The Genealogies of Jesus: Introduction

Why are the genealogies (long lists of names I can't pronounce, 'the begats,' the big sections I skip when I read, the boring parts) in the Bible?

The Bible is a book of books. These books contain stories. The stories are connected by families. The families are connected by genealogies. The study of the genealogies helps us put all of the **pieces** together. The genealogies give us perspective of the relationships and tell us how far apart events occurred. The genealogies weave the stories together like a weaver weaves together a piece of cloth.

The genealogies help us keep the stories in **context**. The root word for context is text. We get our English word text from the Latin word *textum*. *Textum* refers to the textile industry (clothing). So, when you think about keeping a verse/story in the Bible in context, think about your clothes. Look at your clothes for a moment. Do you see that the whole piece of material is actually a combination of many tiny threads woven together? In the same way, the Bible is a book of books that's woven together with the breath of God and the hand of man. It's our job when we study the Bible not to pull one thread out of context, but rather to keep in mind that each thread/story fits within the whole of the Bible.

That's where genealogies come in. Have any of you ever studied your family's genealogy? How far back could you trace it? 100 years? 500 years? The genealogies listed in Matthew and Luke allow Jesus to trace back His genealogy about 4,000 years. I think He's got us beat (in more ways than one).

Can't I just skip them?

However, some of us just skip the genealogies when we read through the Scripture. Mostly it's because it takes more effort to study a genealogy than a proverb. However, **2 Timothy 3:16-17** makes it clear that, "**All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**" We don't get to skip or ignore **any** part of Scripture. We should study it all. A great example of this are the Bereans in **Acts 17:11**: **These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so.** I'll be speaking more on that tonight during the evening service.

Let's get back to Jesus' genealogies. You'll notice that I'm using the plural word genealogies and not the singular genealogy—that's on purpose. Some attempt to show the Bible is filled with errors and will say that the genealogies are filled with errors. The genealogies are consistent. Consistent is a math term to describe two equations that have a solution. A consistent system has a solution (a point at which two lines cross); an inconsistent system has no solution (the lines don't cross). The genealogies of Jesus have a wonderful solution—Jesus Himself is the point at which both of these genealogical lines cross.

Let's take a moment and read each of the genealogies. In this study, it will help if we all have the same version, because different translations spell the names differently.

Matthew 1:1-15

1 The book of the genealogy [the Greek word is Genesis meaning, source or origin] **of Jesus** [Jehovah is Salvation] **Christ** [Anointed]**, the Son of David** [beloved]**, the Son of Abraham** [father of a multitude]**: 2 Abraham begot Isaac** [to laugh]**, Isaac begot Jacob** [heel-catcher or supplanter]**, and Jacob begot Judah** [he shall be praised] **and his brothers. 3 Judah begot Perez** [a breach] **and Zerah** [a rising (as the sun)] **by Tamar** [palm tree]**, Perez begot Hezron** [enclosed]**, and Hezron begot Ram** [high]**. 4 Ram begot Amminadab** [one of the prince's people]**, Amminadab begot Nahshon** [enchanter]**, and Nahshon begot Salmon** [raiment: a garment]**. 5 Salmon begot Boaz** [in him is strength] **by Rahab** [wide]**, Boaz begot Obed** [serving] **by Ruth** [a female friend]**, Obed begot Jesse** [wealthy]**, 6 and Jesse begot David** [beloved] **the king.**

David the king begot Solomon [peaceful] **by her** *who had been the wife* **of Uriah** [light of Jehovah]**. 7 Solomon begot Rehoboam** [enlarger of the people]**, Rehoboam begot Abijah** [my father is Jah (Jehovah)]**, and Abijah begot Asa** [physician, or cure]**. 8 Asa begot Jehoshaphat** [whom Jehovah judges]**, Jehoshaphat begot Joram** [whom Jehovah has exalted]**, and Joram begot Uzziah** [strength of Jehovah]**. 9 Uzziah begot Jotham** [Jehovah is upright]**, Jotham begot Ahaz** [possessor]**, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah** [the might of Jehovah]**. 10 Hezekiah begot Manasseh** [forgetting]**, Manasseh begot Amon** [builder]**, and Amon begot Josiah** [whom Jehovah heals]**. 11 Josiah begot Jeconiah** [whom Jehovah establishes] **and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon** [confusion]**.**

