

Week 21, Lecture 60.¹ The Genealogy of Jesus.

Reason these genealogies are in "OT Lectures." Levine mentioned them this week; I wanted to take a look at them. Reminder to self: Read Levine's statement (below) before coming back to look at these.

Matthew 1:6-16	Luke 3:23-31 (reversed order)
<p>David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah,⁷ and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa,⁸ and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah,⁹ and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,¹⁰ and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah,¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.¹² ¶ And after the deportation to Babylon:</p>	<p>³¹ David Nathan Mattatha Menna Melea ³⁰ Eliakim Jonam Joseph Judas Simeon ²⁹ Levi Matthat Jorim Eliezer Jesus ²⁸ Er Elmadam Cosam Addi Melchi ²⁷ Neri</p>
<p>Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,¹³ and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor,¹⁴ and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud,¹⁵ and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and</p>	<p>Shealtiel Zerubbabel Rhesa Joanan ²⁶ Joda Josech Semein Mattathias Maath ²⁵ Naggai Esli Nahum Amos Mattathias ²⁴ Joseph Jannai Melchi Levi Matthat ²³ Heli Joseph Jesus</p>
<p>Matthan the father of Jacob,¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.</p>	

¹ Lectures are numbered consecutively. Although this is this week's first lecture, its number reflects its place in the **total** sequence.

Levine's Statement

After Zerubbabel there is no firm Davidic line that historians can trace down. At this point the Davidic heirs pass into legend. Although the New Testament attributes to Jesus descent from King David, the genealogies we have in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew do not even agree past the time of King David. So the Davidic line is, at least as far as we can tell, lost.²

Global Observations, Context

Matthew begins his genealogy in verse 2 of the first chapter of his Gospel.

Luke waits until **after** he has told the story of the annunciation, the birth of Jesus, the visit of the shepherds.

He even tells a story of the 12-year old Jesus in the Temple.

Then, before he begins the account of his ministry with the baptism by John, he inserts the genealogy.

Global Observations, Order of Names

Matthew (1:2-17) starts his genealogy with Abraham, and ends with Jesus.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah . . . (RSV)³

Luke (3:23-38) starts his genealogy with Jesus, and works all the way back to Adam.

Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, . . . the son of Seth the Son of Adam, the son of God

The chart is a comparison of the genealogies from David to Jesus, following Matthew's order.⁴

Global Observations, Number of Generations

Luke's genealogy has more names. There are two reasons for this.

One reason is that Luke traces Jesus all the way back to Adam.

The second reason is that even between David and Jesus, Luke has many more names than Matthew

Matthew counts 28 generations from David to Jesus

Luke counts 43 generations from David to Jesus. Fitzmyer (Gospel of Luke) argues that this number is more plausible

There are about 1000 years between David and Jesus.

28 generations would make each one ca. 35 years. 43 generations would make each one ca. 23 years

Who Follows David? (Recall that Levine said the genealogies do not agree even beyond David)

Matthew traces the descent of Jesus through David's son **Solomon**; Luke, through David's son **Nathan**.

One suggestion is that Luke wished to avoid Solomon, because of the "Bathsheba affair" (adultery, murder)

Thus, Levine's point is well taken.

Nathan. David's son Nathan is not as famous as Solomon. He is not even as famous as the prophet Nathan.

But he is mentioned in the OT genealogies.

And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron; and more sons and daughters were born to David. ¹⁴ And these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, **Nathan, Solomon**, (2Sam 5:13-14; see also 1 Chr 3:5; 14:4)

According to these three genealogies Nathan was the **older brother** of Solomon, probably by a different mother.

Shealtiel & Zerubbabel. The genealogies **both** mention **Shealtiel & Zerubbabel** -- after the Babylonian Exile.

None of the names after these appear in the OT. **Fitzmyer notes:**

In the postexilic part of the genealogy, if Jesus' nine ancestors in the Matthean list (from Abiud to Jacob, . . .) are otherwise unknown, so too are the eighteen in the corresponding part of the Lucan list (. . . Rhesa to Heli), where not one of them agrees with any of the nine in the Matthean genealogy.

² Amy-Jill Levine, "Restoration and Theocracy," Lecture 21 of *The Old Testament* (The Teaching Company, 2001) Lecture Transcript and Course Guidebook, p. 147. ISBN 1-56585-615-5.

