

Prologue to the Life of Christ

III. The prologue to Christ's life: God breaks His 400 year silence.

A. Luke's Primary Sources – Luke 1:1-4

1. Luke 1:1a – Luke wrote a classical introduction, giving his Gospel a literary touch equal to the Greek classics.
2. Luke 1:1b – Luke gave a thorough and authentic account of Christ's life.
3. Luke 1:2 – Luke included the accounts of the apostles and other eyewitnesses.

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4. Luke 1:3 – Luke wrote his Gospel as well as the Book of Acts to Theophilus, whose name means lover of God.
5. Luke 1:4 – Luke followed the custom of the best literary form of the time by providing an opening statement.

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B. The pre-existent state of Jesus Christ – John 1:1-18

1. John 1:1 – Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, came into the world from a pre-existent state for the purpose of providing redemption for mankind.

2. A SHORT DOCTRINE OF THE DEITY OF CHRIST

a. Christ was called God. Isaiah 9:6, John 1:1, 14, Hebrews 1:8

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- b. Christ possesses the attributes of God.
 - 1) Christ is eternal. Micah 5:2, John 8:58
 - 2) Christ never changes; He is immutable. Hebrews 1:10-12, 13:8
 - 3) Christ is righteous. Luke 1:35, John 6:69, Hebrews 7:26
 - 4) Christ is truth. John 14:6, Revelation 3:7
 - 5) Christ is love. John 13:1, 1 John 3:16

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c. Christ performed the works of God.

1) Christ participated in the creation of all that exists. He is Creator.

Colossians 1:16

2) Christ sustains creation. He preserves all He created. Colossians 1:17

3) Christ forgives sin. Luke 5:20-24

4) Christ judges. John 5:22

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- d. Christ accepted the honor and worship due only to God. Matthew 14:33, John 5:23
- e. Christ affirmed that He is equal with God. John 8:24, 10:30

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3. John 1:2 – Since Christ is God, He is also eternal.
4. John 1:3 – Although creation has a start date, the *Logos*, the Word, Jesus Christ, has always existed.
5. John 1:4-5 – The message of light (truth) shines at all times, but men love the darkness and suppress the message of light.
Romans 1:18

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6. John 1:6 – John the Baptist was the forerunner to the Messiah's ministry as prophesied in Malachi 3:1. Interestingly, author John was a disciple of John the Baptist until he knew that Jesus was the Lamb of God.
7. John 1:7-8 – John the Baptist's purpose was to point others to the Light, Jesus Christ.
8. John 1:9 – Jesus is the source of all knowledge (Colossians 2:1-3), and His Light is available to all men.

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9. John 1:10 – The Creator of the world was recognized by only a few of His creation when He came to redeem them.
10. John 1:11 – Jesus, the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, came to the Jews first, but they did not recognize Him. Isaiah 53:3
11. John 1:12a – Even though the world as a whole rejects Jesus, some accept Him.

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12. John 1:12b – Only those who place their faith in the Person of Jesus Christ have the right to be called *children of God*.

Galatians 3:26

13. John 1:13 – God gives everyone who believes in Christ the new birth.

14. John 1:14a – John used the term flesh to emphasize Jesus' humanity.

15. John 1:14b – John emphasized the historical reality of God becoming man (the Hypostatic Union).

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16. John 1:14c – Jesus is the unique Person in the universe because He is undiminished deity and true humanity in one Person forever.

17. A SHORT DOCTRINE OF THE HYPOSTATIC UNION (Jesus as the God-Man)

- a. The Hypostatic Union is the theological term for the uniting of undiminished deity and true humanity in the person of Christ, without mixing the two and without any loss of the identity of each.

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- 1) *HUPOSTASIS* is the Greek word meaning the substantial nature of something, the characteristics that comprise the essence of something
- 2) The essence or nature of the God-man, Jesus Christ, His deity and humanity, are locked together forever like two water-tight compartments.

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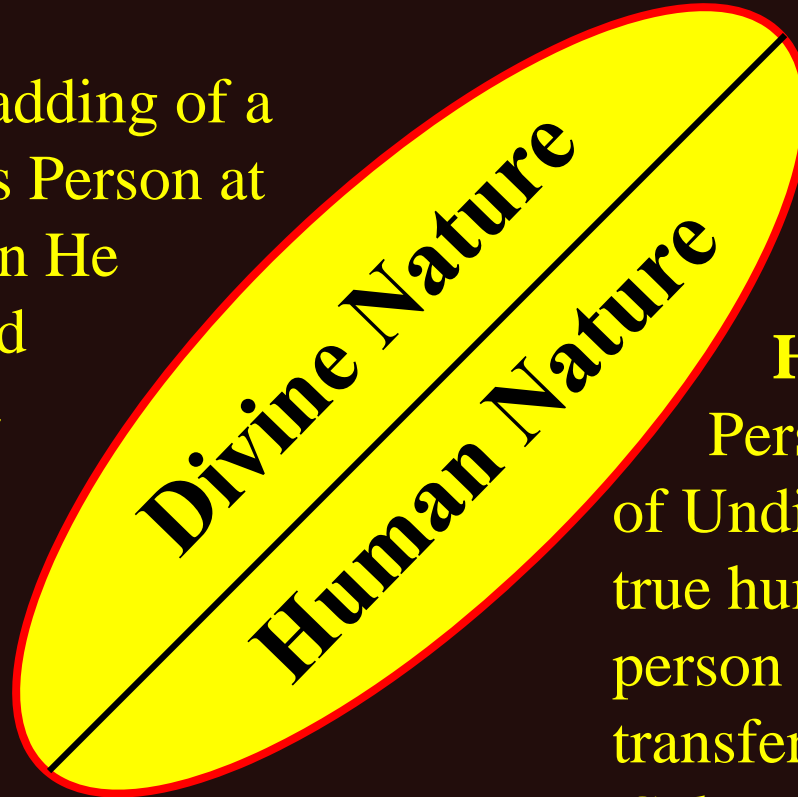
- b. When the Word became flesh, the Hypostatic Union of Christ began. As God, Christ had no beginning.
- c. Christ had to be both God and man to be an appropriate substitute and mediator for mankind. 1 Timothy 2:5
 - 1) As both God and man, Jesus Christ alone could represent and be the substitute for man before God.