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel [I have asked of God]**, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel** [born at Babel, i.e. Babylon]**. 13 Zerubbabel begot Abiud** [my father is majesty]**, Abiud begot Eliakim** [raising up by God]**, and Eliakim begot Azor** [helper]**. 14 Azor begot Zadok** [just]**, Zadok begot Achim** [the Lord will establish]**, and Achim begot Eliud** [God his Praise]**. 15 Eliud begot Eleazar** [help of God]**, Eleazar begot Matthan** [gift]**, and Matthan begot Jacob** [heel-catcher or supplanter]**. 16 And Jacob begot Joseph** [let him add] **the husband of Mary** [their rebellion]**, of whom was born Jesus** [Jehovah is salvation] **who is called Christ** [anointed]**.**

Summary of Matthew

1. **Abraham**	15. David	29. Jeconiah
2. Isaac	16. **Solomon**	30. Shealtiel
3. Jacob	17. Rehoboam	31. Zerubbabel
4. Judah	18. Abijah	32. Abiud
5. Perez	19. Asa	33. Eliakim
6. Hezron	20. Jehoshaphat	34. Azor
7. Ram	21. Joram	35. Zadok
8. Amminadab	22. Uzziah	36. Achim
9. Nahshon	23. Jotham	37. Eliud
10. Salmon	24. Ahaz	38. Eleazar
11. Boaz	25. Hezekiah	39. Matthan
12. Obed	26. Manasseh	40. Jacob
13. Jesse	27. Amon	41. Joseph/Mary
14. David	28. Josiah	42. **Jesus**

Luke 3:23-38

23 Now Jesus Himself began *His ministry at* about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) *the* son of Joseph, *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, *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, 32 *the son* of Jesse, *the son* of Obed, *the son* of Boaz, *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, *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 Enosh, *the son* of Seth, *the son* of Adam, *the son* of God.

Summary of Luke

1. **Jesus**
2. Joseph/Mary
3. Heli
4. Matthat
5. Levi
6. Melchi
7. Janna
8. Joseph
9. Mattathiah
10. Amos
11. Nahum
12. Esli
13. Naggai
14. Maath
15. Mattathiah
16. Semei
17. Joseph
18. Judah
19. Joannas
20. Rhesa
21. Zerubbabel
22. Shealtiel
23. Neri
24. Melchi
25. Addi
26. Cosam
27. Elmodam
28. Er
29. Jose
30. Eliezer
31. Jorim
32. Matthat
33. Levi
34. Simeon
35. Judah
36. Joseph
37. Jonan
38. Eliakim
39. Melea
40. Menan
41. Mattathah
42. **Nathan**
43. David
44. Jesse
45. Obed
46. Boaz
47. Salmon
48. Nahshon
49. Amminadab
50. Ram
51. Hezron
52. Perez
53. Judah
54. Jacob
55. Isaac
56. **Abraham**
57. Terah
58. Nahor
59. Serug
60. Reu
61. Peleg
62. Eber
63. Shelah
64. Cainan
65. Arphaxad
66. Shem
67. Noah
68. Lamech
69. Methuselah
70. Enoch
71. Jared
72. Mahalalel
73. Cainan
74. Enosh
75. Seth
76. Adam
77. **God**

The Differences

1. Matthew spans Abraham to Jesus and Luke spans Jesus to God. This appears to be because Matthew was writing to Jews (who would have quickly identified with a man whose lineage came through Abraham and David) and Luke was writing to Romans (who would have wanted to see Jesus as having a direct descent from God).
2. Matthew goes from the **past** to the [then] present and Luke goes from the [then] **present** to the past.
3. Luke includes more **names** (generations) from Jesus to Abraham than Matthew does. This was done for several reasons, but it was common to skip the generations in the listings of longer Jewish genealogies (it was done multiple times in the Old Testament). The words **son of** and **begat** literally mean, "descent from" and not literally, "the father of." An example of this is **Matthew 1:1**—David was not the literal son of Abraham.
4. Matthew's genealogy has some **tangents**. Luke's genealogy is very direct. It's almost as if in Luke's account, Sergeant Joe Friday from Dragnet is telling the story and in Matthew's account, Pastor Gary is telling the story.
5. Luke has a lot more **italicized** words than Matthew. Luke's literally reads, "**that Heli, that Matthat, that Levi, that Melchi.**"
6. Joseph (the husband of Mary) appears (on the surface) to have **two** different fathers. Jacob is Joseph's father in **Matthew 1** and it appears that Heli is Joseph's father in **Luke 1**. This will be investigated much, much further in the coming weeks.
7. Matthew's genealogy **precedes** the birth of Christ and Luke's genealogy **follows** the birth of Christ
8. Luke contains **no** women while Matthew contains **five** women.

