

THE DAVIDIC LINEAGE OF MESSIAH YESHUA

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[THE SEED OF ABRAHAM](#)

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INTRODUCTION

Prophecies about the Messiah of Israel in the Tanach (Old Testament) speak of Him coming from the lineage of King David.¹ This is confirmed in New Testament Scriptures that say Yeshua (Jesus) is from the Seed of David.² How though, can there be a *physical* connection from David to Yeshua, as Scripture speaks of,³ when Yeshua had no earthly father as His progenitor? Some people try to connect it to Mary, saying that she had lineage to David, but there's nothing in Scripture that states that. The answer to this enigma evaded me for quite some time,⁴ but on June 18th, 2008, while reading in the Book of Acts, the Lord opened my eyes to the answer in a most wonderful way.

Yeshua—Lineage from Mary?

It's not possible that physical lineage from David came through Mary because Scripture is silent on her genealogy, although some try unsuccessfully to prove that Mary was from the House of David, through either Luke's genealogy (Lk. 3:23f.), or what Luke says about Mary being a relative of Elizabeth, who was a descendent of Aaron (Lk. 1:5, 36). Even if one could prove that Mary's lineage came from David it wouldn't help because ancestry was traced through the father, not the mother. Scripture emphasizes this for the Kings of Israel (Mt. 1:6-11f.). Even though four women are mentioned in Matthew's genealogy of Yeshua (Mt. 1:1-17), none of them have *their* genealogy given.⁵ David Stern confirms this understanding, of genealogy, going through the father, when he says:

“even if Luke's genealogy is of Miryam” (Mary) “and goes back to David, it doesn't help Yeshua because descent, for purposes of inheriting kingship, cannot be counted through the mother.”⁶

¹ 2nd Samuel 7:12-13; Isaiah 11:1-9; Jeremiah 23:5; 30:7-10, 33:14-16; Ezekiel 34:23, 37:21-28; Hosea 3:4-5; 1st Chronicles 17:11-14; 22:10; 28:4-7.

² Mt. 1:1-17; Lk. 1:27, 32, 69; 2:4; 3:23-31; Acts 13:22-23:

Rom. 1:3: “the Good News concerning His Son, who was *descended from David according to the flesh.*”

2nd Tim. 2:8: “Remember! Yeshua the Messiah, raised from the dead, *the Seed of David*—that is my Good News.”

Heb. 7:13-14: “Now, the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another Tribe, *from which no one has ever served at the Altar.* For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that Tribe, Moses said nothing about priests.”

Heb. 8:4 by inference, “Now, if He were on Earth He would not be a priest at all since there are priests who offer gifts according to the Law.”

Rev. 5:5: “Then one of the Elders said to me, ‘Do not weep! See! *The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David,* has conquered so that He can open the Scroll and its seven seals.’”

Rev. 22:16: “It is I, Yeshua, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the Assemblies. *I am the Root and the Seed of David,* the bright morning star.”

³ 2nd Sam. 7:12; Isaiah 11:1-9; Psalm 132:11; Mt. 22:42; Rom. 1:3, etc.

⁴ Actually, the answer to that question has stymied theologians for almost two millennia. They have never been able to properly answer this question. Many Jews, who are anti-Yeshua/Jesus, use this Scripture about Messiah being from the loins of King David as “proof” that Yeshua isn't the Messiah, since He didn't have an earthly father who begot Him, and Christians theologians don't have an understanding of how Jesus could be from David's loins.

⁵ Matthew 1:5 for both Rahab and Ruth; v. 6 for Bathsheba (by inference); v. 16 for Mary. Luke doesn't mention any women in his genealogy (Lk. 3:23-38).

Some try to force Luke's genealogy of Joseph onto Mary by suggesting that a "missing" Greek article (*the*), in front of Joseph's name, means that Joseph is not the "son of," but rather the "son-in-law" of Heli, thus making Heli (Hebrew, Eli), *Mary's father*, but this "grammatical explanation" defies the Greek language.⁷

Others also try and present Joseph as Eli's *son-in-law*, again shifting Luke's genealogy unto Mary, by interpreting the phrase, "as was supposed" (Lk. 3:23) to mean that Luke was saying that people thought that Yeshua was Joseph's natural son; "as was supposed," but in reality, Eli was the father of Mary.

"Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli," (Luke 3:23 NKJV)

This "interpretation" makes Eli the father of Mary and makes it her genealogy,⁸ at least for them. Alexander Bruce says that this is "ingenious, but not satisfactory," noting that if that had been Luke's intention, he would have clearly stated it.⁹ Also, there's no second Scripture witness for this being Mary's lineage.

Still others attempt add to the Word by making the phrase mean, "Joseph, the son of Heli *by marriage*," again trying to make Luke's genealogy of Mary, but this is just another version of the concept immediately above. Leon Morris writes that Luke "does not mention Mary" (nor any other women) in his genealogical list, and also, "genealogies were not traced through the female line,"¹⁰ as Stern spoke of.

