

“Conflicting Genealogies of Christ?”

How do you reconcile the difference in Christ’s genealogy given in Matthew and Luke?

Bible.org answers your question here: bible.org/question/why-do-matthew-and-lukes-genealogies-contradict-one-another:

“Matthew and Luke actually give two different genealogies. Matthew give the genealogy of Jesus through Joseph, the legal, though not the physical father of Jesus. Luke, on the other hand, gives the ancestry of Jesus through Mary from whom Jesus was descended physically as to his humanity. This is a beautiful fulfillment of prophecy and actually testifies to the accuracy of the Bible. Through Joseph, Jesus became the legal heir to the throne while at the same time bypassed the curse of Coniah as prophesied in Jeremiah 22:24-30. Both, of course, were in the line of David so that Jesus had a legal right to the throne as the adopted son of Joseph and was at the same time a physical descendent of David through Mary.

“The Ryrie Study Bible gives an excellent summary of the issues here:

Although Coniah had seven sons (perhaps adopted; cf. 1 Chron. 3:17), none occupied the throne. So, as far as a continuing dynasty was concerned, Coniah was to be considered “childless.” Although his line of descendants retained the legal throne rights, no physical descendant (no man of his descendants) would ever prosperously reign on the Davidic throne. The genealogy of Matthew traces the descent of Jesus through Solomon and Jeconiah (Heb., Coniah; Matt. 1:12); this

is the genealogy of Jesus' legal father, Joseph. Luke traces Jesus' physical descent back through Mary and Nathan to David, bypassing Jeconiah's line and showing accurately the fulfillment of this prophecy of Jeremiah. If Jesus had been born only in the line of Joseph (and thus of Jeconiah), He would not have been qualified to reign on the throne of David in the Millennium. See note on Matt. 1:11."

Blessings,

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries Webmistress

+ + + + + + + + + +

I have noticed that there is an error in your article concerning the genealogies of Christ. You say that the line goes through Mary in Luke, but this is not so, I have looked this up in the NIV, ESV and the Bible in my own language. Luke chapter 3:21-38 does not even mention Mary, it says Joseph. This still creates a conflict in the genealogy. Maybe I am reading this wrong. In the Matthew account it says: ". . .Mary, of whom is born the Christ. . ." one can argue for Mary in the Matthew account, but this feels like a stretch.

Glad you asked! It's not an error; this has been a point of discussion among Bible scholars for many years. Here's insight from the GotQuestions.org website, answering the question, "Why are Jesus' genealogies in Matthew and Luke so different?"

"[M]ost conservative Bible scholars assume Luke is recording Mary's genealogy and Matthew is recording Joseph's. Matthew is following the line of Joseph (Jesus' legal father), through David's son Solomon, while Luke is following the line of Mary (Jesus' blood relative), though David's son Nathan. There was no Greek word for "son-in-law," and Joseph would have been considered a son of Heli through marrying Heli's daughter Mary. Through either line, Jesus is a descendant of

David and therefore eligible to be the Messiah. Tracing a genealogy through the mother's side is unusual, but so was the virgin birth. Luke's explanation is that Jesus was the son of Joseph, "so it was thought" (Luke 3:23).

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

© 2008 Probe Ministries, updated Sept. 15, 2011