

Genealogy of Jesus
Luke 3:23-38

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 Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel,[a]the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God. (English Standard Version – ESV)

Background:

- Greco-Roman biographers included lists of ancestors, especially illustrious ancestors, whenever possible. Like Greco-Roman genealogies, but unlike the one in Matthew and the Old Testament, Luke starts with the most recent names and works backward, possibly to end with “Son of God.”
- Scholars have proposed various explanations for the differences between the genealogies of Matthew and Luke, of which the following are most prominent: (1) Matthew records Joseph’s genealogy, while Luke records Mary’s genealogy; (2) Matthew spiritualizes the genealogy rather than following it literally; (3) both lines of descent cross, but are different, because one includes several adoptive lines through levirate marriages (Deuteronomy 25:5-10).
- In Greek society, men often entered public service at age 30. Levites’ service in the temple also began at 30. Like a good Greek historian, Luke says “about thirty” rather than giving an estimate as a definite number, as was more common in traditional Jewish historiography.

Questions:

- + What is significant about Luke saying that Jesus was “the son (as was supposed) of Joseph? If Jesus was not related to Joseph by natural birth, why is he included in this genealogy?
- + Of the names in this genealogy, which three do you regard as most important, and why?
- + If you were writing your natural genealogy, who would you be sure to include, and why? If you were writing your spiritual genealogy, who would you be sure to include, and why?