Craig Evans states that most theologians believe, and what seems fairly obvious, is that it's Joseph lineage that Luke writes of in Lk. 3:23f., not Mary's. Therefore, Luke, like Matthew, speak of the Davidic lineage of Yeshua from Joseph. Luke also speaks of Yeshua being the Son of David, in other places (Lk. 1:27, 33; 2:4).¹¹

Many theologians correctly believe that Matthew and Luke's genealogies speak of Joseph, not Mary,¹²

⁶ David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), p. 173.

⁷ [The Non-Messianic Genealogy of Jesus](#) states that an article was written by Arnold Fruchtenbaum, and circulated by "Jews for Jesus," and Fruchtenbaum made the following claim: "In the Greek text of Luke's genealogy, every single name mentioned has the Greek definite article "the," with one exception: the name of Joseph (Luke 3:23). *Someone reading the original* would understand, by the missing definite article from Joseph's name, that this was not really Joseph's genealogy, but his wife Miriam's" (Mary's).

David Blank, Professor of Classic Languages at The University of California–Los Angeles, writing in [The Non-Messianic Genealogy of Jesus](#), made the following observation about Fruchtenbaum's knowledge of Greek:

"According to the Greek original, Eli is indeed the father of Joseph. There is a definite article before each name, except that of Joseph, and that definite article is in each case the masculine genitive singular article–*you*. Not only does this *not* clearly indicate that Joseph is skipped in the genealogy, it *cannot*, by any stretch of the imagination, be taken as so indicated. The author's comments (Fruchtenbaum) on the Greek grammar of the passage are absurd and manifest an appalling ignorance of the facts of Greek syntax."

⁸ Alexander Balmain Bruce, D.D., Author; W. Robertson Nicoll, Editor, M. A., LL. D., *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. one: *The Synoptic Gospels* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), p. 485.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Leon Morris, The Rev. Canon, M.Sc., M.Th., Ph.D., *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Luke* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000), p. 110.

¹¹ Craig A. Evans, *New International Biblical Commentary: Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1990), p. 60.

¹² I. Howard Marshall, Author; I. Howard Marshall and W. Ward Gasque, Editors, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1978; Accordance Software), pp. 62, 157 (see also Evans, *Luke*, p. 25). The lineage of Yeshua goes back to King David through Joseph *in both Matthew and Luke's genealogies*. *Mary is never mentioned as coming from King David*, but being married to Joseph, who was from the Seed of David: "and Jacob, the father of Joseph, the husband of

even though Matthew and Luke present different fathers for Joseph (as well as different lineages from Joseph back to King David). Julius Africanus offers a possible explanation for the problem of the two different fathers for Joseph.¹³

Also, in Joseph's encounter with the angel Gabriel, Joseph is called "son of David" (Mt. 1:20), but there's no mention of any lineage for Mary, or her being a "daughter of Aaron," as Elizabeth is (Lk. 1:5). Luke writes of Mary's encounter with Gabriel, where Gabriel says to Mary, "Highly favored one, the Lord is with you!" (Lk. 1:28), but there's no mention of any connection to David. Gabriel could easily have said to Mary, "Highly favored one, daughter of David!," but he didn't.

Matthew and Luke speak of Joseph's genealogy going back to King David, not Mary's, and so there isn't any Davidic connection for Mary, but even if both of them were Mary's genealogy, it would not speak of Messiah's physical connection to David as genealogy goes through the father, not the mother. Mary's lineage is not seen in Scripture because it's through Joseph's lineage that Yeshua is the Son of King David. The problem still remains though—how is Yeshua physically descended from King David when He only has an earthly mother, and descent is not counted through a woman?

Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah" (Mt. 1:16). Mt. 1:20: "But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.""

Luke 1:27: "to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the House of David. The virgin's name was Mary."

The NASB for Luke 1:27 has, "to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants (plural) of David, whose name was Mary." This could be interpreted to mean that both Joseph and Mary were of the Seed of David, but both the NRSV and the KJV have it speaking of only Joseph and it seems that the NASB is only stating that Joseph was one of many of the descendants of David, as we see in Matthew chapter one:

The NRSV: "to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary" (Lk. 1:27).

The KJV: "to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary" (Lk. 1:27).

The NIV has descendent, singular, which points directly to Joseph and Joseph only: "to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendent of David. The virgin's name was Mary" (Lk. 1:27).

Luke 2:4: "Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the House and Family of David."

Luke too, traces Yeshua's lineage through Joseph: "Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph, son of Heli" (Luke 3:23).

¹³ Morris, *Luke*, p. 110. Julius Africanus (160-240 AD) in his letter to Aristides, says that he heard from a descendent of James that Heli (Hebrew: Eli) of Luke 3:23 died childless. Jacob (Mt. 1:16), Eli's half brother, had the same mother, but obviously, a different father, and married the widow of Eli, and Joseph was born (see also [Julius Africanus](#)). If this is true, and Africanus seems to be a credible source, it reconciles the different fathers and lineage of Joseph in Matthew and Luke.

What this means is that Eli was the original husband of Joseph's mother, but Eli died childless and according to Mosaic Law (Dt. 25:5-7; see also Ruth 4:5, 10; and law that predates Moses; Gen. 38:6-10, 14, 24-30) a brother of the dead husband was to raise up a son for his dead brother through his dead brother's widow so his dead brother's "name" and inheritance wouldn't be forgotten or lost in Israel.

