

“Selected Studies in the Gospels”
The Genealogy of Yeshua, Part 2
Matthew 1:1-17/Luke 3:23-38

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A. Matthew’s genealogy—Luke’s genealogy

1. Matthew’s genealogy is divided into three sections, each containing fourteen generations—Abraham to David, Solomon to Jeconiah, Shealtiel to Yeshua.
2. The division of the genealogy into 3 groups of 14 generations each is clearly artificial—The numerical value of $\overline{\text{יָיָי}}$, in *gematria* is 14 (4 plus 6 plus 4) and there are 3 letters in the name $\overline{\text{יָיָי}}$.
3. The first two sections depend on the genealogical material in 1Chronicles 1:34-3:19—according to the LXX.

B. The genealogy’s “contradictions”

1. **Contradiction**—According to Matthew there were 42 generations from Abraham to Yeshua—according to Luke there were 56.

Response—Matthew’s division of Yeshua’s genealogy is clearly stylized (see A above).

a. Ezra 7:1-6 (cf., 1Chronicles 6:7); b. M. Avoth 5:2

2. **Contradiction**—According to Matthew, Joseph’s father is Jacob and his line comes down through Solomon—according to Luke, Joseph’s father is Eli and his line comes down through Nathan the son of David.

Response—Matthew records Yeshua’s “official genealogy,” *i.e.*, his line of succession to the throne—Luke records Yeshua’s actual genealogy, *i.e.*, his physical genealogy through Joseph.

Response—Matthew gives Yeshua’s legal lineage through Joseph—Luke gives Yeshua’s physical lineage through Miriam.

C. Other objections to the genealogy

1. **Objection**—Descent ... cannot be counted through the mother. And if Yosef is not Yeshua’s physical father, his legal status as Yeshua’s adoptive father ... is insufficient ...

Response— But there is a descent from David, whether it applies to Yosef or to Miryam, and no genealogy could cope with the radically unique circumstances of Yeshua’s birth as God’s ‘only and unique’ son (Jn 1:18), with no human physical father. Such circumstances transcend (the common) application of genealogies. Yeshua was the seed of David, physically ... in the manner and to the degree that these circumstances admit.¹

2. **Objection**—The genealogy of *Joseph* ... is traced back to King David. However, Matthew then ... claim(s) that *Joseph* was never the father of (Yeshua) ... Therefore, since ... (he) never connects *Joseph* as the father of (Yeshua), it is clear that (Yeshua) has no genealogical record going back to King David.

Response—

a. Lk. 1:32, 69; Acts 2:30; Rom. 1:3

b. Yeshua is frequently referred as the “Son of David”

—Cf., Matthew 1:1,20; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30,31; 21:9,15; 22:42; Mark 10:47,48; 12:35; Luke 3:31; 18:38,39; 20:41.

3. **Objection**—Even though *Joseph* wasn’t the biological father of (Yeshua), he was the *legal* father, and, therefore, passed on his genealogical line through adoption ... there is no indication from any of the records in the Christian Bible that Joseph actually adopted (Yeshua) ...

Response—According to every human law (Yeshua) was reckoned legally as Joseph’s son. No other father ... was known.²

a. Mt. 13:54-55 (Mk. 6:2-3); Lk. 2:22-39; 40-41; Jn. 1:45; 6:42

4. **Objection**—Even if one would want to say that through adoption the genealogy is adopted ... Matthew traces the genealogical line of *Joseph* back to King David, this line goes through ... Jeconiah (who) is cursed by God (Jer. 22:30) ... any descendant of Jeconiah would be disqualified from ever being a Messianic candidate; and therefore, if ... (Yeshua is) the legal adopted child of *Joseph*, then it is obvious that (Yeshua) would be disqualified from even *potentially* being the Jewish Messiah.

Response—Yeshua is the son of David, through Nathan, not Solomon.

5. **Objection**—*Mary* herself was *NOT* from a legitimate messianic family. According to the Bible, the Messiah must be a descendant of King David, through his son Solomon (2Samuel 7:12-13; 1Chronicles 17:11-14; 22:10; 28:4-7).

Response—David’s throne and kingdom *through* Solomon, but *not* his “offspring.”

a. 2Sam. 7:12-13; 1Chron. 17:11-14; 22:10; 28:4-7

b. Song of Songs Rabbah 8. 6 § 2

¹ David H. Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), pp. 112-113.

² A. Lukyn Williams, D.D., *A Manual of Christian Evidences for Jewish People* (The MacMillan Company, 1919), pp. 19-20.