

On the Corner Fringe: Genealogy Dispute January 23, 2020

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://cornerfringe.com/media/z3qy7v9/otcf-genealogy-dispute>

*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document be printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

Reconciling the Two Genealogies of Christ

This transcript of a message delivered by **Pastor Daniel Joseph** of **Corner Fringe Ministries** examines the **perceived contradictions** between the ancestral records of Jesus found in the **Gospels of Matthew and Luke**. Daniel argues that these differences are frequently used by **anti-missionaries** to challenge the reliability of the New Testament. While some scholars suggest the accounts represent distinct **royal versus physical lineages** or Mary's versus Joseph's ancestry, Daniel proposes a different solution based on **Torah law**. He asserts that the discrepancy is resolved through the practice of **levirate marriage**, a Jewish tradition where a man fathers a child for his deceased brother's line. By citing historical accounts from **Eusebius and Julius Africanus**, he illustrates how one man could legally belong to two different family trees. Ultimately, he concludes that the **early church** understood these complexities and saw no conflict in the two unique genealogical paths.



[Daniel Joseph]

Welcome everyone. I'm Daniel Joseph, and you're "*On the Corner Fringe*."

Today I want to talk about genealogy, specifically the genealogy as listed in the Gospel of Matthew versus the genealogy listed in the Gospel of Luke. Now, you look at these two genealogies, and they couldn't be more different. Matthew traces his genealogy all the way back to Abraham, but he does so in a

specific way through the line of Solomon, the son of David. You look at Luke's genealogy; he traces his genealogy all the way back to Adam, way beyond Abraham. It goes back to Adam. But how he gets there is completely and entirely different than how Matthew gets to Abraham. Luke gets there through Nathan, the son of David. And so, you put these two genealogies side by side, and there's a stark contrast. What do we do with this apparent contradiction?

Because I'm going to tell you, this is what our anti-missionary friends are utilizing. It's things like this that they'll bring to the table to show you that, "Hey, the New Testament can't be trusted. We can't trust this. I mean, look at this; you have Matthew and Luke, and they can't even agree on genealogy. And when I look at Matthew's account, men are missing from the genealogy. Do you think we can really trust this? We're not going to listen to this." And for those of you who are not familiar with anti-missionaries, this is a group that is dedicated to destroying the gospel. In their viewpoint, they're defending their people. They're protecting their people from heresy. They do not want any Jews falling into what they believe to be a heretical concept of accepting the Messiah, Yeshua, Jesus, as King of the Jews, as the anointed, the *Mashiach ben David*. So, this is just one of the things that they will utilize.

So, what do we do with this when we're presented with something like this? You know, there have been pastors, and there have been some Christian scholars that have come out with some interesting ideas of how to reconcile this discrepancy. Some say, "Well, all Matthew's trying to do is just simply show that Christ is from royal bloodlines." And so, he just merely takes it through this royal genealogy versus, well, Luke's account, which is the literal genealogy. It's the fleshly genealogy, but the Matthean account (referring to the Gospel of Matthew) is the royal genealogy. It's an interesting thought. I don't believe it answers or reconciles the discrepancy whatsoever. I don't believe it's the right answer.

You have others who will come on the scene and say, Well, you know, the Matthean account is Joseph's physical genealogy, which is Joseph, the accredited father of Jesus, Yeshua. Whereas Mary, the mother of Yeshua, her genealogy is recorded in the Gospel of Luke. And there have even been some who would come on, and they try to take you to the Greek and show you, well, there's a specific term used known as "*nomizo*," and it simply means, according to custom, or as is supposed, or as is thought of. This is the term that is found there.

The only problem with that is it's not a reference to Joseph being a descendant of Heli, but rather Jesus. The *nomizo* is used in the context of Jesus being the son of Joseph. Well, clearly Joseph wasn't His physical father. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. And so, the term is only used... It isn't used between Joseph and Heli; it's used between Joseph and Yeshua. So that idea really falls short, trying to attempt that "Hey, this is Mary's genealogy."

So again, I posed the question: what do we do with this contradiction? How do we reconcile the difference? There's a very simple answer, and the answer is found in the Torah in Deuteronomy 25. It is *levirate* marriage. This concept of *levirate* marriage is when there is a couple, and the husband dies; a brother is to step in and raise offspring for his brother so that offspring could be accredited to the deceased husband. It's an amazing thing so that the names of Israel will not be blotted out. So, this law is amazing, but it also works in the sense that even if the brother had offspring and died early on, the brother could come in and marry the mother, and obviously he would father that child. And this is an aspect, if you will, even liberally speaking, of *levirate* marriage as well as caring for this offspring.