Joseph is literally and legally the son of Jacob (Matthew's Gospel), but theologically he's the son of Eli (Luke's Gospel). The two different lineages of Jacob to David (Matthew) and Eli to David (Luke) come from Jacob and Eli being half-brothers with different fathers, both with different Davidic lineage. This is seriously questioned by Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp. 158-159, who says it's improbable, but also states that the enigma "is insoluble with the evidence presently at our disposal."

Yeshua—Lineage from Aaron?

Scripture speaks of the Messiah of Israel physically coming from the lineage of King David, but does Yeshua also have to have lineage from Aaron, the first High Priest of Israel? There are those who teach that Yeshua needs to have lineage to Aaron in order for Him to be the High Priest of Israel. This isn't based on anything said about the Messiah being the eternal High Priest of Israel, but on what is said about the Sons of Aaron succeeding him as High Priest.¹⁴ In other words, in order for Jesus to be the High Priest, His lineage from Aaron is necessary to establish and validate Him as Israel's eternal High Priest.

The Scripture they use for this is that Mary was related to Elizabeth, who was of the “daughters of Aaron” (Lk. 1:5, 36). Some take that to mean they were cousins, but unless they were blood cousins, saying perhaps, that Mary's father was a “Son” of Aaron, who had a brother who married say, Elizabeth's mother, Mary's lineage wouldn't connect to Aaron. Luke 1:5 states:

“There was in the days of Herod, the King of Judah, a certain priest named Zachariah, of the division of Abijah. *His wife was of the daughters of Aaron*, and her name was Elizabeth.” (Luke 1:5)

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to Mary, in Elizabeth's sixth month of pregnancy (Lk. 1:26) and tells Mary that Elizabeth, her relative, was pregnant:

“Now indeed, Elizabeth your *relative* has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.” (Luke 1:36)

Those who erroneously teach that Yeshua had Aaronic lineage base their claim on these two verses, reasoning that Mary, being related to Elizabeth, who had Aaronic lineage, must mean that Mary had it also. There are two problems with their reasoning. One, Scripture *never* links Yeshua, through Mary (or even Joseph), to Aaron, but actually comes against Yeshua having any Aaronic lineage. And two, the Greek word for “relative,” doesn't necessarily mean a blood relative, which is why some theologians use “perhaps,” Mary had Aaronic lineage—and was a “daughter of Aaron.”

Luke writes of Mary's encounter with Gabriel, where the angel addresses Mary, saying, “Rejoice, highly favored one! The Lord is with you! Blessed are you among women!” (Luke 1:28) Gabriel though, *doesn't* say, “Rejoice, highly favored one, daughter of Aaron!” He certainly could have, and if he had, we would know for certain that Mary had lineage from Aaron, but even then it wouldn't mean it passed over to Jesus, as lineage only goes through the man. Also, there isn't a single Scripture that says that Mary was of Aaronic lineage. There's no Scripture to support that Mary was from the Tribe of Levi (or even the Tribe of Judah),¹⁵ and *Yeshua is never referred to in Scripture, Old or New, as having any ancestry to Levi or Aaron.*¹⁶ Just the opposite is the case, as Hebrews 7:14 and 8:4 will reveal.

Mary is often erroneously linked to Aaron, the first High Priest of Israel, through either an alleged lineage in Matthew (Mt. 1:16) or Luke's Gospel (Lk. 3:23-38), although Aaron and Levi are not mentioned in ei-

¹⁴ Cf. Ex. 28:1, 4; 40:13; Lev. 7:34; Dt. 10:6.

¹⁵ This would make a physical connection to David through Mary, and with no earthly father, a way that Yeshua could have physically descended from David, but because this is never mentioned as such, it seems unlikely. The New Testament writers, who wrote of Yeshua descending from David, listed Joseph's lineage, not Mary's.

¹⁶ There are some who insist that Mary had to have at least one parent with lineage to Aaron because, in their eyes, that would make Yeshua's high priesthood possible under Mosaic Law. This thought though, fails to recognize that Yeshua was a High Priest “according the order of Melchizedek,” not Aaron (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 5:6, 10; 7:1f.; cf. Zech. 6:12-13). There was no need for Yeshua to have any lineage from Aaron, and as a matter of fact, it was necessary that He didn't have Aaronic lineage because Aaronic lineage would defile Yeshua's Priesthood. Yeshua was like Melchizedek, who had no lineage to Aaron, whose ministry was temporal, ending in Aaron's death. See [Yeshua—From the Tribe of Levi?](#)

ther lineage. Only Judah is written of (Mt. 1:2-3; Lk. 3:33), who was a brother of Levi, and most theologians see both genealogies as pertaining to Joseph. The reason for this is because Scripture speaks of the genealogies as Joseph's:

“And *Jacob begot Joseph* (the husband of Mary), of whom was born Yeshua, who is called the Messiah.” (Matthew 1:16)

“Now Yeshua Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) *the son of Joseph*, the son of Heli.” (Luke 3:23)

In Matthew, Mary is noted as Yeshua's mother, but the lineage is Joseph's. Luke actually speaks of people thinking that Joseph was Yeshua's father, but makes it clear that Joseph wasn't Yeshua's father. The genealogy, as we've seen, is obviously that of Joseph's. Mary isn't even mentioned in Luke's genealogy.

