

Background & Purpose

Historically, the Jewish people placed great importance upon genealogy. One's tribe determined the land in which they lived, the blessing they inherited, sometimes even their social status in life. The Jews, therefore, kept meticulous records of their lineage. (See Philippians 3:4-5)

I have read that there are more than 300 different prophecies about the coming Messiah fulfilled by Jesus in His life, death, and resurrection. Some prophecies are very specific about His lineage and pedigree. We will see some of these prophecies and find their fulfillment in this lesson. Interestingly, after the temple was destroyed in 70 AD and many Jews were killed and scattered across the world, no Jew has been able to trace their ancestry back to their tribes and forefathers with any reliability. Jesus, therefore, was the last one who could reliably fulfill His claim to be the Messiah.

Ultimately, the purpose of this genealogy is to establish the role of a descendent of Abraham and David, and thereby the legitimate heir to the throne of David. Most, if not all of the disciples surrounding Jesus during His ministries were likely ignorant of His lineage and even of His virgin birth (John 7:37-53). This was no obstacle to God, however, who was able to convince them of His true identity (Matthew 16:17). We should never let our ignorance be an obstacle for our faith in God.

Organization

There are 41 names included in this list, broken into rough groupings of 14: 14 from Abraham to David; 14 from David's son Solomon to Jeconiah; and 14 from Jeconiah to Jesus. Jeconiah may be counted twice because he lived on both sides of the dividing line. He was the last independent King of Judah before they were deported to Babylon. He was personally deported to Babylon and lived there for the rest of his life, raising a family. Jeconiah's uncle, Zedekiah was appointed King in his stead by Nebuchadnezzar after he conquered Jerusalem. However, Zedekiah's children were murdered by Nebuchadnezzar and therefore the lineage must go through Jeconiah. The use of 14 may be a mnemonic device or may be significant because it is twice the number seven, often considered the number of perfection.

A Lineage of Grace

The Lord gives us some hints that He is trying to do more than trace a lineage in this genealogy, but also to show us a picture of grace. Grace, by definition, is undeserved kindness or unmerited favor; it is to receive what you do not deserve. This lineage traces the names of the men who were in the lineage of Joseph, the step-father of Jesus. There are only references to four women in this list, yet, they were remarkable women. We know the names of the mothers of many of these men, but the names the Lord chose to highlight teach us a valuable lesson about His grace. He is a King of grace. Just like many of the men, they were included in Jesus' family tree because their faith in Him, not their deeds (Heb. 11:16).

Abraham to David

Abraham (*Father of Nations*) – Gen. 12:1-3

The Gospel of Matthew

GENEALOGY (1:1 - 1:17)

Isaac (*Laughter*) – Gen. 21:9-12

Jacob (*Underminer*)/Israel (*Who Prevails with God*) – Gen. 25:29-34

Judas/Judah (*The Praise of the Lord*) – Gen. 49:9-10

Why did Judah, the 4th born, receive the blessing? – His older brothers lost the birthright because of treachery: Reuben slept with his father's concubine; Simeon and Levi invaded Shechem.

Phares/Perez (*Divided*) – born of Thamar/Tamar - Gen. 38:27-30

Esrom/Hezron (*The Dart of Joy*)

Aram/Ram (*Magnificence*)

Aminadab (*Kindred of the Prince*) – Num. 10:14 – The prince of the tribe of Judah during Exodus

Naason/Nahshon (*Foreteller*)

Salmon (*Peaceable*)

Booz/Boaz (*In Strength*) – born of Rachab/Rahab

Obed (*Servant/Workman*)

Jesse (*Gift*) – born of Ruth

David (*Well Beloved*) – 2 Sam. 7:12-16 – A godly leader except for the incident with Bathsheba.

David to Jeconiah

Solomon (*Peaceful*) – born of Bathsheba – The height of Israel's prosperity, but his sin began division.

Roboam/Rehoboam (*He who sets the people free*) – He led the people away from the Lord

Abia/Abijah (*The Lord is my Father*) – Began a religious revival in Judah, but turned away from the Lord

Asa (*Physician*) – A godly king in general, but relied upon king of Aram

Josaphat/Jehoshaphat (*The Lord is Judge*) – A godly king, but aligned himself by marriage with Ahab

Joram (*Elevated*) – 2 Chron. 21:4-7 - A very evil king yet God retained His promise

*** MISSING: AHAZIAH, JOASH, AND AMAZIAH ***

The Hebrews often used telescoping to condense genealogies

Ozias/Uzziah (*Strength of the Lord*) – A wicked king who began by serving God but grew proud

Joatham/Jotham (*Perfection of the Lord*) – A fairly good and godly king

Achaz/Ahaz (*One that takes or possesses*) – A wicked king that boldly led Israel into idolatry.

Ezekias/Hezekiah (*Strength of the Lord*) – A godly king that led Israel in a spiritual revival

Manasses/Manasseh (*Forgetfulness*) – A wicked king who reinstituted idolatry but eventually had a change of heart and repented to a degree.

Amon (*Faithful/True*) – A wicked king who would not turn and repent to God

Josias/Josiah (*Fire of the Lord*) – A godly king whose righteousness prolonged the days of Judah

*** MISSING: JOHAIKIM ***

– An evil king who led Judah into bondage by the Babylonians

Jechonias/Jeconiah (*Stability of the Lord*) – Jer. 22:24-30 – A curse for his disobedience

Jeconiah to Jesus

Salathiel (*Lent of God*)

Zorobabel/Zerubbabel (*Stranger at Babylon*) – Hag. 1:12-14; 2:20-23 – The curse is reversed

The Gospel of Matthew

GENEALOGY (1:1 - 1:17)

** THE FOLLOWING NAMES THROUGH JOSEPH LIVED DURING THE 400 SILENT YEARS
BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS. NOTHING IS KNOWN OF THEM **

Abiud (*Father of Praise*)

Eliakim (*Resurrection of God*)

Azor (*A Helper*)

Sadoc (*Just, Righteous*)

Achim (*Preparing*)

Eliud (*God is my Praise*)

Eleazar (*Help of God*)

Matthan (*Gifts*)

Jacob (*Underminer*)

Joseph (*Increase*)

Jesus (*Jehovah is my Savior*) who is called Christ

Meaning of Christ or Messiah

The name Christ is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word, "Messiah", which means **anointed**.

It means that He was set apart for His great work as the mediator between God and man. This title was introduced in the Old Testament (see Isaiah 61:1, and Daniel 9:24-26) and assigned to Jesus in the New Testament (Acts 2:36).