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- 2) The right substitute able to die for mankind had to be fully human.
- 3) An ordinary man can die for only one other ordinary man.
- 4) As God, Jesus' death had infinite value that applies to the entire human race.

The Theanthropic Person

Kenosis – Christ’s adding of a human nature to His Person at the incarnation when He voluntarily restricted access to His divine nature to handle the problems of the human experience.
Philippians 2:5-11



Hypostatic Union – Personal eternal union of Undiminished Deity and true humanity in ONE person forever without transfer or loss of essence.
Colossians 2:9; 1Timothy 2:5

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18. John 1:15 – John the Baptizer (the Identifier) continually gave witness to Jesus.
19. John 1:16 – The abundance that comes from Christ's grace is the source of our salvation and spiritual life (*grace upon grace*).
20. John 1:17 – Grace and truth reached their full meaning and understanding in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
21. John 1:18a – No one at any time in human history has seen God the Father.

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22. John 1:18b – Jesus Christ provided full disclosure of the Father's essence. Seeing Christ was seeing the Father since Christ continually and consistently revealed Him. (God's nature – John 14:9; God's power – John 3:2; God's wisdom – John 7:46; God's glory – John 1:4; God's life – 1 John 1:1-3; God's love – Romans 5:8)

Exegeting the Father

John 1:18

Nature of God

John 14:9

Glory of God

John 1:14

Power of God

John 3:2

Life of God

1 John 1:1-3

Wisdom of God

John 5:46

Love of God

Romans 5:8

Hebrews 1:1-4

PANORAMA OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Prologue to the Life of Christ



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C. The genealogies in Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38

1. Under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit, Matthew and Luke both recorded genealogical records, thereby signifying the importance of Jesus' ancestry.
2. Genealogies were important legal records to the nation Israel because they proved tribal membership for inheritance rights.

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3. If genealogies are so important, why didn't Mark and John include them?
 - a. Mark wrote to the Roman world that didn't consider such information important or necessary.
 - b. John went back to eternity past to emphasize Jesus as the eternal Son of God. A genealogy could not establish that Truth.

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4. Contrasting the genealogies of Matthew and Luke
 - a. Matthew's genealogy contained 41 names; Luke's contained 74 names.
 - b. Matthew traced the line of Christ from Abraham to Joseph; Luke traced the line of Christ all the way back to Adam.
 - c. Matthew traced David's line through Solomon; Luke traced David's line through Nathan, another son.

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- d. Matthew traced the line of Jesus through Joseph, thus giving Jesus a legal claim to David's throne. Luke traced the line of Jesus through Mary, thus giving Jesus blood ties to David's throne.

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5. Why give the genealogy of Christ?
 - a. Matthew's genealogy of Christ answered the important questions a Jew would rightly ask anyone who claimed to be the King of the Jews.
 - b. The temple housed the genealogy records; therefore, anyone who questioned Jesus' genealogy could view them. Ezra 2:62.
 - c. The enemies of Christ never questioned His genealogy.

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6. Characteristics of Matthew's genealogy
 - a. Matthew gave a systematic summary of the three periods of Israel's history.
 - 1) Abraham to David(14 names) – Matthew 1:2-5
 - 2) David to the Babylonian captivity (14 names) – Matthew 1:6-11
 - 3) The Babylonian captivity to Christ(14 names) – Matthew 1:12-16

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- b. Matthew related Christ to two great covenants between Israel and God.
 - 1) The Abrahamic Covenant – Genesis 12:1-3
 - 2) The Davidic Covenant – 2 Samuel 7:8-17
 - 3) To properly understand Israel's history, the eternal, unconditional Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants must first be understood.

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- a) God promised an eternal house for David. 2 Samuel 7:11
- b) A son of David would sit on the throne of David. 2 Samuel 7:12
- c) Solomon would build God's temple. 2 Samuel 7:13
- d) David and Solomon's throne was established forever. 2 Samuel 7:13, 16

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- e) Solomon would be disciplined for disobedience. 2 Samuel 7:14-15
- f) Messiah would come from David's seed. 1 Chronicles 17:11
- g) Messiah's throne, house, and kingdom will be established forever. 1 Chronicles 17:12-14

The Abrahamic Covenant

Genesis 12:1-3
“land, seed, blessing”

**Real Estate
Covenant**
Deut. 29-30
“land”

**Davidic
Covenant**
2Sam 7:12-16
“seed”

**New
Covenant**
Jer. 31:31-34
“blessing”

The Davidic Covenant

Provisions:

