

The Genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1:1-17

Introduction	¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David , the son of Abraham .	Importance of genealogies for kings and priests, not prophets. See Ezra 2:61-63 for instance, and Numbers 3:10, 16:40.
Group 1 14 from Abraham to David, inclusive.	² Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, ³ and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, ⁴ and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon (and Elisheba), and Nahshon the father of Salmon (aka Sala), ⁵ and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, ⁶ and Jesse the father of David the king.	Gen. 21:2-3 Gen. 25:24-27 Gen. 29-30, 35:17-18 Gen. 38:27-30, 46:12; note Judah Gen. 49:9, Rev. 5:5 Gen. 46:12 Amminadab is found in several Bible texts Exod. 6:23 intermarriage with Aaron Ruth 4:11-17 Ruth 4:18-22 1 Chron. 2:12 1 Chron. 2:13-15, 1 Samuel 16:11-13
Group 2 14 from David to Josiah inclusive.	And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, ⁷ and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah (aka Abijam), and Abijah the father of Asaph (aka Asa), ⁸ and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram (aka Jehoram), <i>Skipped Ahaziah (evil)</i> <i>Skipped Athaliah (evil)</i> <i>Skipped Joash (good)</i> <i>Skipped Amaziah (good)</i> and Joram the father of Uzziah (aka Azariah), ⁹ and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, ¹⁰ and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos (aka Amon), and Amos the father of Josiah, <i>Skipped Jehoiakim</i> ¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jechoniah (aka Jehoiachin) and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.	2 Samuel 12:24 1 Kings 11:43 1 Chron. 3:10 1 Kings 15:24 2 Kings 8:16 2 Chron. 26:1 2 Kings 15:5 2 Kings 15:38 2 Kings 16:20 2 Kings 20:21 2 Kings 21:18 2 Kings 21:24; Josiah-son Jehoahaz (3 mos), then other son Jehoiakim/Eliakim (11 yrs)-Jehoiachin (3 mos) See the Jeconiah curse in Jer. 22:28-30 About 597 B.C.
Group 3 14 from Jeconiah to Christ, inclusive.	¹² And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, ¹³ and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, ¹⁴ and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, ¹⁵ and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob,	1 Chron. 3:17 1 Chron. 3:19. Something happened here. Name only occurs in Matt. 1:13 Ditto Ditto – make sense because of exile Ditto, though a common name in history Ditto Ditto Ditto, although another common name Ditto Ditto, a very common name

	<p>¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom [Mary] Jesus was born, who is called Christ.</p>	<p>Interesting about Joseph that his name is common in Scripture as a people, but not many individuals are recorded with the name. Genesis Joseph and this Joseph are the main ones. There is one in Ezra and one in Nehemiah.</p> <p>Because of the Jeconiah curse, it would seem that Joseph was <i>not</i> the rightful heir of the throne of David. Thus why he was not ruling presently. God had promised none of that line would prosper on the throne! Matthew thus shows the necessity of Jesus to be born of a virgin, <i>without</i> Joseph's participation. Still, this is the genealogy of Jesus Christ. It is part of his history.</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>17 So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.</p>	<p>The repeated "fourteen" indicates that the genealogy is intended to be a convenient summary, perhaps for memorizing. We can see from simple lookup-work above that several generations are skipped.</p> <p>The entire tenor of the passage is that Jesus is person with historical lineage and that the faith in Christ is based on solid historical footing. There are 45 preceding generations listed, and more can be given (see Luke 3).</p> <p>Any stain of the Jeconiah curse is avoided with the virgin birth, but Jesus has also a connection to the throne through Joseph's historical lineage.</p>

The Genealogy of Christ in Luke 3:23-38

Introduction	²³ Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph,	This genealogy runs “backwards” in time from Jesus back to Adam.
Group 1 From Jesus back to the captivity	the son of Heli, ²⁴ the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph, ²⁵ the son of Mattathiah, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, ²⁶ the son of Maath, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Judah, ²⁷ the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel,	This section of the genealogy is entirely different than what we saw in Matthew. Matthew has about 13 generations including Zerubbabel and Shealtiel and Jesus. This list in Luke has 22 including Jesus, Mary, and Zerubbabel and Shealtiel. Evidently the list is more complete. It is hard to believe that the generations were so much shorter than those listed in Matthew. The rigors of the captivity perhaps made the genealogical records less evenly complete. Of course, God could easily have revealed names lost to history, but He may not have done so, guiding instead Luke’s historical research using extant materials at the time. I do not believe Matthat is the same as Matthan (Matt 1:15).
Group 2 From the captivity back to David	the son of Neri, ²⁸ the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er, ²⁹ the son of Jose, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, ³⁰ the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim, ³¹ the son of Melea, the son of Menan, the son of Mattathah, the son of Nathan, the son of David,	There are two important issues in this part of the genealogy: 1. David’s offspring is listed as Nathan. In Matthew, Solomon was listed as David’s offspring. We were certain that the Matthew listing was for the ancestry of Joseph. That means that without question, Luke’s genealogy must be for another person—Mary. See the “as was supposed” and “son of Heli” in Luke 3:23. Note that her Son has a genealogical right to the throne through her. Particularly since Luke 1:32 records God’s promise that such will occur. His legal right flows through Joseph. 2. But Zerubbabel and Shealtiel appear in both this list and in Matthew. Therefore, there is a cross-linking between the two genealogies in the middle. A secular reader could easily assume there is a mistake, but there are no mistakes in God’s word, and there is no evidence of textual corruption at this point. So, what happened? That is a question we will address below.
Group 3	³² the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz,	This covers the same period as Matthew 1:2-6 with no differences in the list of names.