There isn't any Scripture to support Mary being of the House of Aaron. Resting one's justification upon the Greek word for “relative,” certainly doesn't prove it, either. Louw and Nida confirm this, saying that Mary, being a relative of Elizabeth, *does not mean that Mary was a descendent of Aaron*. Louw states that the Greek word for relative, “συγγενίς” (*sug'gay'nis*, συγγενς in the Textus Receptus), means, “a female member of an extended family or clan” a “relative, kinswoman.”¹⁷ This means that Mary could have been of Aaron's lineage, but she also could not have been.

Theologians Alexander Bruce and I. Howard Marshall, commenting on the two Scripture verses (Lk. 1:5; 36), say “perhaps” Mary had Aaronic descent because Elizabeth was a relative of Mary. Alexander Bruce states that the Greek word for “relative” speaks of,

“a blood relation, *but of what degree, not indicated, suggesting that Mary perhaps belonged to the tribe of Levi,*”¹⁸ from whom Aaron descended.

In other words, Mary could have been from the lineage of Aaron, but she could just as equally have been from the lineage of Dan or Benjamin, etc. Howard Marshall explains more about συγγενίς saying it's,

“a rare form for συγγενς, ‘a female relative,’ *not necessarily a cousin*. Mary's relationship to Elizabeth *suggests that she too may have been of priestly descent.*”¹⁹

Both Thayer and BDAG though, say there isn't any Scripture that speaks of Mary being a descendant of Aaron.²⁰ Be all that as it may, with Scripture speaking of Mary being a relative of Elizabeth, Mary cannot be descended from Aaron because the Author of Hebrews categorically denies this when he states:

“For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which Tribe Moses *spoke nothing concerning priesthood.*” (Hebrews 7:14)

If Yeshua had also been a descendant of Aaron, the Author of Hebrews could not have spoken of Yeshua only coming from Judah, of which “Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood” because with Aaronic lineage, Yeshua would have had physical descent from Aaron, who was the High Priest of Israel. Everyone knows that any Levitical or Aaronic priest must have lineage back to Levi or Aaron, yet Hebrews goes on to state of Yeshua that,

“if He were on Earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts

¹⁷ Johannes Louw and Eugene A. Nida, Editors, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, vol. 1 (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), p. 113.

¹⁸ Bruce, *The Synoptic Gospels*, p. 30, *The Gospel of Luke*.

¹⁹ Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, p. 71.

²⁰ συγγενίς Joseph Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Accordance Bible Software, 2017), paragraph 8,743: “a kinswoman.”

συγγενίς Walter Bauer, augmented by William F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (third edition, 2001; Accordance Bible Software), p. 950; “kinswoman, relative.”

according to the Law.” (Heb. 8:4)

In other words, with Yeshua not having lineage from Aaron, He could not be a Priest according to Mosaic Law, for it requires that the High Priest be of Aaronic lineage. The word “relative” therefore, cannot mean that Mary was a “daughter of Aaron.”

There are a myriad of possible ways Mary and Elizabeth could have been related, but not to where Mary was of Aaronic lineage. For instance, any one of Mary’s grandparents (two grandfathers and two grandmothers) could have had a brother or a sister or even an aunt or an uncle, who married one of Elizabeth’s grandparents, aunts or uncles, etc. This would have made Mary and Elizabeth “related,” but obviously, would not have meant that Mary had lineage back to Aaron.

Why the “need” for Mary to have Aaronic lineage stems from those who think that Jesus must have Aaronic lineage in order to be High Priest of Israel. They fail to understand that Scripture says the Messiah is the High Priest of Israel “according to the order of Melchizedek,”²¹ and so Yeshua doesn’t need, and should not have, Aaronic lineage. This is because Yeshua’s Priesthood isn’t fashioned after Aaron’s Priesthood, but after Melchizedek’s Priesthood.²² Melchizedek didn’t have any lineage to Aaron, especially as Melchizedek preceded Aaron by more than 500 years. Yeshua, according to the order of Melchizedek’s Priesthood, doesn’t need to have lineage from Aaron, either. Melchizedek and Aaron are two entirely different priesthoods. One is temporal, while the other is eternal. Aaron and his Sons died. Their ministry ended at their death; Yeshua ministers and lives forever. Aaron and his sons offered up “bulls and goats,” which forgave sins, but Yeshua offered up the Son of God, whose blood not only forgives sins, but transforms carnal, human nature into the divine human nature of God the Son. Finally, if Yeshua had Aaronic lineage it would have polluted His Priesthood “according to the order of Melchizedek,” as Aaron’s Priesthood symbolizes his sinful, carnal nature, whose ministry ended with his death. This is why Yeshua was a High Priest “according to the order of Melchizedek,” and not according to the order of Aaronic, and hence, He didn’t have, or want to have, lineage, Aaronic lineage. Also, Yeshua’s High Priesthood is not predicated upon His lineage, as are the Sons of Aaron, but upon His eternal Person. Only His Kingship demands His lineage to King David.