God promises an eternal “house” for David – *2 Samuel 7:11, 16; 1 Chron. 17:10.*

A son of David would sit on the throne after David – *2 Samuel 7:12.*

Solomon would be the one to build God’s temple – *2 Samuel 7:13.*

David and Solomon’s throne established forever – *2 Samuel 7:13, 16.*

Solomon will be disciplined for disobedience – *2 Samuel 7:14-15.*

Messiah will come from David’s seed – *1 Chron. 17:11.*

Messiah’s throne, house, and kingdom will be established forever – *1 Chron. 17:12-14.*

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- c. Illustrious people in Matthew's genealogy
 - 1) Matthew 1:3 –Tamar, a Gentile, was a Canaanite adulteress. Genesis 38
 - 2) Matthew 1:5a –Rahab, a Gentile, was a Canaanite harlot. Joshua 2
 - 3) Matthew 1:5b – Ruth, a Moabite, was a Gentile convert.
 - 4) Matthew 1:6 – Bathsheba, a Gentile, was a Hittite adulteress. 2 Samuel 11

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- 5) Matthew 1:8 – Joram married Athaliah, the daughter of King Ahab and Jezebel, an evil Phoenician princess. 2 Chronicles 18:1
- 6) Matthew 1:12 – Jechoniah (Coniah) was a wicked king of Judah whom God cursed, another proof that Joseph was not Jesus' father. Jeremiah 22:28-30

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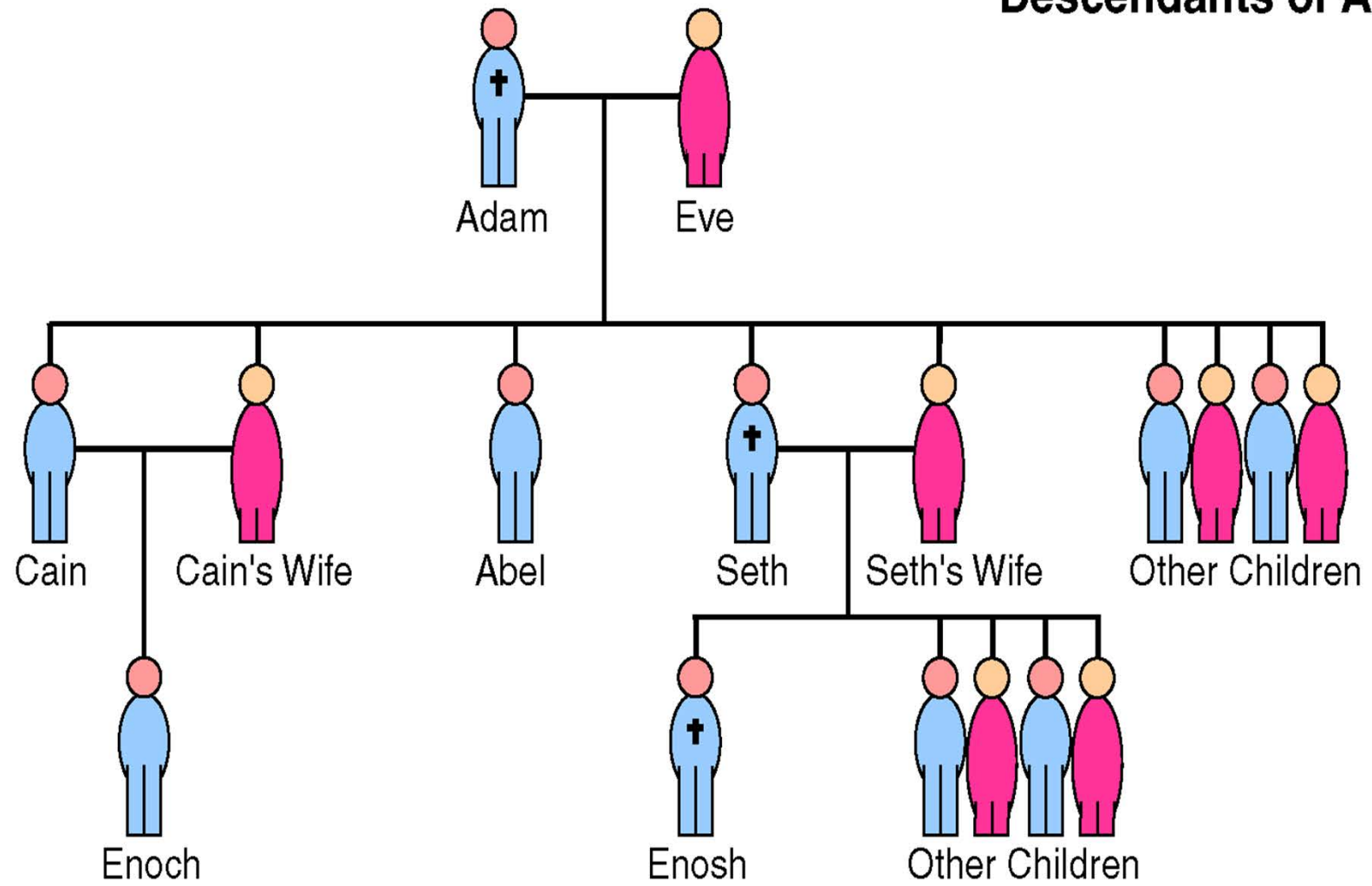
d. Grammatical observation: The grammatical structure used by Matthew verifies the virgin birth of Christ.

1) The pattern in the passage from Matthew 1:2 through 1:16a was, in every case, that the father of one generation fathered the son of the next generation.

