

The remains of the genealogical spirit among the later Jews has only been glanced at to show how deeply it had been penetrated into the Jewish national mind. It remains to be said that just notions of the nature of the Jewish genealogical records are of great importance with a view to the right interpretation of Scripture. Let it only be remembered that these records have respect to political and territorial divisions, as much as to strictly genealogical descent, and it will at once be seen how erroneous a conclusion it may be, that all who are called "sons" of such or such a patriarch, or chief father, must necessarily have been his very children. Just as in the very first division into tribes Manasseh and Ephraim were numbered with their uncles, as if they had been sons instead of grandsons (Genesis 48:5) of Jacob, so afterwards the names of persons belonging to different generations would often stand side by side as heads of families or houses, and be called the sons of their common ancestor.¹ (p. 1144)

Principles:

1. The genealogical records of the Israelites are more detailed than those of any of their contemporaries.
2. The Abrahamic covenant, the Aaronic priesthood, and the promise of the Messiah from the tribe of Judah kept them fixated on keeping precise pedigrees of the 12 tribes.
3. The ascendancy of kings from the tribe of Judah was extremely important with regard to the advent of Messiah.
4. When becoming king, Hezekiah reinstated the keeping of genealogical records by the scribes. Same for Zerubbabel following the return to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity.
5. When Augustus ordered his census of the Roman Empire, Joseph took the expectant Mary with him to the family home in Bethlehem, indicating that his ancestral home was there, instituted by Judah when the tribal lands were assigned by Joshua.
6. Records of successive high priests were preserved over a period of 2,000 years.

¹ William Smith and J. M. Fuller, eds., *A History of the Bible*, 2d ed. (London: John Murray, 1893), 1:1142–44.

7. These examples provide evidence that the Jewish genealogical records were preserved up to the destruction of the Jewish Temple c. A.D. 67–70.
8. These examples also allow us to conclude that Joseph and Mary's family's records were current and housed in the Temple.
9. Therefore, the proof of Jesus' Davidic pedigree was recorded at the Temple and available for anyone to consult to verify the Lord's direct link to the Davidic line.
10. Finally, the chart pedigrees of Joseph are referenced by Matthew and Luke and appear in the Gospels of Matthew 1:1–17 and Luke 3:23–38.
11. This brings us to the next excerpt from Smith and Fuller's *A History of the Bible*. The next section is:

GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST. The New Testament gives us the genealogy of but one person, that of our Saviour. The priesthood of Aaron having ceased, the possession of the land of Canaan being transferred to the Gentiles, and there being under the New Testament dispensation no difference between circumcision and uncircumcision, Barbarian and Seythian, bond and free, there is but One Whose genealogy it concerns us as Christians to be acquainted with, that of our Lord Jesus Christ. Him the prophets announced as the seed of Abraham and the son of David, and the angel declared that to him should be given the throne of His father David, that He might reign over the house of Jacob for ever. His descent from David and Abraham being therefore an essential part of His Messiahship, it was right that His genealogy should be given as a portion of Gospel Truth. Considering, further, that to the Jews first He was manifested and preached, and that His descent from David and Abraham was a matter of special interest to them, it seems likely that the proof of His descent would be one especially adapted to convince them: in other words, that it would be drawn from documents which they deemed authentic. Such were the genealogical records preserved at Jerusalem. And when to the above considerations we add the fact that the lineage of Joseph was actually made out from authentic records for the purpose of the civil census ordered by Augustus, it becomes morally certain that the genealogy of Jesus Christ was extracted from the public registers. Another consideration adds yet further conviction.

It has often excited surprise that the genealogies were those contained in the public registers, it could not be otherwise. In them, Jesus, the Son of Mary, the espoused wife of Joseph, could only appear as Joseph's Son (cf. John 1:45, ["Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph.'"]). (p. 1145)

But now to approach the difficulties with which the genealogies of Christ are thought to be beset. These difficulties have seemed so considerable in all ages as to drive commentators to very strange shifts. Some, as early as the second century, botched the notion, which Julius Africānus vigorously repudiates, that the genealogies are imaginary lists designed only to set forth the union of royal and priestly descent in Christ. Later, and chiefly among Protestant divines, the theory was invented of one genealogy being Joseph's, and the other Mary's; a theory in direct contradiction to the plain letter of the Scripture narrative, and leaving untouched as many difficulties as it solves. The fertile invention of Annius of Viterbo \vĕ-ter'-bō\ forged a book in Philo's name, which accounted for the discrepancies by asserting that all Christ's ancestors, from David downwards, had two names. The circumstance, however, of one line running up to Solomon, and the other to Nathan, was overlooked. Other fanciful suggestions have been offered. Others like Alford, content themselves with saying that solution is impossible, without further knowledge than we possess. But it is not too much to say that after all, in regard to the main points, there is no difficulty at all, if only the documents in question are dealt with reasonably, and after the analogy of similar Jewish documents in the Old Testament—and that the clues to a right understanding of them are so patent, and so strongly marked, that it is surprising that so much diversity of opinion should have existed. The following propositions will explain the true construction of these genealogies:— (pp. 1145–46)

