

COMPARING THE TWO EARTHLY GENEALOGIES OF JESUS CHRIST

N. Sebastian Desent, Ph.D., Th.D., D.D.; Pastor of Historic Baptist Church

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Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, having no earthly father. Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. His Father is God almighty. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost of God giving seed to Mary.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.
32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:
33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.
34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?
35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Luke 1:30-35

Jesus is God, and as God he is eternal. He has no beginning and no end (John1:1). His earthly birth was his being made manifest in the flesh so we could know him, believe on him, and receive him as our Saviour. He became flesh so he could give his life for us.

Although Jesus had no *earthly* father by birth, Jesus had Joseph as a “step-father.” Joseph was married to Mary. And, legally, as such, Jesus is reckoned according to Joseph’s genealogy.

THE GENEALOGY OF THE KING

As one opens the New Testament and starts reading in Matthew chapter one, he immediately finds the genealogy of Jesus Christ. This Gospel’s genealogy starts with these words:

1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Matthew 1:1

Because the author knew what he was writing, we understand this book, the Gospel of Matthew, is purposed – among other things – to show Jesus Christ as the son of David through Joseph’s family genealogy.

The privilege of being lawfully a son of David means Jesus Christ fulfills a key requirement to being the promised King of Israel. God told the prophet Nathan to give this promise to King David:

8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:
9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.
10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,

11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house.

12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.
2 Samuel 7:8-17

Isaiah's prophecy in respect to the Saviour is as follows:

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:6, 7

Thus, Matthew is a legal document showing Jesus as righteous Heir to the throne of David, through Joseph: "And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ" (Matthew 1:16).

The scriptures show beyond a doubt, that Jesus Christ is the King over Israel and he will rule on the throne of David forever. Note these passages in the New Testament:

5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass

Matthew 21:5

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

Matthew 27:11

29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

Matthew 27:29

37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Matthew 27:37

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

This is what the angel told Mary:

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.
32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:
33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end
Luke 1:30-33

Although Jesus was Joseph's step-son, Jesus was still legally in the lineage of Joseph, tracing his genealogy to King David.

THE GENEALOGY OF THE HIGH PRIEST

As we continue reading the New Testament we get to the Gospel of Luke, chapter 3. Here, we find the genealogy of Jesus Christ through Mary's line.

I understand some Bible-believers may struggle with this lineage being Mary's, but the Authorized Version gives us an important key to help in understanding. Note verse 23:

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was *the son* of Heli,
Luke 3:23

Thanks God for this little parenthetical phrase inserted by the Author, for the Bible says "as was supposed." This little phrase gives understanding in many ways, listed below are a few:

- Since Jesus is the Son of God, Joseph was *not* his biological father. Therefore, when referring to Matthew's genealogy, we have to understand this genealogy is the *legal* lineage of Christ, not the actual fleshly line, because Jesus was not *born* or *begotten* of Joseph.
- In contrast, Jesus *was born* of Mary (Matthew 1:16). Luke's genealogy shows Mary's line as applied to Joseph through marriage.
- Jesus was (as was supposed) *the son* of Joseph – not begotten of Joseph. One has to understand the distinction between being begotten and being the son of.

Now, the word "supposed" can be used in two meanings and contexts – the first and most common is, that someone thinks (or "supposes") something to be true, but it is not necessarily true. For example, this verse in Luke 12:51: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division...."

The second way "supposed" can be used, is to show the way something is expected or planned to be. Someone thinks (or "supposes") something to be true because he knows it is true. As preachers, we have probably said something like this: "Your testimony as a believer is important. If lost people see your bad behavior, they will likely say: 'He is *supposed* to be a Christian, and see how he acts.'" Or, the old meme: "Men are not *supposed* to cry."

Here are a few New Testament verses that use the word “suppose” in this way:

25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

John 21:25

26 I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.

1 Corinthians 7:26

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Hebrews 10:29

So, allow me to stress this important conclusion before going forward, because this is an important and key step: Although Jesus was “supposed” by unbelievers to be the actual *begotten* son of Joseph (although not true); he, more importantly, was **supposed to be** the *legal* son of Joseph by God himself, which is true.

The phrase in Luke 3:23 uses the word “supposed” the first way, but as believers we also know this was the way it was supposed to be. Some people thought (incorrectly) that Jesus was *begotten* of Joseph; but all people were to think (correctly) that Jesus is *the legal* son of Joseph. Furthermore, God, in his omniscience and wisdom, **fully intended** for Jesus to be in the **legal** line of Joseph – first, as if he were a begotten son; and, secondly, through marriage to Mary.

This way, three critical things are accomplished: first, Jesus has legal lineage to King David through Joseph; second, he has legal lineage to King David and access to Levitical bloodline through Joseph’s marriage to Mary and directly through Mary; and thirdly, Jesus was born supernaturally by God’s Spirit (not by Joseph) without giving up any legal lineage. This was the way *it was supposed to be*, as determined by God.

So, read the verse in Luke again with this understanding:

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was *the son* of Heli,

Luke 3:23

The beginning of verse 23 is also important: “And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age.” This phrase shows Jesus as being qualified age-wise for the Levitical priesthood, the fourth thing accomplished in conjunction with Mary’s lineage.

Read what the Old Testament said in respect to priests:

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,
2 Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers,

3 From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.

4 This shall be the service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation, about the most holy things:

29 As for the sons of Merari, thou shalt number them after their families, by the house of their fathers;

30 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old shalt thou number them, every one that entereth into the service, to do the work of the tabernacle of the congregation.