The teaching that Jesus needed Aaronic descent, and that it comes from Mary, in order for Him to be the High Priest of Israel, is a false teaching. All that being said, we may never know Mary’s ancestry “this side of the New Jerusalem,” but we can know how Scripture speaks of Messiah Yeshua coming from the “fruit of King David’s body” (Psalm 132:11; Acts 2:29-30).

FROM THE FRUIT OF KING DAVID’S BODY

Reading Acts 2:29-30 that day in June 1988, I was struck again by the concept of Yeshua coming from the physical lineage of David. Acts Two is *Shavu’ot* (Pentecost), with the Holy Spirit initially falling on the Jewish Apostles and quite possibly all the 120 (Acts 1:15), and then the Jewish people who gave their lives to Yeshua (Acts 2:36-41.). Peter proclaims a number of wonderful things to the multitude of Jews who gathered around him, the chief of which was how Yeshua was the long awaited Messiah, and at one point Peter expressly speaks of Yeshua coming from the “fruit of” (loins of) David’s body “according to the flesh:”

“Men and brethren! Let me speak freely to you of Father David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn, with an oath to him, that *of the fruit of his body* according to the flesh, He

²¹ Six times, over three chapters, the Writer of Hebrews speaks of Yeshua’s High Priesthood as being “according to the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 5:6, 10, 6:20; 7:11, 17, 21).

²² See Gen. 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7:1f., and my article [Melchizedek and Jesus](#).

would raise up the Messiah to sit on his Throne...” (Acts 2:29-30).

How could Peter say that? How could Yeshua be from the physical lineage of King David when Yeshua had no earthly father (Luke 1:34-35), and Mary’s lineage is never mentioned? Some, as we’ve already seen, some try and force her into the House of David through Luke’s genealogy (Luke 3:23f.), but as we’ve seen, the lineage is of Joseph, not Mary. *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary* though, states that Mary was from the Tribe of Judah, from the lineage of David,²³ but they fail to mention how they came to that conclusion, or even give a Scripture to support it.

The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)* also believes that Luke was speaking of Mary’s lineage. It states that the phrase in Luke 1:27, “‘of the House of David,’ goes with virgin, not Joseph,” but adds that “this is controversial.”²⁴ *ISBE* admits that Mary’s lineage to King David “cannot be proved conclusively from the genealogy of Lk. 3:23-28.” *ISBE* goes on to interpret, rather poorly, the two verses found in Luke 1:32, 34, that they point,

“in the direction of Mary’s Davidic ancestry when it says, “The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,” for Mary was engaged, *but not yet married* to Joseph. It is *evident* that Mary realized that *Joseph was excluded* when she said, “How shall this be since I have no husband?””²⁵

“Evident” to them perhaps, but the problem with *ISBE*’s translation is that the Greek doesn’t have Mary saying, “since I have no husband,” but rather, “since I have not known a man” (ἐπεὶ ἄνδρα οὐ γινώσκω, lit. “since man not known”), or “since I have not (sexually) known my (intended) husband.”²⁶ Also, Mary knew that she was betrothed and would have considered herself married to Joseph, even though the marriage hadn’t been consummated yet. Howard Marshall states that betrothal in ancient Israel was,

“regarded as equally binding as marriage, the girl having the same legal position as a wife, but it was not normal for intercourse to take place during this period.”²⁷

The consummation of the marriage would take place on the night of their wedding. *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* confirms what Marshall says and states:

“Jewish law held espousal or engagement as binding as marriage,” and “After the betrothal the groom could claim his bride at any time.”²⁸

The Illustrated Bible Dictionary states that when one was betrothed they were recognized as husband and wife:

“In the Near East betrothal (Talmudic *erusin* and *qiddusin*) is almost as binding as marriage itself. In the Bible the betrothed woman was sometimes called “wife” and was under the same obligation of faithfulness (Gen. 29:21; Dt. 22:23-24; Mt. 1:18, 20), and the betrothed man was called “husband” (Joel 1:8; Mt. 1:19).”²⁹

David Stern relates that the Jewish Sages thought that adultery in the betrothal state was a greater sin than

²³ Merrill F. Unger, *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988), p. 822.

²⁴ Geoffrey W. Bromiley, general editor; Everett F. Harrison, Roland K. Harrison and William Sanford LaSor, associate editors, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. three (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 269.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, p. 69. Marshall writes of J. B. Bauer suggesting “that ἄνδρα (man/husband) should be translated as “my husband.””

²⁷ Ibid., p. 64. SBI, 45-47; II, 393, Jeremias, Jerusalem, pp. 364-367.

²⁸ Charles F. Pfeiffer, Old Testament; Everett F. Harrison, New Testament, *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), pp. 1030-1031.