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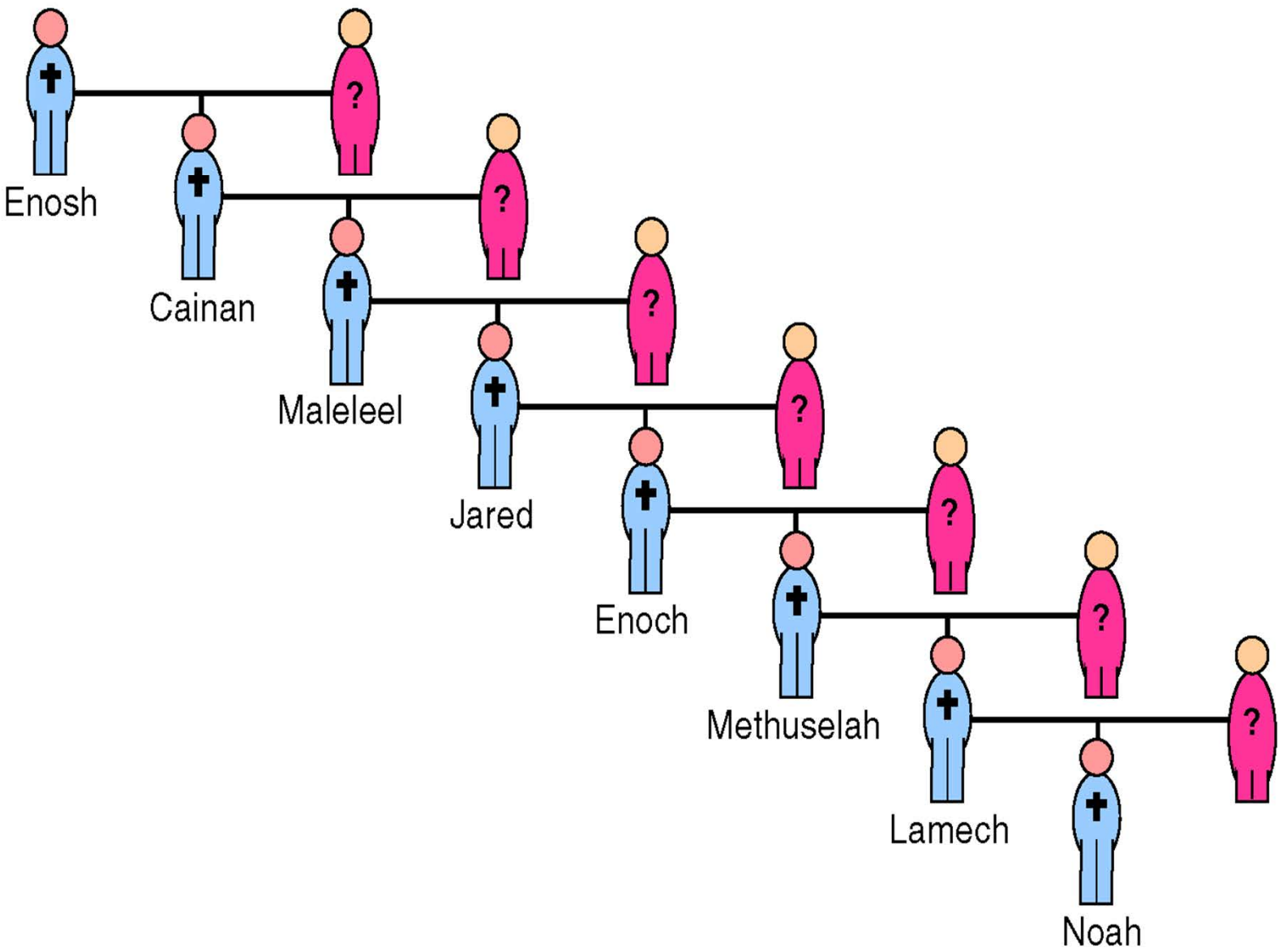
- 2) In verse 16b, Matthew changed the pattern, stating *Mary, of [by] whom was born [brought forth] Jesus*, thereby stating dogmatically that Joseph was not Jesus' biological father.
- 3) Christ's birth exactly fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 that a virgin would bear a son.