We have examples of this in Scripture, and I just think of First Chronicles 3 and Ezra 3, where you have Zerubbabel. In First Chronicles 3, he's considered ... I mean, Zerubbabel is the physical descendant of Pedaiah. Well, you read Ezra; now he's the son of Shealtiel. How is that possible? Well, because Shealtiel was obviously married to Pedaiah's wife after Pedaiah's death. Alright? And so here would be a situation where even Shealtiel would be considered the father of Zerubbabel, even though his actual father was Pedaiah. I mean, there's scriptural precedent for this concept of *levirate* marriage, which ironically enough is a very Jewish concept. You know, when we look at this objection from our anti-missionary friends, this is a Jewish concept. How we understand this discrepancy is through the Torah.

And so, I want to take you back really quick to early Christianity. I want to show you this is how they understood it. They understood that *levirate* marriage reconciled this issue. I'm going to take you back to Eusebius and listen to what he says: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*—MATTHEW and Luke in their gospels have given us the genealogy of Christ differently, and many suppose that they are at variance with one another. Since as a consequence every believer, in ignorance of the truth, has been zealous to invent some explanation which shall harmonize the two passages. We're still seeing that today, right? Permit us to subjoin the account of the matter which has come down to us, and which is given by Africanus... Now if you're not familiar with Africanus, he even proceeds with that of Eusebius. We're talking about the second and early into the third century, Julius Africanus, the Christian historian.

He's going to go on to reference him, and this is what we read: Matthan and Melchi having married in succession the same woman ... By Estha, who is the wife, then Matthan, a descendant of Solomon, and this is important: he's the descendant of Solomon, first begat Jacob.

Moving on, And when Matthan was dead, Melchi, who traced his descent back to Nathan, being of the same tribe but of another family, married her, as before said, and begat a son [H]Eli. Thus we shall find the two, Jacob and [H]Eli, although belonging to different families, yet brethren by the same mother. Of these the one, Jacob, when his brother [H]Eli had died childless, took the latter's wife and begat by her a son Joseph, his own son by nature and in accordance with reason. Wherefore also it is written: 'Jacob begat Joseph.' But according to law he was the son of [H]Eli, for Jacob, being the brother of the latter, raised up seed to him.

Therefore, you have it. I mean, we can go back to early Christianity and how they understood how to reconcile these two completely different genealogies, and the answer is simple: *levirate* marriage. This is the answer. And you know, I think of this as an objection, especially by our, you know, anti-missionary friends that say, "Whoa, timeout, this can't be trusted." Here's the thing: there should be a red flag right off the bat.

The fact that we as believers, and the first believers, were Messianic Jews and then Gentile Christians would join in and be grafted into Israel. There's something worthy of note. We have to understand that we can clearly read. We can see there's a massive contradiction, right? But as the gospel is going out, we kept it, and we have proof of this through manuscripts, okay? So, the early manuscripts that we have, and we could think of, you know, P 75 and P 45, we have evidence that manuscripts of the Gospels were circulating. Eventually, they would be collected together and canonized or deemed as the inspired Word of God.

Now you would think that Christians, if they thought there was at all any variance or they would accuse Luke of being a Gnostic and veering off of the truth, they would have excluded just as they excluded all other Gnostic epistles, which were numerous, ones we could name. It would never be included in the Gospels, and yet it wasn't excluded as heretical, as off. See, my point is this: obviously the early church recognized and had no issue whatsoever with these two different genealogies, but rather they understood what was going on. The answer is *levirate* marriage.

Now, as I just went through this commentary, if you will, by Eusebius, talking about what had come down through Africanus, I want to show you an actual graph of this because that might've made your head explode maybe a little bit, not being able to follow it. I kind of plowed through that quickly, but I'm

going to simplify this so you can actually see this play out on a graph. It's much more tangible, I think. But this is what it looks like.