31 And this is the charge of their burden, according to all their service in the tabernacle of the congregation; the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and sockets thereof,

32 And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords, with all their instruments, and with all their service: and by name ye shall reckon the instruments of the charge of their burden.

33 This is the service of the families of the sons of Merari, according to all their service, in the tabernacle of the congregation, under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

Numbers 4:1-4, 29-33

The service for priesthood did not start until a Levite turned thirty years old. Jesus began to be “about thirty years of age,” Luke says. If one does a separate study on the birth of Jesus Christ compared with the years of Herod’s reign compared to the time of the crucifixion, one would find Jesus’ actual earthly age to be a few years older than thirty.

My thought is that once Jesus turned thirty his body ceased to age. He would always *appear* to be thirty years old regardless of his actual time on earth (for we know regardless of his looks, he is eternal). And had our Saviour not become sin for us, he would have never died (Romans 6:23). He could be walking on the earth today still looking like a thirty year old male in perfect condition. Even as Adam, who, even a week after his creation, probably appeared to be about thirty years of age; Jesus Christ will never age, even though he is eternal.

It is also interesting that David was thirty years old when he began to reign. 2 Samuel 5:4, 5 says: “David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.”

An High Priest after the Order of Melchisedec

Jesus is our High Priest. As the Son of God, God made him a high priest after the order of Melchisedec:

1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

Hebrews 3:1

5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Hebrews 5:5, 6, 10

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

Hebrews 10:21

Believers in Jesus Christ are made sons of God by faith (John 1:12). Furthermore, we are made kings and priests through him that loved us, and we shall reign on earth (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:5, 6; 5:10; 20:6).

Jesus Christ is King *and* High Priest over **both** the kingdom of God (spiritual) and the kingdom of heaven (physical).

A Lawful Son and a Son-in Law

Joseph, when he married Mary, through that lawful union became a son-in-law to Heli. He was legally supposed to be a son (-in-law) to Heli. In a similar fashion, Jesus was legally *supposed* to be a son of Joseph.

We do not know if Mary had no living brothers, but this portion of the Law is interesting:

6 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

7 The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren; and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them.

8 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter.

9 And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren.

10 And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren.

11 And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall possess it: and it shall be unto the children of Israel a statute of judgment, as the LORD commanded Moses.

Numbers 27:6-11

A son-in-law is a legal son and is considered such – thus “*son-in-law*.”

Similarly, Moses, a Levite, was considered the son of Pharaoh's daughter (Exodus 2:10; Hebrews 11:24).

10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

Exodus 2:10

Zechariah and Elizabeth

John the Baptist's mother was Elizabeth. She was cousin to Mary, Jesus' mother. Elizabeth was a daughter of Aaron.

5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

Luke 1:5, 36, 37

The Levitical high priests (of the sons of Aaron) had to follow certain rules. One in particular was that he should marry a wife from his own people.

10 And he that is the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes;

11 Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother;

12 Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD.

13 And he shall take a wife in her virginity.

14 A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife.

Leviticus 21:10-14

Zacharias was a Levitical priest, and his wife Elisabeth was a daughter of Aaron the priest. Mary was cousin to Elisabeth. Although we do not know for sure, it is possible Mary also was a daughter of a priest.

“Begot” vs. “the son of”

In Matthew we have the term “begot,” where in Luke we have “the son of.” This distinction we should make note of (though some modernist versions use “the son of” in Matthew, thus confusing truth). The “begot” has to do with fleshly birth. “The son of” can apply to legal lineage. It can also apply to being a grandson or relative – as in, Jesus is the son of David.

The genealogies in the two gospels differ until they get to King David. From that point they follow the same path to Abraham. Luke then traces Abraham back to Adam.

Matthew traces Joseph’s genealogy to Solomon, the son of David. Luke traces Joseph’s genealogy (through Mary) to Nathan, the son of David.

Both Solomon and Nathan were children of Bathsheba, the daughter of Ammiel (1 Chronicles 3:5). In 1 Chronicles 26:4, 5, we find Ammiel is the son of Obed-Edom. Obed-Edom was a Levite from the Merari line. Obed-Edom was a doorkeeper for the ark (1 Chronicles 15:24) and a porter (1 Chronicles 16:38).

4 Moreover the sons of Obed-edom were, Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth,

5 Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: for God blessed him.

1 Chronicles 26:4, 5

Although it may appear a little confusing, we have in both Matthew’s and Luke’s lineage connections to Levitical lineage through Bathsheba.

The Mother’s Influence

The requirement to be considered a Jew is dependent on the mother’s family line. If the mother is Jewish, the child is considered Jewish, even with a Gentile father.

A child of a Jewish father and a Gentile mother would not be considered Jewish – at least that was what I was told by a believing Rabbi. That is why today we could have many Gentiles with Jewish names, and likewise, many Jews with Gentile names.

The New Testament support the Jewish mother making the child Jewish. This is proved with the example of Timothy. Timothy's mother was Jewish, though he had a Gentile father.

Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

Acts 16:1

Because his mother was a Jewess, Paul could have Timothy circumcised, and not violate the decree to the Gentile believers.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

Acts 16:3

In contrast, Titus, a Greek was not circumcised:

1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

Galatians 2:1-5

Timothy, being a Jew, could enter the temple. But a Gentile would pollute the temple.

27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,

28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.

29 (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

Acts 21:27-29

In conclusion, the genealogies of our Lord Jesus Christ show his legal right to the throne of David. He is the Son of David. He is the Son of God. He is our High Priest forever.

The End.