

42. We have firmly established the answer of the first question from Micah 5:2. The Theologians were able to answer King Herod's desire to learn where Scripture indicated the place of Messiah's birth would occur by quoting Micah 5:2 in Matthew 2:4-6.
43. The second question resolves a very important detail in documenting the Davidic lineage of Jesus, Joseph, and Mary. We will appeal to research done by William Smith and J. M. Fuller in 1893. We will first note in part 1, Genealogy, followed by part 2, the Genealogy of Jesus Christ.
44. The excerpts will address the curiosity of some who wonder how those in the first century could document the Lord's bloodline back to David through the genealogies of Joseph and Mary.

GENEALOGY. The Celtic clans, the Saxon families using a common patronymic—these are among the many instances that may be cited to prove the strong family and genealogical instinct of the ancient world. Coming near to the Israelites, it will be enough to allude to the hereditary principle, and the vast genealogical records of the Egyptians, as regards their kings and priests, in order to show the attention paid by the Jews to genealogies is in entire accordance with the manners and tendencies of their contemporaries. In their case, however, it was heightened by several peculiar circumstances. The promise of the land of Canaan to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob successively, and the separation of the Israelites from the Gentile world; the expectation that Messiah would spring from the tribe of Judah; the exclusively hereditary priesthood of Aaron with its dignity and emoluments; the long succession of kings in the line of David; and the whole division and occupation of the land upon genealogical principles by the tribes, families, and houses of fathers, gave a deeper importance to the science of genealogy among the Jews than perhaps any other nation.

In Genesis 44 we have an exact genealogical census of the house of Israel at the time of Jacob's going down to Egypt. It is in the teeth of direct evidence from Scripture, as well as of probability, to suppose that the Jewish tribes contained absolutely none but as were descended from the twelve patriarchs.

However, birth was, and continued to be throughout their whole national course, the *foundation* of all the Jewish organization, and the reigns of the more active and able kings and rulers were marked by attention to genealogical operations. (p. 1142)

When David established the Temple-services on the footing which continued till the time of Christ, he divided the priests and Levites into courses and companies, each under the family chief. The singers, the porters, the trumpeters, the players on instruments, were all thus genealogically distributed. When Hezekiah re-opened the Temple services which had fallen into disuse, he reckoned the whole nation by genealogies. This appears from the fact of many of the genealogies in Chronicles terminating in Hezekiah's reign, from the expression "So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies" (1 Chronicles 9:1), immediately following the genealogies which do so terminate, and from the narrative in 2 Chronicles 31:16–19 proving that, as regards the priests and Levites, such a complete census was taken by Hezekiah. We can learn too incidentally from Proverbs 25 that Hezekiah had a staff of scribes, who would be equally useful in transcribing genealogical registers, as in copying out Proverbs.

When Zerubbabel brought back the Captivity from Babylon, one of his first cares seems to have been to take a census of those that returned, and to settle them according to their genealogies. The evidence of this is found in 1 Chronicles 9, and the duplicate passage Nehemiah 11; in 1 Chronicles 3:19; and yet more distinctly in Nehemiah 7:5 and 12. In like manner Nehemiah, as an essential part of that national restoration which he labored so zealously to promote, gathered together the nobles, and the rulers and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy" (Nehemiah 7:5, 12:26). The abstract of this census is preserved in Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7, and a portion of it in I Chronicles 3:21–24. That this system was continued after their times, so far at least as the priests and Levites were concerned, we learn from Nehemiah 12:22; and we have identical evidence of the continued care of the Jews still later to preserve their genealogies in such passages of the apocryphal books. Passing on to the time of the birth of Christ, we have a striking incidental proof of the continuance of the Jewish genealogical economy in the fact that when Augustus ordered the census of the empire to be taken, the Jews in the province of Syria immediately went each one to his own city, *i.e.* (as is clear from Joseph going to Bethlehem the city of David) to the city to which his tribe family, and father's house belonged. So that the return, if completed, doubtless exhibited the form of the old censuses taken by the kings of Israel and Judah.

