

# Luke's Genealogy of Jesus

## Luke 3:23-38

- A. The Royal Line of Christ (Lk. 3:24-31)
- B. The Religious Line of Christ (Lk. 3:32-34a).
- C. The Racial Line of Christ (3:34b-38).

# Chart of Gospel Genealogies

GOSPEL	GENEALOGY	CHRIST AS:
Matthew	(back only to Abraham)	Jew
Mark	(no genealogy – servants do not need one)	Servant
Luke	Back to Adam	Son of Man
John	(back to eternity – even, “the beginning”)	Messiah, Son of God

## A. The Royal Line of Christ (Lk. 3:24-31)

1. (vs. 23) Luke's genealogy in presenting Christ as the Son of Man goes all the way back to Adam and so the list contains "76 names including Jesus and Adam and excluding God. Contrary to Matthew's genealogy, Luke's genealogy begins with Jesus and works back to God. Matthew began with Abraham and worked forward to Jesus in three sets of 14 generations. Other differences exist between the two genealogies. Luke included 20 names prior to Abraham, and he stated that Adam was 'the son of God'" (BK).

1. (cont.) The text says, “When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age. TC says, “Luke probably used the round number ‘30’ to describe Jesus’ age when He launched His ministry because many significant Old Testament characters began their service of God when they were 30 (cf. Gen. 41:46 [Joseph]; 2 Sam. 5:4 [David as king]; Ezek. 1:1 [Possibly Ezekiel’s own age and the age at which he would have entered the priesthood had he remained in Jerusalem - Ryrie]). This included Israel’s priests (Num. 4).” So, like many in Israel,

1. (cont.) Jesus began His ministry at about age 30  
“being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli.” “Supposed” translates a form of the Greek *nomizō* (νομίζω) meaning, “to form an idea about something but with some suggestion of tentativeness or refraining from a definitive statement, *think, believe, hold, consider,*” so perhaps the BDAG translation, “He was, as commonly held, the son of Joseph,” apparently the consensus of public opinion. But Luke chose his words with extreme care and Phillips says, “He was nothing of the kind. He was

1. (cont.) the long-awaited ‘seed of the woman’ (Gen. 3:14–15: the first prophecy of Scripture). Joseph, the husband of Mary, seems to have had his adoption of Jesus formally registered in the temple archives. When Joseph married Mary, the regal line through Solomon and the natural line through Nathan were united.” So, Ryrie says, “Luke affirms the Virgin Birth by the phrase *being, as was supposed. son of Eli*. Joseph was Jacob’s son by birth (Matt. 1:16) and Eli’s son by marriage. This is apparently the genealogy of Jesus through His mother, Mary.”

1. (cont.) Matthew takes the same extraordinary care as Luke did to protect the virginity of Mary in Mt. 1:16.
2. The royal line (3:24–31) “embraces the secret years (3:24–27a) and the silent years (3:27b–31).”  
“Throughout the history of the kings of Judah, we see Satan seeking to corrupt and destroy the royal seed. He seduced Solomon into hundreds of pagan marriages and turned him into an idolatrous and foolish old man. His oppressions eventually brought about a massive revolt by the ten northern tribes against the Davidic throne. Jehoshaphat, a good king,

2. (cont.) played the fool by marrying his son to the evil Athaliah, the infamous daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. Athaliah almost succeeded in wiping out the royal line of David. Manasseh's long and evil reign plunged Judah into excesses of wickedness from which it never recovered. Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:6; also called Jeconiah and Coniah) so infuriated God that Jeremiah was told to pronounce a curse on him to the effect that no descendant of his should ever sit on the throne of David (1 Chron. 3:16; Jer. 22:24–28). It was all in vain. While Satan was so zealously seeking



2. (cont.) the overthrow of the royal line to Christ, via Solomon, all the time God had another line (almost totally ignored) via Nathan, winding its way down the bypaths of history to Mary! And Satan was completely foiled.”

## B. The Religious Line of Christ (Lk. 3:32-34a).

1. Having completed the royal line, Luke as historian goes “back and back from David to Abraham. We are back now among people we know, important people in the Hebrew theocracy—Abraham, Jesse, Boaz (who married Ruth the Moabitess), Salmon (who married Rahab the harlot)—and on back to Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham.”
2. More history follows: “Back we go along the line of sacred history. There were names there when the big blusterer Saul was king, when Samuel spoke, and

2. (cont.) when the judges ruled. The sacred secret line was always there, preserved by God. Now Joshua was conquering Canaan. Now Moses was there in Sinai. Back and back we go, the Spirit of God recording all of the necessary names. Now, as we continue to climb the ladder of history a rung at a time, we see Abraham in pagan Ur receiving his vision of a better land on high. The world's noisy events fill the world with din. The Holy Spirit ignores them. Only one family matters. The Spirit of God keeps our attention riveted on that family—father and

2. (cont.) son—until the entire roll call is complete.”

## C. The Racial Line of Christ (3:34b-38).

1. “Finally, there is the racial line (3:34b–38). The Holy Spirit takes us to a time before the Flood, from Abraham back to Noah, and then back to a time before the Fall. The Holy Spirit does not pause. The bell keeps tolling: Methuselah, Enoch, Abel, Cain, Adam—and God calls a halt. Adam! He calls him ‘the son of God’ (3:38). So the list, for all of its backward trend, takes us from one whom we know as ‘the son of God’ to One whom we know as God, the Son.”

2. “God takes us to the First Adam and then to the Second Adam—from the first man to the second Man—and He employs seventy-five names in doing so. (Note Ryrie says, “76 names including Jesus and Adam and excluding God.”) A unique way indeed to record the coming and going of sixty centuries of time! But, then, God always has had a tender love for people, especially His own, and He likes to write their names into His Book.”