From David back to Abraham	the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, ³³ the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, ³⁴ the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham,	
Group 4 From Abraham back to Adam and God.	the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, ³⁵ the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, ³⁶ the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, ³⁷ the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan, ³⁸ the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.	This information is not included in Matthew's genealogy.

The Problem of Shealtiel (Salathiel) and Zerubbabel

The genealogies convene in these two characters and then split again. What is happening here?

The split after Zerubbabel is straightforward. It is that Zerubbabel had two boys, one named Abiud (Matthew's genealogy) and the other named Rhesa (Luke's genealogy). After that, the two families lines did not reconnect. One was the line of Joseph, and the other the line of Mary.

How the two families lines joined at Zerubbabel and his father Salathiel (Shealtiel) is more complex. Besides the two being a join point of seemingly unrelated genealogical trees, there are some other complications. (1) Matthew has **Jeconiah** as the father of Shealtiel, but Luke has **Neri** as the father of Shealtiel. (2) These genealogies list Shealtiel as the father of Zerubbabel. But at the same time in history, 1 Chronicles 3:18-19 lists Jeconiah as father of Shealtiel and then Shealtiel's brother Pedaiah as the father of Zerubbabel. It is possible that there were first cousins both named Zerubbabel, but it is strange that the Shealtiel Zerubbabel's genealogy (if different) is not given in 1 Chronicles. It is also strange than neither Abiud nor Rhesa are listed in 1 Chronicles 3:19-20 as Zerubbabel's children. However, these could easily be alternate names of two of the sons; or two other sons.

I offer a proposed reconstruction as follows, which can be diagrammed as shown in Figure 1. It could be that Jeconiah married Neri's daughter. This is where the family trees converged again. They had Shealtiel and Pediah, among other

children. Shealtiel married, but had no children. Then his brother Pedaiah married his brother's widow (Deut. 25:5-6; see Ruth 4:10).¹ They had a son named Zerubbabel, who was counted as offspring of Shealtiel even though he was dead. By Levirate marriage, Zerubbabel would be counted as the descendant of Salathiel. So indeed Shealtiel was the legal father of Zerubbabel, but Pedaiah was his biological father.

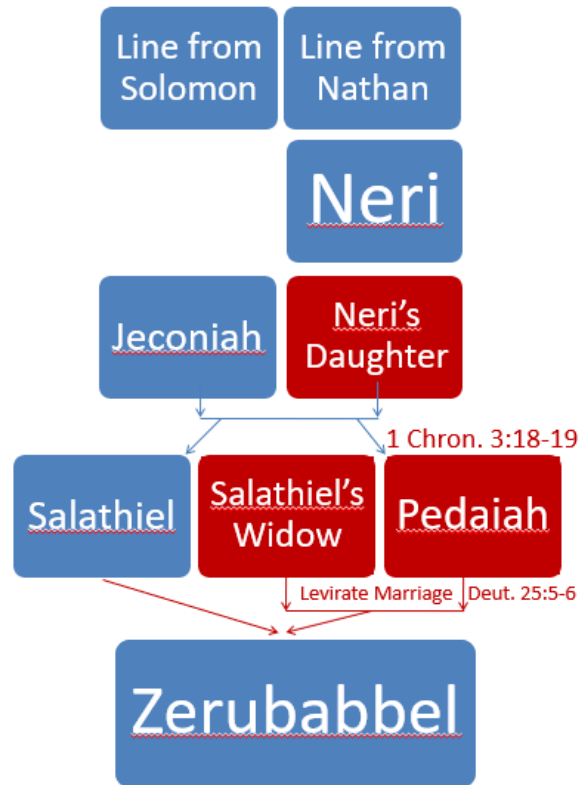


Figure 1: How Shealtiel and Zerubbabel could have formed a join-point in the genealogies of Jesus. Red boxes indicate my proposal.

Does this reconstruction do anything to the Jeconiah curse? The curse would flow through Pedaiah as well, so it only seems to make the problem worse, i.e. making it impossible for both the branch from David through Solomon and the branch through Nathan to produce offspring that avoid the curse. The virgin birth could very well be *the* explanation of how this works.

In the end, I have not been able to arrive at a completely satisfactory explanation. Neither are other Bible students able to get to the bottom of this. What we know shows there is significant difficulty with the issue of probably at least one levirate marriage, the Jeconiah curse, and sons that are otherwise unnamed in Biblical sources. This is unfortunate. However, we approach the Scripture with trust, knowing that the genealogy of Luke is just as inspired and accurate as the genealogies in 1 Chronicles and elsewhere in the OT, and just as inspired as John 3:16. Whatever has happened, it is evident that God arranged for a seemingly impossible situation, and then solved it with the virgin birth of Christ.

¹ This is called "levirate" marriage because of the Latin word *levir*, which means "husband's brother," that is, brother-in-law.