²⁹ J. D. Douglas, M.A., B.D., S.T.M., Ph.D., Organizing editor, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, part 2 (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1998), p. 955.

adultery after betrothal. He says that the,

“word for betrothal is “*Kiddushin*,” which signifies “sanctification, separation,” i.e. the setting aside and separating of a particular woman for a particular man. According to the Mishna, adultery during the betrothal period is a more serious sin than adultery after marriage.”³⁰

Ancient Jewish betrothal was legally seen as the marriage state, except for consummation and living together, so even though Mary was “only engaged” to Joseph, he was certainly not “excluded” from Mary’s, nor Gabriel’s, thoughts, because Mary was theologically and spiritually “one” with her husband, Joseph. That’s *why* Gabriel waited until *after* the betrothal, and *before* the consummation, to come to Mary (Mt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:30-38). This will prove to be the key to understanding how Yeshua came from the loins of King David.

Commenting on the phrase “House of David” (ἐξ οἴκου Δαυὶδ i.e. a descendant of David) in Luke 1:27, “to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the House of David,” Marshall writes:

“had that phrase been meant to refer to Mary, it would have had to be differently constructed” (in Greek). “It is meant to show how Jesus was the “son of David” through Joseph as his legal “father” (3:23; Mt. 1:16)...Nevertheless, Origen and others have held that the phrase was meant to refer to Mary, whose Davidic descent is asserted in Protev. Jac. 10:1; Ignatius, Ephesians 18:2; Justin, Dialogue 43, 45, 100, 120.”³¹

Alexander Bruce suggests that the phrase could refer to Mary, but says that because Luke uses the Greek word for virgin twice in the same verse, “House of David,” should refer to Joseph, not Mary:

“Mary, Joseph or both? Impossible to be sure, though the repetition of παρθένου (*parthaynu*—virgin) in the next clause (instead of αὐτῆς “her”) favours the reference to Joseph.”³²

Granting *ISBE*’s interpretation of Luke 1:32, 34, without accepting it as true (that Gabriel spoke of David’s Throne referring to Mary’s ancestry, and that Mary knew that Joseph was excluded from Gabriel’s words because “Mary wasn’t married yet”), if Mary was a descendant of David, if Yeshua’s Davidic human lineage came through Mary, where, at the very least, is a second witness in Scripture to Mary descending from David?³³ Even with *ISBE*’s far fetched “interpretation,” there is not one clear and plain Scripture of Mary coming from the lineage of David. Yet, there are three clear and specific Scripture witnesses to Joseph being a descendant of King David (Mt. 1:20; Lk. 1:27; 2:4; cf. Lk. 1:69; Gen. 49:10). Why is Mary’s lineage never clearly mentioned *if she is the one through whom Yeshua’s Davidic lineage is supposed to have come from?* And why is Joseph specifically mentioned as coming from David when he wasn’t the father of Yeshua? In other words, it shouldn’t matter if Joseph was from King David or not, *except for the fact that biblical lineage is seen from the father; not the mother.*³⁴

The Illustrated Bible Dictionary (IBD) relates that Luke’s genealogy speaks of Joseph’s ancestry, and says that even though *Scripture is silent* on Mary’s ancestry, she could have come from David, but the don’t give any Scripture for this. *IBD* related how people like Origen could “fill in the blanks” about Mary coming from David, but they don’t have any credible Scripture references to support them. *IBD* states that,

“Luke tells us that Joseph was of Davidic descent and *although no mention is made of Mary’s lineage*, it is possible that she came from the same line...This...sketch of Mary

³⁰ Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p. 3.

³¹ Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp. 64-65.

³² Bruce, *The Synoptic Gospels*, p. 463.

³³ Dt. 19:15; Mt. 18:16; 2nd Cor. 13:1.

³⁴ Priestly lineage: Ex. 28:4, 29:9-30, 30:30; 40:15, Tribal lineage: Num. 36. Kingship lineage: Gen. 49:10, 1st Kings 11:4, and 1st Chron. 17:11-19.

and her relationship to our Lord leaves many gaps in the record, which pious *legend* has not been slow to fill, but we are not able to press the Gospel record beyond their historical limit.”³⁵

Some say that Joseph legally *adopted* Yeshua as His earthly father and so, it could be said that Joseph’s lineage passed to Yeshua. This isn’t reality though. Neither adoption in the Jewish world, nor in the Gentile world, passes the father’s genealogy to his adopted son.³⁶ Also, adoption is never mentioned or even hinted at in Scripture for Jesus. Joseph saw Yeshua as “his son,” and Yeshua submitted Himself to Joseph (Lk. 2:41-51) as a son would to his father, but adoption would not pass on Joseph’s Davidic lineage to Yeshua, with or without adoption papers, although no one in Messiah’s time would dispute Jesus being the son of Joseph because most thought, as Luke presents, that Yeshua was from Joseph’s loins (Lk. 3:23). How though, is the *physical* aspect of Messiah, *coming from the Seed of David*, as Peter, Paul and even Yeshua (cf. Rev. 22:16), speak of, happen?

