is with the Son of David that the great difference begins, for Luke traces our Lord's ancestry from David through Nathan, whereas Matthew uses the royal line through Solomon. It is true that the names Shealtiel, Zerubbabel, and possibly Matthat (Matthan in Matt. KJV) appear subsequently in both, but otherwise the lists are entirely different. Indeed in one, Jacob is spoken of as Joseph's father; whereas in the other, Heli is presumably so presented.

Two views have been maintained by equally godly and learned scholars. Some believe both genealogies are of Joseph, but that the one in Matthew gives the legal descendants of David to establish our Lord's claim to the Davidic throne, while Luke gives the particular line to which Joseph actually belonged, The second list, then, is spoken of as the collateral line and is eligible for royal duty when the legal line is incapacitated or becomes extinct.

A far simpler solution, and in all probability the true one, is that since every man has two genealogies—one through his father and another through his mother—so Matthew presents Joseph's genealogy (the Lord's foster or legal father, not his actual father), whereas Luke presents Mary's genealogy. This view is supported by linguistic and historical evidence and is held by many students of the Bible. In addition, appeal may be made to Numbers 27:1-11 and 36:1-12 to give Scriptural precedent for the substitution of Joseph's name in Luke 3:23. At the same time it avoids the judgment spoken of in Jeremiah 22:28-30.

The genealogy in Matthew begins with Abraham, founder of the Hebrew nation, and concludes with Joseph, the husband of Mary. Luke's genealogy begins with Joseph and carries the Messianic line back as far as Adam. Matthew inserts historical data, Luke does not. The list in Matthew is divided into three sections.

The last individual in these genealogies in the O.T. records is Zerubbabel (Mt 1:13; Lk 3:27). There are some omissions, as between Joram and Uzziah (Mt 1:8) for which see 2 Kings 8:24 and 1 Chronicles 3:11. Women are mentioned in the Matthew genealogy, contrary to usual custom (cf. 1 Chr 1-8).

See Matthew 1:11. This man called Coniah in Jeremiah 22:24-30, where a curse is pronounced upon him. There it is predicted that none of his seed should prosper sitting upon David's throne. Had our Lord been the natural son of Joseph, who was descended from Jeconiah, He could never reign in power and righteousness because of the curse. But Christ came through Mary's line, not Joseph's. As the adopted son of Joseph, the curse upon Coniah's seed did not affect Him.