The Series

In the coming weeks, we'll look into the people that are in these genealogies, the people that were left out, the rabbit trails and the implications. There's much to learn and much to discuss. Don't check your brains at the door and come with your questions (knowing that I don't have all the answers, but God does).

Here are two teasers to give you a flavor of what type of things we'll be looking at.

1. Perspective

Both Matthew and Luke tell of Jesus' early life, but it appears that each tells the story from a different perspective. In Matthew, **Joseph** plays a more prominent role. An angel appears to Joseph three times and Joseph's thoughts are recorded. In Luke, **Mary** plays a more prominent role. An angel appears to Mary and Mary's thoughts are recorded. It should come as no surprise then that Matthew records Joseph's genealogy and Luke records Mary's genealogy.

2. The Women in Matthew's Genealogy

Now, first and foremost, you didn't list women when giving a Jewish genealogy, but Matthew does (and we'll go into the 'why' in later weeks). Here they are: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary. Here's my question . . . did they have anything in common?

1. Tamar's story is told in **Genesis 38** and it's an awful tale of incest and treachery. Tamar does not behave properly and neither does almost anyone else in that chapter.
2. Rahab's story is told in **Joshua 2** and **Joshua 6** and it's a great story about heroism and keeping your word. Rahab was a prostitute, but was used by God when Joshua fought the battle of Jericho.
3. Ruth's story is told in the book of **Ruth**. Ruth was a Moabite (which was a negative stigmatism that she bore when she was brought into Israel). Ruth is also the easiest example of chesed in the Old Testament. The loving-kindness that Boaz showed her in Ruth is hard to describe. Ruth turned out to be King David's great-grandmother.
4. Bathsheba's story is told in **2 Samuel 11** and her story is probably the most famous of the four so far. But how would you like to be famous for what she's famous for? She was stolen by David from another man and birthed Solomon.
5. Mary is the last woman mentioned. She was found pregnant before she and Joseph were under the chuppah.

All five of these women experienced **humiliation**.

The genealogies have many such threads running through them and understanding these threads helps us to understand the context of this great book, the Bible.

I challenge you to read over the genealogies this week and to find out what you can about some of the names listed. I'd like for us to do with some of these names what we did with the 10 Commandments—pick one and be ready to give a 1-2 minute overview of that person's name in the Old Testament.

The Genealogies of Jesus: Matthew 1

Treasury of Scripture Knowledge

Verse 2

Abraham

Genesis 21:2-5; **Joshua 24:2-3**; **1 Chronicles 1:28**; **Isaiah 51:2**

Isaac

Genesis 25:26; **Joshua 24:4**; **1 Chronicles 1:34**; **Isaiah 41:8**; **Malachi 1:2-3**

Jacob

Genesis 29:32-35; **30:5-20**; **35:16-19**; **46:8-27**; **49:8-12**; **Exodus 1:2-5**; **1 Chronicles 2:1-8**; **5:1-2**

Verse 3

Judah

Genesis 38:27, 29-30; **46:12**; **Numbers 26:20-21**; **1 Chronicles 2:3-4**

Zerah

1 Chronicles 9:6

Tamar

Genesis 38:6, 11, 24-26

Perez

Genesis 46:12; **Numbers 26:21**; **Ruth 4:18**; **1 Chronicles 2:5; 4:1**

Ram

Ruth 4:19; **1 Chronicles 2:9**

Verse 4

Amminadab

Ruth 4:19-20; **1 Chronicles 2:10-12**

Nahshon

Numbers 1:7; **2:3**; **7:12, 17**; **10:14**

Verse 5

Salmon

Ruth 4:21; **1 Chronicles 2:11-12**

Rahab

Joshua 2:1-22; **6:22-25**; **Hebrews 11:31**; **James 2:25**

Boaz

Ruth 1:4, 16-17, 22; **2:1-4**

Verse 6

Jesse

Ruth 4:22; **1 Samuel 16:1, 11-13**; **17:12, 58**; **20:30-31**; **22:8**; **2 Samuel 23:1**; **1 Chronicles 2:15**; **Psalm 72:20**; **Isaiah 11:1**