AN INSIGHT FROM ABOVE

As I pondered Peter’s words that day in June 1988, it came to me. So simple and so sublime, as it always is with the Holy Spirit revealing and interpreting God’s Word. It wasn’t by my intelligence or reasoning capabilities. It was by the Holy Spirit. Conceptually, just as Yeshua rebuked the Sadducees for not believing in an afterlife, basing their belief on *their* understanding of the Law of Moses (and they didn’t believe in the Prophets or the Psalms), so it is with Yeshua’s Davidic physical lineage.

Yeshua went right to the Torah (the Law of Moses; Genesis through Deuteronomy) and showed the Sadducees, who only believed in Torah, how wrong they were in their interpretation of God’s Torah, using the only Scripture they thought was divine (i.e. Mosaic Law). He told them of Moses at the Burning Bush, in Genesis 3:6, and how God had said, speaking in the present tense, “**I *am*** the God of your father; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob,” not *I was* the God of Abraham, etc. Yeshua explained that to God, *even the dead are alive unto Him* (Mt. 22:31; Mk. 12:26; Lk. 20:37). *How could the Sadducees have failed to see that?!*

How indeed! Without Yeshua telling them, we would have failed to see it, too! Praise God for Yeshua, who reveals His Word to us by His Spirit! Yeshua’s physical lineage to David and Abraham is also conceptually seen in Torah, at Genesis 2:24. God says.

“Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and cling to his wife, *and they shall become (or be) one flesh.*”

At betrothal, Joseph and Mary became *one flesh*, one entity in God’s eyes. Adam and Eve were literally “one” before Eve came forth from Adam, and when men and women marry they symbolically, physically and spiritually revert back to that oneness; that one entity (1st Cor. 6:15-16). Also, Scripture does not record the genealogies of women. That’s because the woman is “one” with her husband (or before marriage, with her father).³⁷ This is why only men were counted in the numbering of Israel in the Wilderness, and in the feeding of the 5,000 by Yeshua, etc.³⁸

³⁵ Douglas, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, part 2, p. 959.

³⁶ See [The Non-Messianic Genealogy of Jesus](#).

³⁷ This is also why man is the head or the authority in the marriage; not the woman. There is only “one creature” in a marriage.

³⁸ Women and children were considered part of the family, *one* with the husband or father. The man was the head of the family. Only the firstborn sons in Egypt were killed at the First Passover; no daughters, while only the firstborn sons of Israel were spared (Ex. 12:12). Because of that, Yahveh spoke of them, the firstborn sons of Israel, being His (Ex. 13:1-2, 12-13, 14, 15; 22:29). An obvious parallel in the Old Testament was circumcision,

Mary, from whatever lineage she may have been from, was now of the lineage of King David through her husband Joseph, even though the marriage union hadn't been consummated. That's why it was essential for Joseph and Mary to have been betrothed³⁹ *before* Gabriel came to Mary. Mary had become "one flesh"

for males only, "to come into the Covenant." Why not something for women? There isn't anything because they are one with their father and come into the Covenant of Abraham through him and his circumcision.

Only the firstborn *male* is considered the *firstborn* to open the womb (Ex. 12:48). In Ex. 30:11-16 it's only the men over 20 years old that are commanded to give a half-shekel for their redemption from Egypt, and subsequent numbering.

In Ex. 34:19-20 only the male sons are to be redeemed when they are born (for it was only the firstborn sons of Egypt that died and the firstborn sons of Israel that were spared). Ex. 34:23 mentions that only the males are to come to the place where Yahveh has His Name, three times a year, to celebrate the major Feasts, and in Ex. 38:25-26 only the men gave of the silver half-shekel to be redeemed and numbered (as per Ex. 30:11-16).

Only the *male* Levites could be helpers to Aaron and his sons. Only the *male* priests could eat of the grain sacrifice (Lev. 6:18) and the trespass sacrifice (Lev. 7:6) and offer up sacrifices. Also, it was literally only the *Sons* of Aaron who could minister and offer sacrifice in the Tabernacle of Moses, and later the Temple.

Only the men of Israel over 20 years old were numbered in the two censuses of the Wilderness, and that, according to their *Father's* House. The women weren't numbered (Num. 1:1-4, 20, 22; 2:32 26:1-4). The male Levites were also numbered according to their Father's House (Num. 3:14-15f; 26:22), and only the male firstborn of Israel were numbered (Num. 2:23; 3:40-43). God commanded Moses to number the Levitical *men* from 30-50 years old, for the various work of the Tabernacle (Num. 4:1-18). Israel camped around the Tabernacle according to their Father's House, not their Mother's House (Num. 2:1-2). Only the man could bring a charge of infidelity against his wife (Num. 5:11f, esp. vv. 19-20, 29). His wife couldn't do that against her husband. Only the Sons of Aaron could be priests (Num. 8:16, 17, 18; 24-26). There were no priestesses. Only in paganism do we find priestesses modeled after the Queen of Heaven.

The regulations for the Passover, that one could observe in the second month, only applied to men being unclean or on a long journey, not to women (Num. 9:10). In Num. 18:19 it specifically states, "sons and daughters" when indicating such as to receive sacrificial portions, which reinforces that it's only the males when God speaks of them and them only, and in 18:21 the *b'nay* Israel (Sons of Israel) only means *sons*, as it speaks of the Levites who worked or ministered in the Tent as receiving the tithe. Only men are given land as an inheritance (Num. 26:52-56), unless there were no men to give it too (Num. 27:1-11). If a woman made a vow, her father or her husband could annul it in the day that he heard it (Num. 30:3-16), such was the authority that the man had and how "one" the women were to their father or their husband.