Descendants of Adam



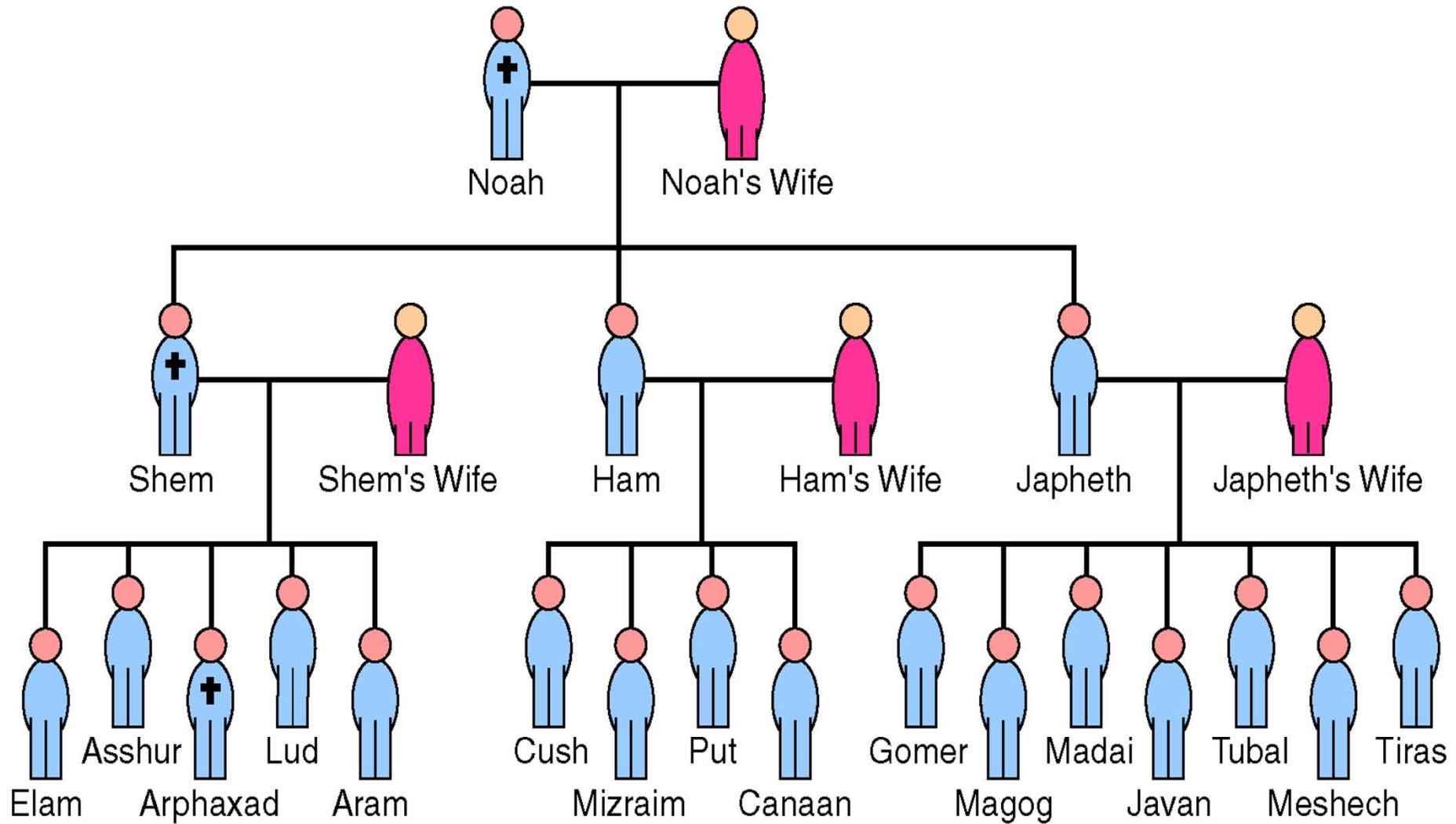
† indicates lineage of Christ

Descendants of Enosh

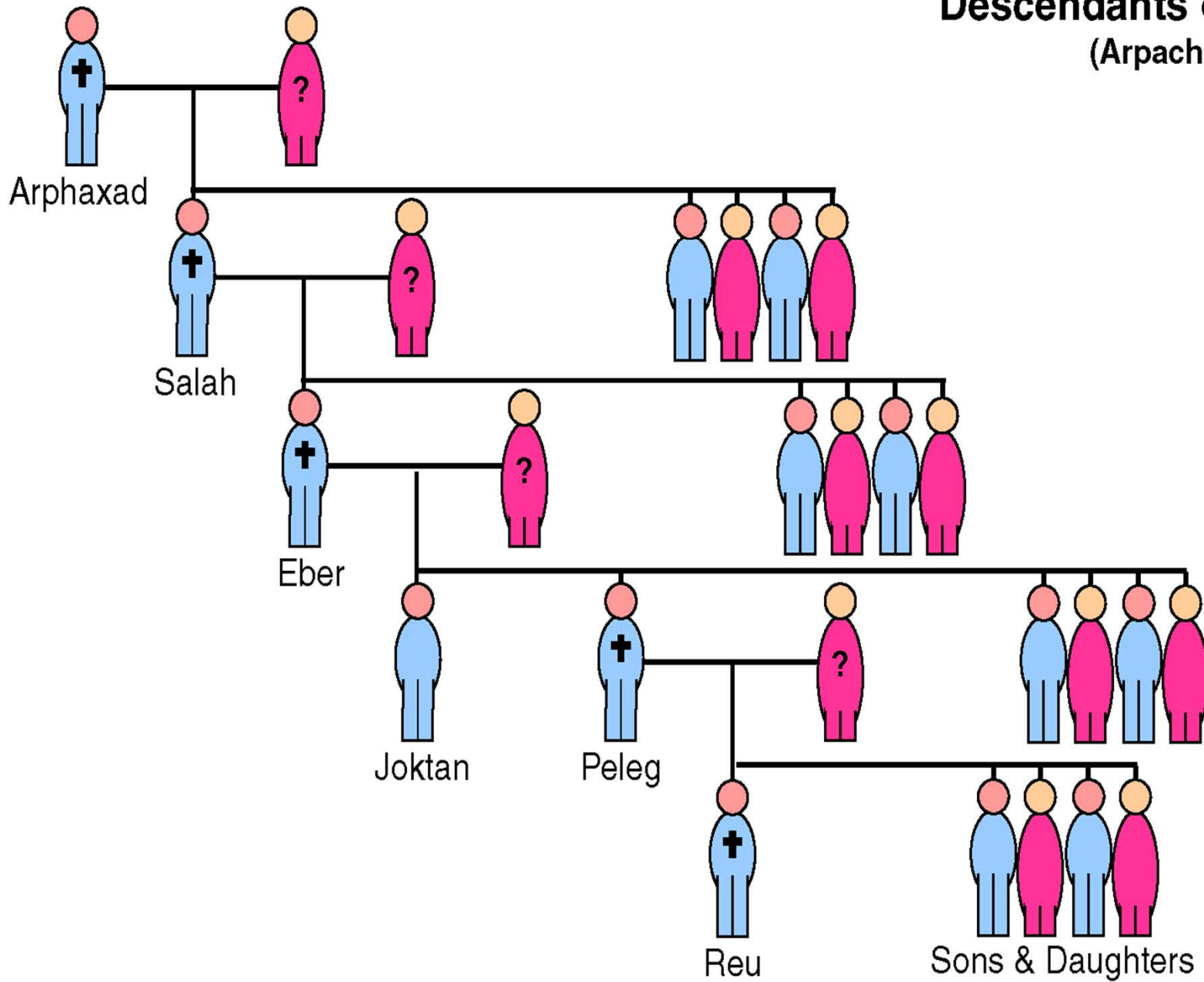


