Two Family Trees — and One King

Disciple copy · Men's Jail Ministry · Pleasant Springs Church

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

The full study online: https://ps-church.com/deep-research/two-genealogies-of-jesus

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One of the big arguments against the Bible

"The Bible can't be true. Matthew and Luke give Jesus two different family trees. They even name different grandfathers — Jacob in one, Heli in the other. So the Bible contradicts itself."

Here is the solution.

➤ The whole lesson in one sentence: Jesus is King by _____ through Joseph and King by _____ through Mary — and the _____ _____ makes both true.

Words to know

- **Genealogy** — a family tree written as a list of names.
- **Curse** — God's sentence of judgment on someone.
- **Adopt** — to take a child as your own, with your name and your rights.
- **Heir** — the one who gets what a father leaves behind.

The problem, part 1 — two trees, two grandfathers

> **Matthew 1:16 (ESV)** — "and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ."
>
> **Luke 3:23 (ESV)** — "being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,"

In Matthew, Joseph's father is _____. In Luke, Joseph is the son of _____.

The two lists split at King David. Matthew goes through David's son _____. Luke goes through David's son _____.

The problem, part 2 — a curse on the king's line

> **Jeremiah 22:30 (ESV)** — "Thus says the LORD: 'Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days, for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah.'"
>
> **Matthew 1:12 (ESV)** — "Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,"

None of Jechoniah's _____ would ever sit on David's throne. And Jechoniah is in _____'s line.

So the argument says: if Jesus is Joseph's son, he is under the curse — and he can never be king.

The solution, part 1 — Matthew follows Joseph: the LEGAL line

Matthew's list is the line of the kings — the king's _____. Whose name is on it decides who has the right.

Matthew does not say "Joseph the father of Jesus." He says Joseph was "the _____ of Mary."

> **Matthew 1:20–21 (ESV)** — "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."
>
> **Matthew 1:25 (ESV)** — "And he called his name Jesus."

When Joseph _____ the boy, he was saying, "He's mine." That made Jesus Joseph's legal son — and his legal _____.

Joseph had every reason to walk away. He stepped _____ instead.

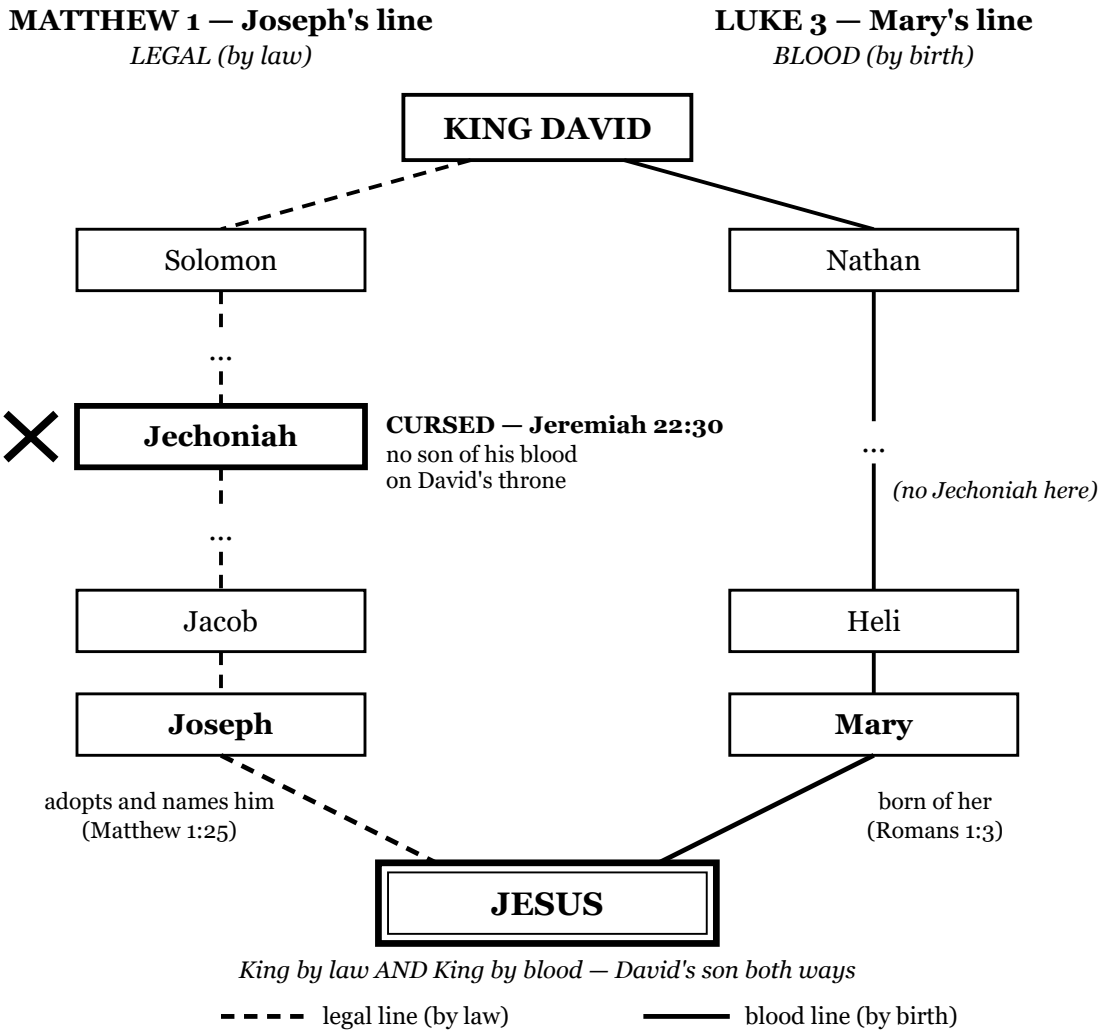
The solution, part 2 — Luke follows Mary: the BLOOD line

