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Brit Hadasha: Examining the Genealogy of Yeshua

GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Teaching Summary

This teaching responds to the claim that the genealogies of Yeshua in Matthew and Luke contradict one another and therefore make the New Testament unreliable. It argues that the gospel writers sincerely believed what they wrote and that the early Messianic community would not reasonably preserve accounts that were hopelessly contradictory.

Matthew lists fewer names than Luke, but the teaching explains that biblical genealogies sometimes skip generations to highlight important individuals. The teaching compares this practice with genealogical lists in the TANAKH, including the difference between the lists in 1 Chronicles and Ezra.

Matthew follows David through Solomon, while Luke follows David through Nathan. The teaching presents Matthew's genealogy as coming through Joseph and Luke's as coming through Mary. It also argues that the Messiah was promised as a son of David, not necessarily as a descendant of Solomon, whose kingdom promise was conditional on faithfulness.

The teaching answers the objection that genealogy cannot continue through a woman. Numbers 27:8 allows inheritance to pass to a daughter when there is no son; the source acknowledges that this is an inheritance rule rather than a genealogy rule. First Chronicles 2:34–36 then supplies its separate example of a genealogical line continuing through a daughter and her children.

The curse associated with Jehoiachin is addressed through the later treatment of Jehoiachin and the description of Zerubbabel as a signet ring. The teaching presents these passages as evidence that the curse was reversed. The apparent difference involving Shealtiel and Zerubbabel may involve different men with the same names, a levirate marriage, or another family relationship; the teaching says these possibilities cannot be proven but are reasonable.

The teaching concludes that the differences between Matthew and Luke are not insurmountable. They have several plausible resolutions and are not unlike technical issues found in the TANAKH. Therefore, the objection that the genealogies disqualify Yeshua as Messiah does not hold.

Summary Points

- The teaching answers objections to the genealogies in Matthew and Luke.
- Biblical genealogies may legitimately omit generations.
- Matthew follows David through Solomon, while Luke follows David through Nathan.
- The teaching presents Matthew's line through Joseph and Luke's through Mary.
- The Messiah is promised as a son of David, not unconditionally as a son of Solomon.
- The TANAKH shows that family inheritance and genealogy can continue through women.
- The teaching interprets Jehoiachin's release and the signet imagery as evidence of restoration.
- Shealtiel and Zerubbabel may be different men with the same names.
- A levirate marriage could explain legal and biological lines of descent.
- The apparent discrepancies have several plausible resolutions.

Fill-In-the-Blank — Basic

1. Matthew's genealogy contains fewer names because biblical genealogies sometimes _____ generations.
2. Matthew follows David through his son _____.
3. Luke follows David through his son _____.
4. The teaching presents Luke's genealogy as tracing Yeshua's line through his mother _____.
5. The promise concerning Solomon's kingdom was conditional on his _____.
6. A levirate marriage can distinguish a child's legal descent from his _____ descent.

Fill-In-the-Blank — Challenging

1. Matthew's genealogy traces Yeshua's ancestry from _____.
2. Luke traces Yeshua's ancestry back to _____, the first man.
3. The Torah passage discussed says that if a man has no son, his inheritance is transferred to his _____.
4. Jeremiah 22:24 uses the image of a _____ ring in the judgment on Jehoiachin.
5. After the exile, Haggai describes _____ as being made like a signet ring.
6. The Torah passage about a deceased brother's wife and his heir is found in Deuteronomy chapter _____.

Group Discussion Questions

1. Why does the teaching say the different numbers of names do not make the genealogies contradictory?

2. How does the teaching explain the different lines through Solomon and Nathan?

3. What evidence does the teaching use to argue that genealogy can continue through women?

4. How does the teaching address the objection involving Jehoiachin's curse?

5. What are the possible explanations offered for the difference involving Shealtiel and Zerubbabel?

6. Why does the teaching conclude that the genealogical objections do not disqualify Yeshua as Messiah?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. skip — Teaching comparison with 1 Chronicles 6:3–14 and Ezra 7:1–5
2. Solomon — Matthew 1:6–7
3. Nathan — Luke 3:31
4. Mary — Teaching interpretation of Matthew 1 and Luke 3
5. faithfulness — 1 Chronicles 28:7; 1 Kings 11:9–13
6. biological — Deuteronomy 25:5–6; teaching proposed explanation

Challenging

1. Abraham — Matthew 1:1–2
2. Adam — Luke 3:38
3. daughter — Numbers 27:8
4. signet — Jeremiah 22:24
5. Zerubbabel — Haggai 2:20–23
6. 25 — Deuteronomy 25:5–6

FACILITATOR DISCUSSION NOTES

Suggested responses follow the teaching. Invite discussion and personal application; these are not additional required answers.

1. The teaching compares 1 Chronicles 6:3–14 with Ezra 7:1–5 to show that biblical genealogies may abbreviate a line. Ask how a selective list differs from an incorrect ancestry claim. Compare the actual passages and distinguish omitted generations from contradictory relationships.
2. Matthew 1 follows David through Solomon; Luke 3:31 names Nathan. The source presents Joseph's and Mary's lines as its explanation. Preserve this as the teaching's harmonization: Luke's text names Joseph, and the maternal-line explanation is an interpretation, not a direct statement naming Mary in the list.
3. Numbers 27:8 concerns inheritance when there is no son; 1 Chronicles 2:34–36 records descendants through Sheshan's daughter and Jarha. The source uses these together but acknowledges their different functions. Ask exactly what each passage establishes before extending the argument to another kind of family status.
4. Jeremiah 22:24–30 supplies the judgment; Jeremiah 52:31–34 describes release and royal favor; Haggai 2:20–23 uses signet imagery for Zerubbabel. The teaching reads the latter passages as restoration and reversal. Separate those textual events from its inference about repentance and ask how the imagery supports its case.
5. The source offers different individuals with shared names, a levirate relationship, or descent through marriage as possible explanations involving Shealtiel and Zerubbabel. Deuteronomy 25:5–6 gives the legal-heir pattern. These are possibilities, not reconstructed family history that the evidence proves. Ask what each would explain and what remains unknown.
6. The conclusion is that apparent differences have plausible resolutions and therefore do not, in the teaching's view, disqualify Yeshua. Ask participants to distinguish showing that a contradiction is not necessary from proving one specific reconstruction. Invite further study with the same care used for genealogies elsewhere in Scripture.