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Descendants of Noah

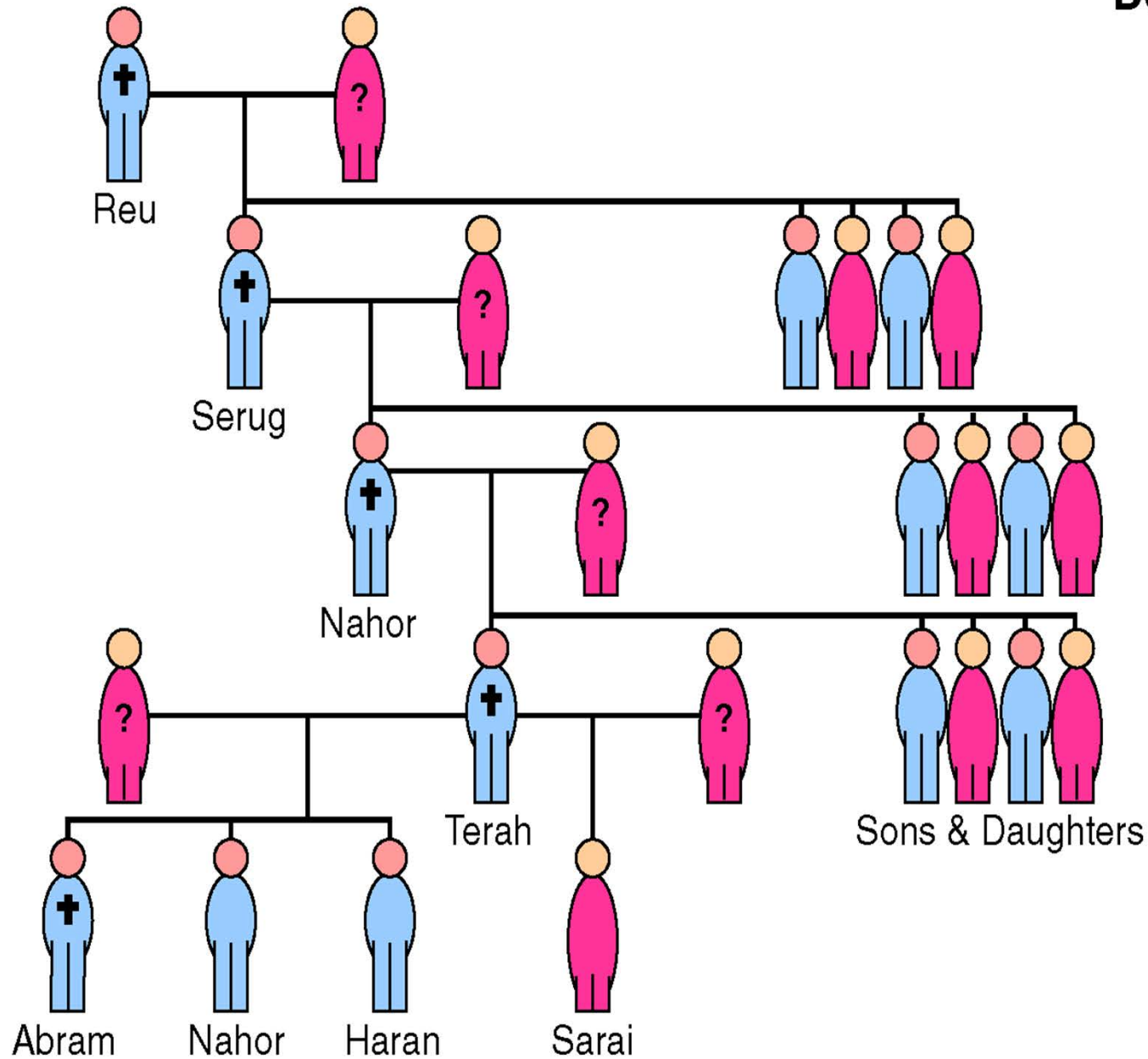


Descendants of Arphaxad (Arpachshad)