³ All scripture references are from the RSV, unless otherwise specified.

⁴ The chart is based on: Aland's *Synopsis of the Four Gospels: English Edition* (United Bible Societies, 1982) # 6.

From these considerations it is obvious that the NT has preserved for us two strikingly different genealogies of Jesus, **which resist all harmonization**. Which one of them stands the chance of being more historical or factual? This is hard to say, even if one thinks that both Matthew and Luke have depended on sources for the material so incorporated.⁵

Because of these many difficulties that arise from the comparison of the Matthean and Lucan genealogies, most commentators realize today that we have in them **neither official public records nor treasured family lists**. Both of the genealogies have in the long run been fashioned by the evangelists, who most likely did depend on different existing Davidic ancestry lists.⁶ [Emphasis added]

Christological Observations, Luke

Because Luke is writing primarily for Gentiles, he wants to put Jesus into the context of all of humanity. Notice also that there is a sense in which Adam can be called "the son of God." Adam has no human father! Paul makes much of the contrast between Christ and Adam

Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam [i.e., Christ] became a life-giving spirit. (1Cor 15:45)

Fitzmyer, however, does not think **Luke** is relying on Paul, but **is presenting his own theology**.

Implicit in the genealogy, however, is the divine origin of the course of history that is sketched by the line of generations. It gives an aspect to the salvation-history operative in the Lucan writings. Now, as the Period of Jesus is about to be begun, it is seen as related to the course of history stemming not only from Israel but from humanity and ultimately from God himself. God's purpose in creating humanity in the beginning [the Greek word is *archē*] is seen to reach a new stage in the *archē* [beginning] of the Period of Jesus itself.⁷

Christological Observations, Matthew. Writes in a Jewish Context.

14-14-14 [Luke has no such scheme]

The 14's are one of several ways that Matthew stresses that Jesus is "Son of David"

David, spelled without vowels would be DVD, 717 , D 7 = 4 V 1 = 6 , So DVD = 4+6+4 = 14

Levine's statement about historical records. Most critical scholars would agree with this assessment.

Two of the greatest Catholic scholars of the 20th century agree with it.

Raymond E. Brown discusses the problem at length in his 750+ page tome *The Birth of the Messiah*.

Joseph A. Fitzmyer treats the matter in his 2-volume commentary on *The Gospel of Luke* in the Anchor Bible Series.

Both of these scholars served on the Pontifical Biblical Commission. They were not "loose cannons."

Levine's statement about the lack of agreement between Matthew and Luke

Again, Levine's statement is in agreement with most critical Christian scholarship.

Both Brown & Fitzmyer (& many others) agree that attempts to "harmonize" these genealogies have been unsuccessful.

Christology. The primary goal of the Evangelists is not history, but Christology.

Attempts to "harmonize" -- i.e., to claim that both genealogies are historically accurate -- are misguided.

⁵ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, vol. 28, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 496.

⁶ Ibid. 497-498.

⁷ Fitzmyer, *Luke I-IX*, 498.

Week 21, Lecture 61. Loose Ends From Last Week: The Search for Truth

Introduction. Last week I gave a couple of examples of contemporary events in the "style" of Salvation History
The Berlin Wall / Our Recent Elections

The ancients were unabashed about ascribing causality to the gods / the God of Israel.

Important Note

Their **experience of life** of ancient peoples was not fundamentally different from our experience, but they spoke often about their experience in ways different from our habitual customs.

For us, "salvation history" is something that we hear only "in Church;"

we do not read it in newspapers, or hear it on the evening news.

If we forget this, we will imagine that God "spoke" more -- or more clearly -- in ancient times than God "speaks" today.

If we read "God said to Moses," OR "The LORD said to Isaiah"

and think that is fundamentally different from the experience of contemporary religious leaders we will fail to understand how **closely** we are connected to the biblical tradition.

Editorial Opinion (Even "inspired" editorial opinion) Last week I ended by pointing out:

Not everyone agrees in the modern world -- with my examples of the Berlin Wall & our Recent Election

Not everyone agreed in the ancient world -- e.g., with the policy of Ezra

We have seen how Ezra & the author of Ruth disagree (more on this below)

We are going to see how Job questions the theology of the Deuteronomistic Historian

It is important to be aware of when we are reading editorial opinion, and when we are reading facts.