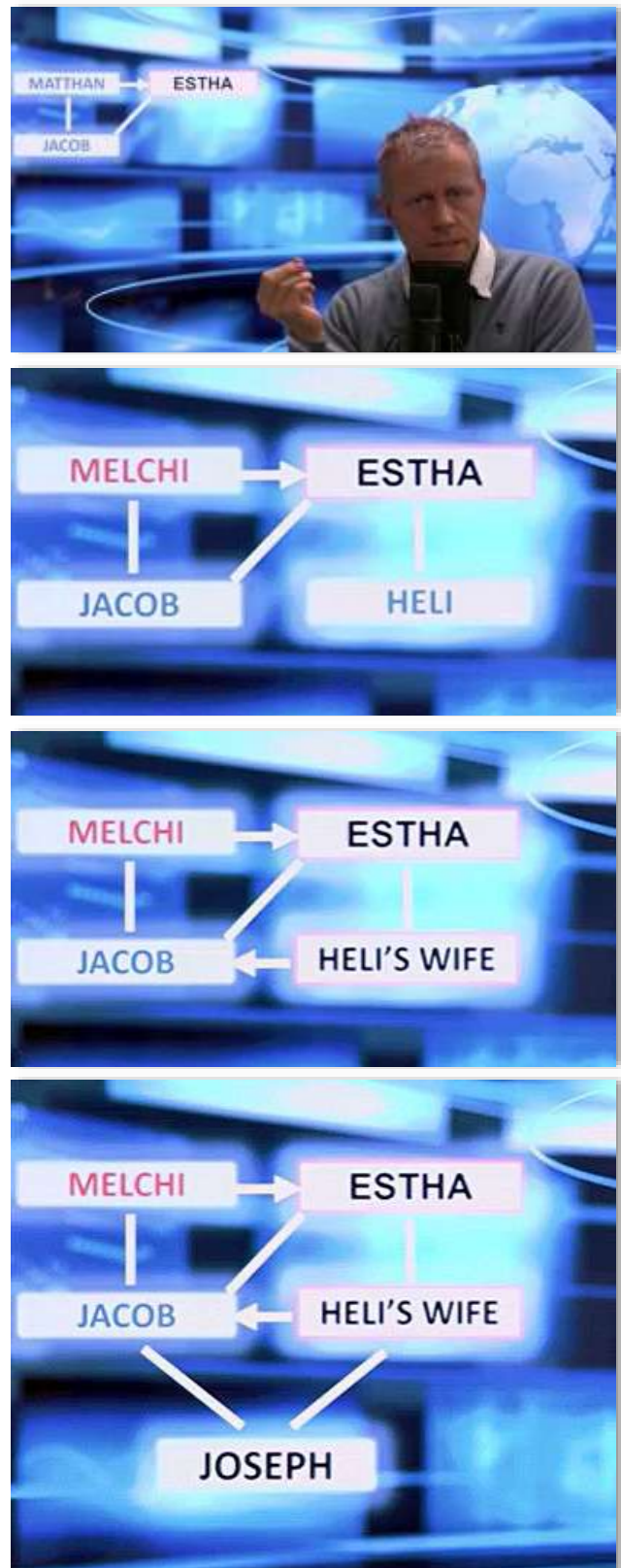
So, Matthan, okay, is of the genealogy of Solomon. He's a descendant of Solomon. He marries this woman who's called Estha, which we know nothing about. But here's this Estha who conceives and bears a son, Jacob, okay? Here's this right now, but over time, guess what happens? Matthan dies.

And who comes in? Melchi. He marries Matthan's wife. Well, Melchi is of the descendants of Nathan. Okay, so now, Melchi is fathering Jacob, who is a descendant of Matthan, who is a descendant of Solomon, married to Estha, and then over time, Estha and Melchi have a son; eventually, they have a descendant. The descendant would be Heli, all right?

But then what happens? Well, according to the account, Heli dies. And then we have Heli's wife getting married to Jacob. Now, if you didn't put this on a graph, this would make your head explode. I mean, this is hard to follow, right? So, Heli's wife marries Jacob, at which time they give birth to Joseph.

So, do you understand how this Joseph, you can literally trace his line legitimately either through Nathan, obviously going through Heli through Melchi, or you can trace it through Solomon? They're both correct, and this is what the early church understood.

Well, that's all I have today on this subject. If you have any further questions, which you may, you can go ahead and email us, and I appreciate you for taking the time to watch this. Bless you in the name of Yeshua.





One King, Two Lineages: Reconciling the Gospels

Resolving Apparent Genealogy Contradictions through Levirate Marriage.



Divergent Ancestral Paths

Matthew:
Solomon's
Royal Line



Luke:
Nathan's
Physical Line



The Critic's Argument

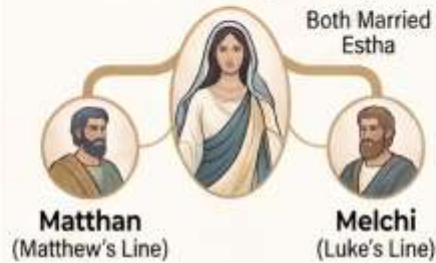
Skeptics use differences to claim the Gospels are contradictory and untrustworthy.



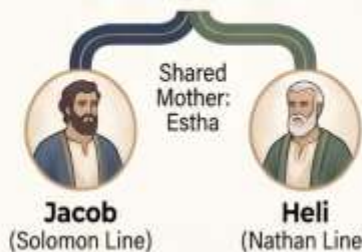
The Levirate Marriage Solution

Deuteronomy 25 requires a man to raise offspring for a deceased brother's name.

The Shared Matriarch (Estha)



Jacob and Heli: Half-Brothers



Joseph's Dual Ancestry



Joseph

Natural (By Birth)

Father: Jacob.
Davidic Branch:
Line of Solomon.
Gospel Record:
Matthew 1.

Legal (By Law)

Father: Heli.
Davidic Branch:
Line of Nathan.
Gospel Record:
Luke 3.

Joseph belongs to both the Royal and Physical lineages of David through the natural and legal implications of Levirate marriage.