It was the duty of the priests after every war to make new genealogical tables from the old ones, and to ascertain what women among the priestly families had been prisoners, as all such were deemed improper to be wives of priests. As a proof of care of the Jews in such matters he further mentions that in his day the list of successive high-priests preserved in the public records extended through a period of 2,000 years.

From all this it is abundantly manifest that the Jewish genealogical records continued to be kept till near the destruction of Jerusalem. Hence we are constrained to disbelieve the story told by Africánus¹ concerning the destruction of all the Jewish genealogies by Herod the Great, in order to conceal the ignobleness of his own origin. His statement is, that up to that time the Hebrew genealogies had been preserved entire, and the different families were traced up either to the patriarchs, or the first proselytes, or the γειώραι [geiōrai: sojourners] or mixed people. But that on Herod's causing these genealogies to be burnt, only a few of the more illustrious Jews who had private pedigrees of their own or who could supply the lost genealogies from memory, or from the Books of Chronicles, were able to retain any account of their own lineage—among whom he says were the Desposyni, or brethren of our Lord, from whom was said to be derived the scheme (given by Africánus) for reconciling the two genealogies of Christ. But there can be little doubt that the registers of the Jewish tribes and families perished at the destruction of Jerusalem, and not before. Some partial records may, however, have survived that event, as it is probable, and indeed seems to be implied in Josephus's statement, that at least the priestly families of the Dispersion had records of their own genealogy. We learn too from Benjamin of Tudela \tū-thā'-lä,\,² that in his day the princes of the Captivity professed to trace their descent to David, and he also names others, e.g. Calonymus [sic Kalonymus],³ “a descendant of the house of David, as proved by his pedigree.” (p. 1143)

It may be safely affirmed that, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jewish genealogical system came to an end. Essentially connected as it was with the tenure of the land on the one hand, and with the peculiar privileges of the houses of David and Levi on the other, it naturally failed when the hand was taken away from the Jewish race, and when the promise to David was fulfilled, and the priesthood of Aaron superseded, by the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God.

¹ “First Christian historian known to produce a universal chronology. Africánus' greatest work was *Chronographiai* (221), a five-volume treatise on sacred and profane history. Relying on the Bible as the basis of his calculations, he incorporated and synchronized Egyptian and Chaldaean chronologies, Greek mythology, and Judaic history with Christianity. His work raised the prestige of early Christianity by placing it within a historical context. He also wrote a critical work on genealogies of Christ as found in Matthew and Luke” (*The Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, 15th ed. (2010), 1:135–36).

² “Rabbi who was the first known European traveler to approach the frontiers of China and whose account of his journey, *Benjamin of Tudela*, 1907), illuminates the situation of Jews in Europe and Asia in the 12th century” (Ibid., 2:103).

³ “Kalonymus, one of the most eminent Jewish families in Germany which flourished from the 9th to the 13th century, especially in the cities near the Rhine. The origins of the family go back to the eighth-century Italy, although the name Kalonymus appears in Talmudic literature. The best and most complete tradition regarding the history of the family is given in a small polemical work written probably around 1220 by Eleazar ben Judah of Worms” (Jewish Virtual Library, “Kalonymus,”

[http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0011_0_10655.html, © 2013 by American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise], accessed January 27, 2015).

The remains of the genealogical spirit among the later Jews has only been glanced at to show how deeply it had been penetrated into the Jewish national mind. It remains to be said that just notions of the nature of the Jewish genealogical records are of great importance with a view to the right interpretation of Scripture. Let it only be remembered that these records have respect to political and territorial divisions, as much as to strictly genealogical descent, and it will at once be seen how erroneous a conclusion it may be, that all who are called “sons” of such or such a patriarch, or chief father, must necessarily have been his very children. Just as in the very first division into tribes Manasseh and Ephraim were numbered with their uncles, as if they had been sons instead of grandsons (Genesis 48:5) of Jacob, so afterwards the names of persons belonging to different generations would often stand side by side as heads of families or houses, and be called the sons of their common ancestor.⁴ (p. 1144)

⁴ William Smith and J. M. Fuller, eds., *A History of the Bible*, 2d ed. (London: John Murray, 1893), 1:1142–44.