Someone might say, "this is inspired, so who cares?" I think the difference is important.

Even inspired authors sometimes disagree.

Ezra & Ruth. Ezra felt that after the Exile, Israel needed to "circle the wagons."

They were going to be absorbed by paganism if they did not take drastic steps to preserve their identity.

He was absolutely certain that God's will was that Jews should:

1) divorce their foreign wives 2) send them, along with their children, away

The book of Ruth, in 4 short chapters makes the point:

if this policy had been in place 500 years ago there would have been no King David.

The grandmother of King David had been a Moabite woman.

How Can We Know the Truth?

If inspired authors can disagree, how can we know the truth? How do we know who is right?

Sometimes the "truth" is **in the tension** between their points of view.

No single statement, even an inspired statement, even an infallible pronouncement, contains the whole truth.

Factions Today

This is an important point to remember **today** when factions in our Church disagree about hot-button issues.

What should the Church's policy be toward those who have divorced and remarried?

-- toward same-sex couples living together?

-- toward those who use forms of family planning that are not considered "natural"?

What should the Church's policy be on women deacons? priests? bishops?

Listening with Humility -- Karl Rahner

Usually we mean "those who think differently from the way we do" should listen with humility.

Some say theologians need to listen with humility to the pope and the bishops.

Others say that the pope and the bishops need to listen with humility to the theologians.

Rahner says that **everyone** needs to listen with humility -- Theologians to the hierarchy; hierarchy to the theologians, and **both** of them to the *sensus fidelium*, the *experience* of all the baptized.

Magisterium

Magister is the Latin word for "university professor." We still use it in M.A. (*Magister Artium*, Master of Arts)

Magisterium was first coined after universities developed. It meant "the job of being a university professor.

Later it was also applied to the teaching ministry of bishop.

For the last hundred years or so magisterium has been (untraditionally) identified almost solely with hierarchical teaching.

Traditionally Catholicism has recognized **Two Magisteria**.

Avery Dulles *A Church to Believe In*. (Later made a **Cardinal** -- not a "loose cannon."

The magisterium of the hierarchy; the magisterium of theologians.

Sometimes in the secular press -- and even in the Catholic press --

we hear of conflict between theologians & the magisterium. That's an oxymoron!

There can be no conflict between theologians and the magisterium. They are **part** of the magisterium!

That would be like saying there was conflict between the U.S. Senate and the "Government."

There **can** be **tensions within** the magisterium.

Once we realize that there are tensions even between inspired authors of the Bible, are we surprised?

The Primary Difference (Avery Dulles)

The primary difference is **not** that one group has the Holy Spirit, and the other does not! Rather:

The teaching of the theological magisterium deserve only as much respect as their arguments warrant.

The teaching of the hierarchical magisterium deserve respect even when the argumentation is weak.

I hasten to add: "Respect" does not mean agreement!

Final Points. This attitude of humble listening applies not only to discussions / debates **within** our Church.

It also applies to **Ecumenical Dialogue** with our Protestant brothers and sisters.

We approach such conversations with the prior understanding that we can learn from them, and they from us.

It also applies to **Interreligious Dialogue** with Jews, with Moslems, and with other religions who are not monotheistic.

We are not "writing," as it were on a "blank slate." The **Spirit of God** has been there before us!

We can learn from all of them. I speak from personal experience.

For several years I served with Amy-Jill on the CBA Task Force: Scriptural Issues Relating to Catholicism & Judaism

Every Thursday I engage in inter-religious dialogue with Rabbi Kline.

Dialogue with "the World"

We can learn from "the world."

About a century ago, democracy and freedom of the press were condemned by our Church. Now we know better.

The wars of religion were not ended because Catholic and Protestants decided to make peace.

They were ended because modern states began to insist on "Separation of Church and State."

The record of the Christian Churches in the abolition of slavery is "mixed" to say the least!

February 8, Feast of **St. Josephine Bakhita**, born in 1869 in Sudan.

kidnapped and sold into slavery at age 7.

Eventually bought by the Italian consul and taken to Italy.

The slave trade was alive and well in the late 1800's, and Christians were buying!

Eventually she became Catholic, and then a nun.

Conclusion

Do we have honest disagreements with "the world." Yes! Important disagreements. Yes indeed!

But even when we dialogue with atheists and agnostics, we are not dealing with "blank slates."

This Spirit of God has been there before us!