

10-2017

The Two Genealogies as Given by Matthew and Luke

Harold Willmington

Liberty University, hwillmington@liberty.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second_person



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), [Practical Theology Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "The Two Genealogies as Given by Matthew and Luke" (2017). *The Second Person File*. 4.

https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second_person/4

This The Eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ is brought to you for free and open access by the Theological Studies at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Second Person File by an authorized administrator of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu.

ARTICLE #4

THE TWO GENEALOGIES AS GIVEN BY MATTHEW AND LUKE

MATTHEW'S GENEALOGY

Mt. 1:1-17

- Matthew begins with Abraham and goes forward in time to Joseph.
 - A. He gives the royal line of Joseph.
 - B. He traces this line through Solomon, David's first son.
 - C. His list includes forty-one names, four of which are women.
- This genealogy is remarkable for several reasons:
 - A. It contains the names of four women—Oriental and Mid-eastern genealogies rarely do this.
 - B. All four women had questionable backgrounds.
 1. Tamar was an ex-harlot (Mt. 1:3; Gen. 38:13-30).
 2. Rahab was an ex-harlot (Mt. 1:5; Josh. 2:1).
 3. Ruth was a former pagan (Mt. 1:5; Ruth 1:4).
 4. Bathsheba was a former adulteress (Mt. 1:6; 2 Sam. 11:1-5).
- But through the manifold and marvelous grace of God, the first of these women (Tamar) became the distantly removed grandmother of King David; the second (Rahab) became his great-great-grandmother; the third (Ruth) was his great-grandmother; and the fourth (Bathsheba) became his beloved wife and mother of Solomon. (See Ruth 4:18-22.)
- Matthew opens and closes his genealogical account with three names.

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham...So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations" (Mt. 1:1, 17).
- It can be seen that his genealogy records 41 generations consisting of three groups of 14 each:
 - A. From Abraham to David
 - B. From David to the Babylonian Captivity
 - C. From the Babylonian Captivity to Christ
- To make these three groups of fourteen each, Matthew omitted three generations, those of Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. Chronologically they should appear between the two

names, "*Jehoram begat Uzziah*" in Mt. 1:8. There were probably several reasons why Matthew used this approach:

- A. As a memory device
- B. The number 14 is twice seven, the number of perfection.
- C. The name David, Israel's greatest king, has a numerical value in the Hebrew language which totals 14.

LUKE'S GENEALOGY

Lk. 3:23-38

- Luke begins with Joseph and goes back to Adam.
 - A. He gives the racial line of Mary.
 - B. He traces this line through Nathan, David's second son.
 - C. His list includes seventy-four names.
- Joseph's father is said by Matthew to be Jacob (Mt. 1:16), while Luke says he was Heli's son (Lk. 3:23). The ancient world often referred to their sons-in-law as their own sons. Thus it is possible that Heli was actually the father of Mary and the father-in-law of Joseph.
- Satan was keenly aware of the fact that the line leading to Christ would go through David's seed. He thus apparently attempted to break a link in the royal chain. With the advent of King Jeconiah (the 19th "link" from David), it appeared that the devil had succeeded, for God pronounced the following curse upon this wicked young ruler:
"Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah." (Jer. 22:30).
- This declaration did not mean he would have no children, for in 1 Chron. 3:17-18, some are named. (See also Mt. 1:12.) What it did mean is that by divine judgment this king would be considered childless as far as the throne of Judah was concerned. Whatever it meant, it seemed the royal line of David and Solomon had ground to a stop with Jeconiah (also called Coniah and Jehoiachin in the Old Testament). (See Jer. 22:24; 2 Kings 24:8.) But what a rude shock when the devil learned that God was not limited to one line. David had another son named Nathan, and it was through this line that Mary, the mother of Jesus, came.