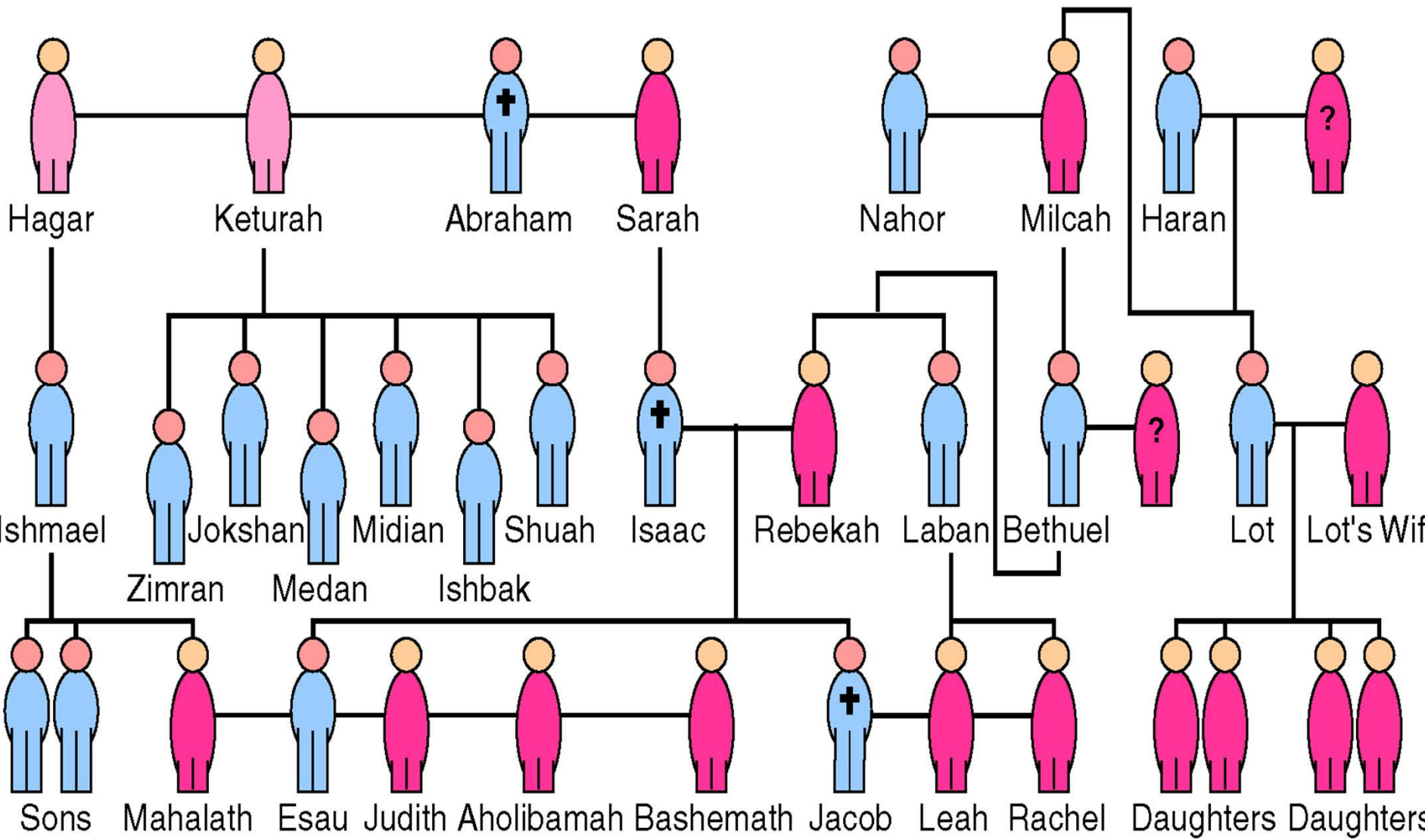


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Descendants of Reu

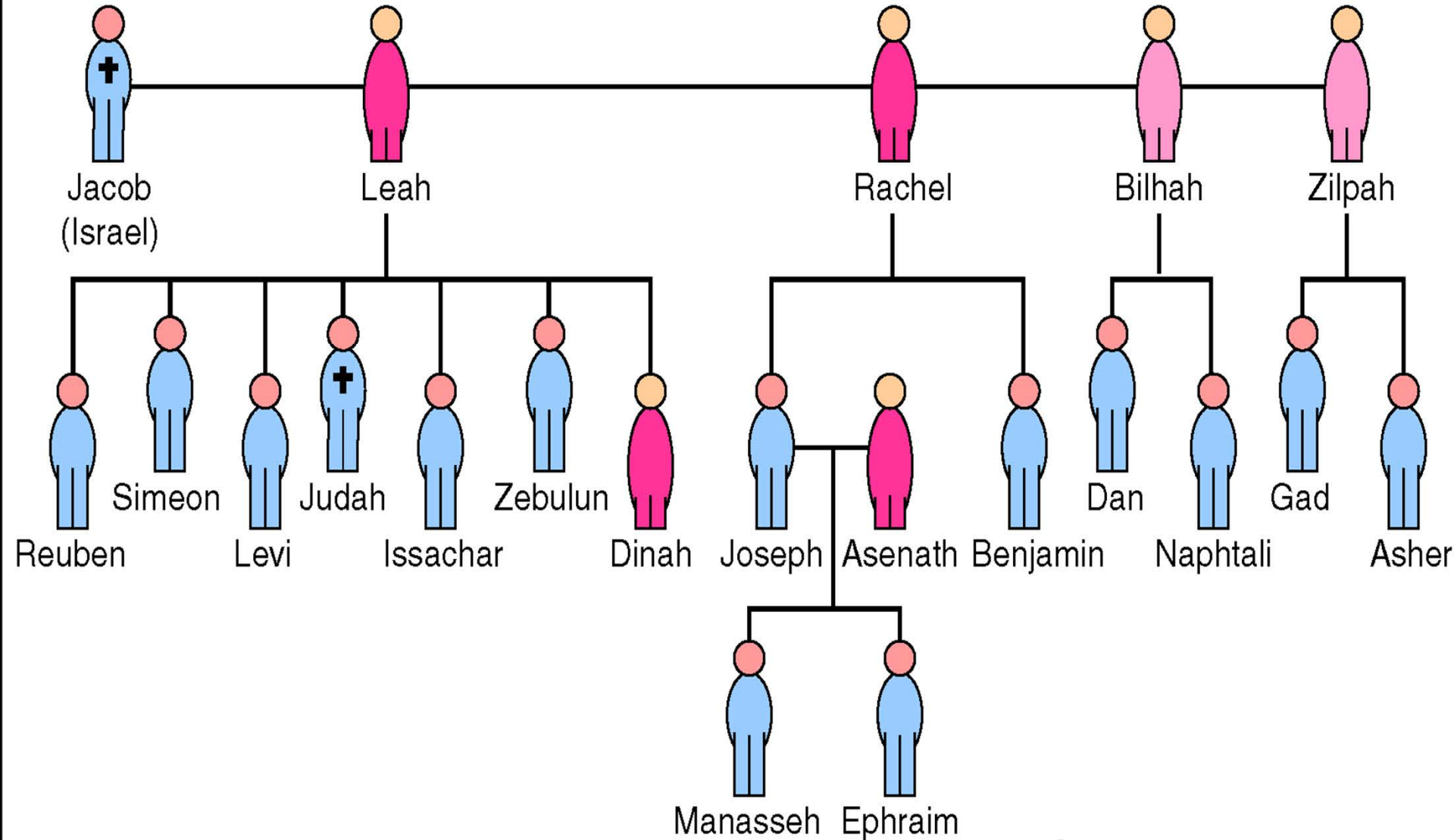