It's written that all the men assembled before King Solomon for the dedication of the Temple (1st Kings 8:1-2; 39-40, 57-58). There were only kings in Israel, not queens who ruled (the only exception being a woman who usurped the authority of the king (2nd Kings 11:1-3). 1st Chron. 15:15 shows that "Sons of Israel" pertains most of the time to men only, and 1st Chron. 21:5 records the unlawful census that King David took, of the men of Israel.

In the NT, the concept of women being *one* with their husbands naturally continues. Only men are counted, not women (Lk. 9:14; Jn. 6:10, the feeding of the 5,000). Interestingly enough, in the accounts of Yeshua and the Passover there aren't any women observing it with Him, just the 12 Jewish men. Yet it specifically says that women ministered to Him and came with Him to Jerusalem at the time of the Passover (Mk. 15:40-41). Also, there were 12 *men* Apostles, but no women Apostles.

Some might say that this line of thinking is archaic and denigrates women, but God's ways are not Man's ways and as Yeshua said to Peter, "You're not thinking as God thinks, but as Man thinks" (Mt. 16:23), certainly applies to them. Satan has come into the Body of Messiah and turned things upside down, one of them being that most men and women do not know what biblical authority is in relation to husbands and wives. There cannot be two authorities in a marriage. Biblically, the woman must give way to her husband (1st Peter 3:1) and recognize him as her head (1st Cor. 11:3).

³⁹ Even though Joseph was "only" betrothed to Mary, and hadn't consummated the marriage yet, when Gabriel appeared to Mary they were officially married. Mt. 1:19 calls Joseph the *husband* of Mary and says that he wanted "to put her away" (i.e. divorce her; see also Mt. 1:24-25; Luke 1:26-27; 2:5), which could only be done if they

with Joseph at betrothal. Now the Child could be conceived and born under Joseph's physical lineage to King David, even though Joseph hadn't had sexual intercourse with Mary. It's no accident that Mary's lineage is never mentioned in Scripture.

Isn't this what happens with us "in Messiah"? Having died to self (like Mary losing her past ancestry and becoming "one" with Joseph), and given eternal life through our union or oneness with Messiah (Rom. 6–7), we are now the *betrothed* Bride of Messiah Yeshua (Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9). We are *one* with Messiah⁴⁰ so we can bear *fruit* unto God (Rom. 7:4). Yet, the consummation of our Marriage won't happen until Judgment Day. Our lineage now, doesn't go back to our fallen mother and father, and through them, to Adam and Eve, but to the eternal lineage of Messiah Yeshua, *God* the Son (Luke 3:38; John 1:1-2). We have "come out of the side" of Yeshua (the sword piercing His side as His sacrificial death, with His divine blood and water gushing forth; Jn. 19:34-35), similar to how Eve came out of Adam's side (Gen. 2:21-24). We have a divine genealogy now, being "one flesh" with our Messiah, just as it's written in Gen. 2:24 and Ephesian 5:31-32. Yeshua left His "Father and Mother"⁴¹ in Heaven, and He has joined Himself to us, and we are now "one flesh" or "one" with Him.

Don't you just want to dance and sing praises to Yeshua?!

Yeshua—from the *Seed* of King David—our Husband!

Just as the Scriptures speak of!

"Yahveh has sworn in Truth to David and He will not change His mind! "I will set upon your Throne the fruit of your body!" (Psalms 132:11)

"Yeshua will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God, and Yahveh God will give Him the Throne of His Father David!" (Luke 1:32)

"Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is *the head of the wife*, just as Messiah is the Head of the Assembly, the Body of which He is the Savior. Just as the Assembly is subject to Messiah, so also, wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, just as Messiah loved the Assembly and gave Himself up for Her, in order to make Her holy by cleansing Her with the washing of Water by the Word, so as to present the Assembly to Himself in Splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind. Yes! So that She may be holy and without blemish. In the same way, husbands should love their wives *as they do their own bodies*. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Messiah does for the Assembly, *because we are members of His Body!* "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be *joined* to his wife, and the two become *one flesh*." This is *a great Mystery*, and I am applying it to the Messiah and the Assembly." (Eph. 5:22-32)

"Yeshua said, "and the two shall become one flesh," so then they are no longer two, but one flesh." (Mark 10:8)

were married (cf. Dt. 24:1-4).

⁴⁰ Rom. 6:11; 7:4; 8:1; 12:5; 1st Cor. 1:2, 30; 4:17; 6:16; 2nd Cor. 1:21; 5:17; Gal. 1:22; 3:28; Eph. 1:1, 11; 2:6, 10; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2; 1st Pet. 5:10, 14, etc.

⁴¹ See [Three Persons—One God?](#) to understand the gender of the Holy Spirit.

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⁴² Revised on Shabat, May 20, 2023.