1. They are both the genealogies of Joseph, *i.e.* of Jesus Christ, as the reputed and legal son of Joseph and Mary. One has only to read them to be satisfied of this. The notices of Joseph as being of the house of David, by the same Evangelists who give the pedigree, are an additional confirmation (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:27, 2:4) and if these pedigrees were extracted from the public archives, they must have been Joseph's.
2. The genealogy of Matthew is, as Grotius most truly and unhesitatingly asserted, Joseph's genealogy as legal successor to the throne of David, *i.e.* it exhibits the successive heirs of the kingdom ending with Christ, as Joseph's son. Luke's is Joseph's private genealogy, exhibiting his real birth, as David's son, and thus showing why he was heir to Solomon's crown.

If Matthew's genealogy had stood alone, and we had no further information on this subject than it affords, we might indeed have sought that it was a genealogical stem in the strictest sense of the word, exhibiting Joseph's forefathers in succession, from David downwards. But immediately we find a second genealogy of Joseph—that in Luke's Gospel—such is no longer a reasonable opinion. Because if Matthew's genealogy, tracing as it does the successive generations through the long line of Jewish kings, had been Joseph's real paternal stem, there could not possibly have been room for a second genealogy. The steps of ancestry coinciding with the steps of succession, one pedigree only could in the nature of things be proper. The mere existence therefore of a second pedigree, tracing Joseph's ancestry through private persons, by the side of one tracing it through kings, is in itself a proof that the latter is not the true stem of birth. When with this clue, we examine Matthew's list to discover whether it contains in itself any evidence as to when the lineal descent was broken, we fix at one upon Jechonias, who could not, we know, be literally the father of Salathiel, because the word of God by the mouth of Jeremiah had pronounced him *childless*. It had also declared that none of his seed should sit upon the throne of David, or rule in Judah (Jeremiah 22:30). The same thing had been declared concerning his father Jehoiakim in Jeremiah 36:30. Jechonias therefore could not be the father of Salathiel, nor could Christ spring either from him or his father. Here then we have the most striking confirmation of the justice of the inference drawn from finding a second genealogy, viz. that Matthew gives the succession, not the strict birth; and we conclude that the names after the childless Jechonias are those of his next heirs, as also in 1 Chronicles 3:17. One more look at the two genealogies convinces us that this conclusion is just; for we find that the two next names following Jechonias, Salathiel and Zorobabel, are actually taken from the other genealogy, which teaches us that Salathiel's real father was Neri, of the house of Nathan. It becomes therefore perfectly certain, that Salathiel of the house of Nathan became heir to David's throne on the failure of Solomon's line in Jechonias, and that as such he and his descendants were transferred as "sons of Jechoniah" to the royal genealogical table, accounting to the principle of the Jewish Law laid down in Numbers 27:8–11.

3. The simple principle that one Evangelist exhibits that genealogy which contained the successive heirs to David's and Solomon's throne, while the other exhibits the paternal stem of him who was the heir, explains all the anomalies of the two pedigrees, their agreements as well as their discrepancies, and the circumstance of there being two at all.

4. It must be added that not only does this theory explain all the phenomena, but that that portion of it which asserts that Luke gives Joseph's paternal stem receives a most remarkable confirmation from the names which compose that stem.² (p. 1146)

Principles:

1. The genealogies of Matthew and Luke confirm the Lord's pedigree goes back to both Solomon and Nathan.
2. The genealogies were authentic documents maintained by the scribes and made available to confirm the pedigree of any Jew.
3. Augustus Caesar contributed to confirming the legitimacy of the two genealogies by his decree to conduct a census that caused Joseph to leave Nazareth and go down to Judah and David's city of Bethlehem.
4. It is considered to be the case that the genealogies continued to be under the supervision of the scribes in the Temple until the building was destroyed in A.D. 70.
5. This means that Matthew and Luke had easy access to the pedigree of Joseph, both his royal line and his family line.
6. In our study of the Messiah's identification through a specific line of individuals, we see each in the two genealogies.
7. We see that Mathew's pedigree begins with Abraham and continues with Isaac, Jacob (Israel), Judah, – David, Nathan, – Joseph.
8. From Luke's pedigree we find that it begins in reverse order beginning with Joseph and continuing with Nathan. David, Judah, Jacob (Israel), Abraham, – Shem, Noah, Seth, Adam, and God.
9. Both genealogies belong to Joseph and developed by the Evangelicals at the Temple. Matthew charts the royal line while Luke constructs the family line that begins the Lord's pedigree through Mary back to Nathan.

² Smith and Fuller, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, 2d ed., 1:1146.