Solomon

2 Samuel 12:24-25; **1 Chronicles 3:5**; **14:4**; **28:5**

her

2 Samuel 11:3, 26-27; **1 Kings 1:11-17, 28-31**; **15:5**

Uriah

2 Samuel 23:39; **1 Chronicles 11:41**

Verse 7

Rehoboam

1 Kings 11:43; **12:1-24**; **1 Chronicles 3:10**; **2 Chronicles 9:31**; **13:7**

Abijah

1 Kings 14:31; **2 Chronicles 12:1**

Asa

1 Kings 15:8-23; **2 Chronicles 14:1-16**

Verse 8

Jehoshaphat

1 Kings 15:24; **22:2-50**; **2 Kings 3:1**; **2 Chronicles 17:1-20**

Joram

1 Kings 22:50; **2 Kings 8:16**; **1 Chronicles 3:11**; **2 Chronicles 21:1**

Uzziah

2 Kings 14:21; **15:1-6**; **2 Chronicles 26:1-23**

Verse 9

Jotham

2 Kings 15:7, 32-38; **1 Chronicles 3:11-13**; **2 Chronicles 26:21**; **27:1-9**

Ahaz

2 Kings 15:38; **16:1-20**; **2 Chronicles 27:9**; **28:1-27**; **Isaiah 7:1-13**

Hezekiah

2 Kings 16:20; **18:1-20**; **2 Chronicles 28:27**; **29:1-32**; **Isaiah 36:1-39**

Verse 10

Manasseh

2 Kings 20:21; **21:1-18**; **24:3-4**; **1 Chronicles 3:13-15**; **2 Chronicles 32:33**; **33:1-19**

Amon

2 Kings 21:19-26; **2 Chronicles 33:20-24**

Josiah

1 Kings 13:2; **2 Kings 21:26**; **22:1-20**; **23:1-30**; **2 Chronicles 33:25**; **34:1-33**; **35:1-27**; **Jeremiah 1:2-3**

Verse 11

Jechoniah

2 Kings 23:31-37; **24:1-20**; **1 Chronicles 3:15-17**; **2 Chronicles 36:1-8**; **Jeremiah 2:10-28**; **2 Kings 25:27**; **2 Kings 24:14-16**; **25:11**; **2 Chronicles 36:10, 20**; **Jeremiah 27:20**; **39:9**; **52:11-15, 28-30**; **Daniel 1:2**

Verse 16

Joseph

Matthew 18-25; **2:13**; **Luke 1:27**; **2:4-5, 48**; **3:23**; **4:22**

The Genealogies of Jesus: Luke 3

Treasury of Scripture Knowledge

Verse 31

Nathan

2 Samuel 5:14; **1 Chronicles 3:5**; **14:4**; **Zechariah 12:12**

Verse 32

Jesse

Ruth 4:18-22; **1 Samuel 17:58**; **20:31**; **1 Kings 12:16**; **1 Chronicles 2:10-15**; **Psalm 72:20**; **Isaiah 11:1-2**; **Matthew 1:3-6**; **Acts 13:22-23**

Obed

Numbers 1:7; **2:3**; **7:12**; **1 Chronicles 2:11-12**

Verse 33

Aminadab

Ruth 4:19-20; **1 Chronicles 2:9-10**

Esrom

Genesis 46:12; **Numbers 26:20-21**

Phares

Genesis 38:29; **Ruth 4:12**; **1 Chronicles 2:4-5**; **9:4**

Pharez of Juda

Genesis 29:35; **49:8**

Verse 34

Isaac

Genesis 21:3; **25:26**; **1 Chronicles 1:34**

Thara

Genesis 11:24-32; **Joshua 24:2**; **1 Chronicles 1:24-28**

Verse 35

Saruch

Genesis 11:18-21

Serug, Reu

Genesis 10:25

Peleg

Genesis 11:16-17

Eber

Genesis 10:24; **11:12-15**

Verse 36

Sem

Genesis 5:32; **7:13**; **9:18, 26-27**; **10:21-22**; **11:10-26**; **1 Chronicles 1:17**

Noah

Genesis 5:29-30; **6:8-10, 22**; **7:1, 23**; **8:1**; **9:1**

Verse 37

Mathusala

Genesis 5:6-28; **1 Chronicles 1:1-3**