Luke says Jesus was the son of Joseph "(as was _____)." People only *thought* Joseph was his father.

> **Luke 3:31 (ESV)** — "the son of Nathan, the son of David,"
>
> **Romans 1:3 (ESV)** — "concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh"

"According to the flesh" means by _____ — through his mother.

The key — the virgin birth



Jesus is not Joseph's _____. So Jechoniah's curse _____ reach him.

But Joseph _____ him and named him. So Jesus gets Joseph's _____ right to the throne.

And Jesus is Mary's blood — David's own family, through _____, with no curse.

The virgin birth is not a strange extra. It is the _____ that unlocks the whole thing.

The daughters' law — why Luke calls Joseph "son of Heli"

A man named Zelophehad died with no sons — only daughters. God gave a rule:

> **Numbers 27:8 (ESV)** — "If a man dies and has no son, then you shall transfer his inheritance to his daughter."
>
> **Numbers 36:6 (ESV)** — "only they shall marry within the clan of the tribe of their father."

The common answer: Heli was Mary's father and had no sons. Joseph, also of David's family (Luke 1:27), married inside the family. Then the husband was counted as a _____ in his wife's father's family.

> **Ezra 2:61 (ESV)** — "the sons of Barzillai (who had taken a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name)."

Be honest — what we know, and what Christians still debate

What we know for sure	What Christians still debate
There are **two lists.**	Is Luke's list really **Mary's**?
Matthew's list is **Joseph's.**	Did Mary have **no brothers**?
The **curse** on Jechoniah is real.	Did God later **soften** the curse? (Haggai 2:23 calls his grandson Zerubbabel God's "signet ring.")
Jesus was **born of a virgin.**	

Even if one answer is debated, there are good answers. **A contradiction has to be _____ — not just puzzling.** Two lists that *can* both be true are a puzzle, not a contradiction.

What it means for you

> **Galatians 4:4–5 (ESV)** — "God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."

Joseph gave Jesus his name. God gives me his _____ — I am adopted as a _____.

Say it in one sentence

"Jesus is King by law through Joseph and King by blood through Mary — and the virgin birth makes both true."

Now say it in your own words:

Questions to think about

1. Have you heard someone say the Bible "contradicts itself"? What would you tell him now?
2. Why does it matter that Matthew calls Joseph "the husband of Mary" and not "the father of Jesus"?
3. Joseph never says one word in the Bible. What does his story tell you about what a real man is?
4. What changes for you if God has adopted you and put his name on you?

Closing prayer

Father, thank you that your Word holds up when we press on it. Thank you for keeping your promise to David for a thousand years, and for solving a problem long before we ever saw it.

Thank you for Joseph — a man who stepped up, who gave a child his name and a place to stand. Make us men like that. Where we have walked away, forgive us. Where nobody stepped up for us, be our Father.

Thank you that Jesus is King by law and King by blood. Thank you that you have adopted us as sons, and put your name on us. Help us to trust your Word, and to follow your Son.

In the name of Jesus, **Amen.**

Take it further — the full study online

https://ps-church.com/deep-research/two-genealogies-of-jesus — both family trees name by name, the curse, the daughters' law, and the answers Christians have given since the early church. More lessons: **ps-church.com/discipleship**.

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