Descendants of Abraham

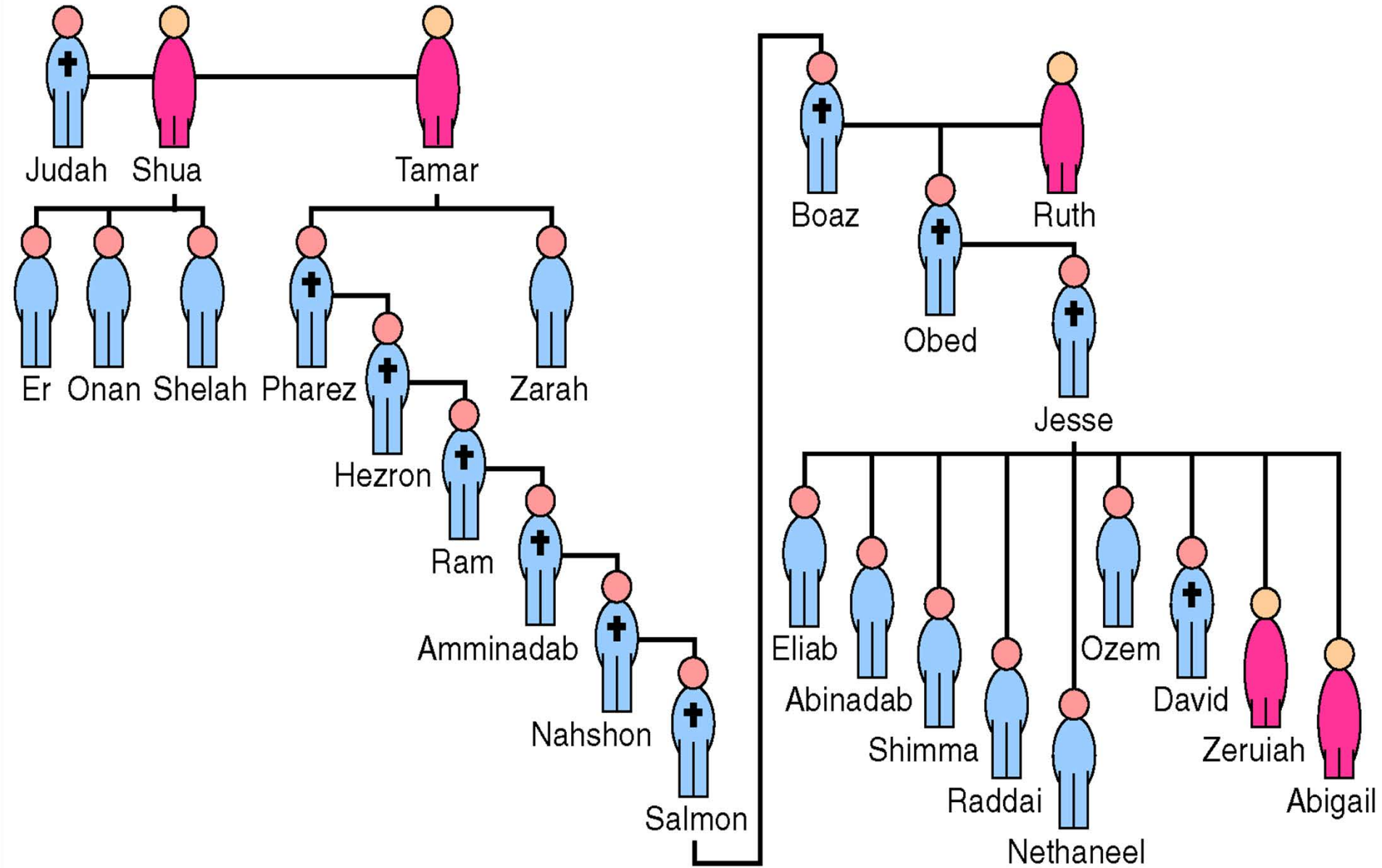


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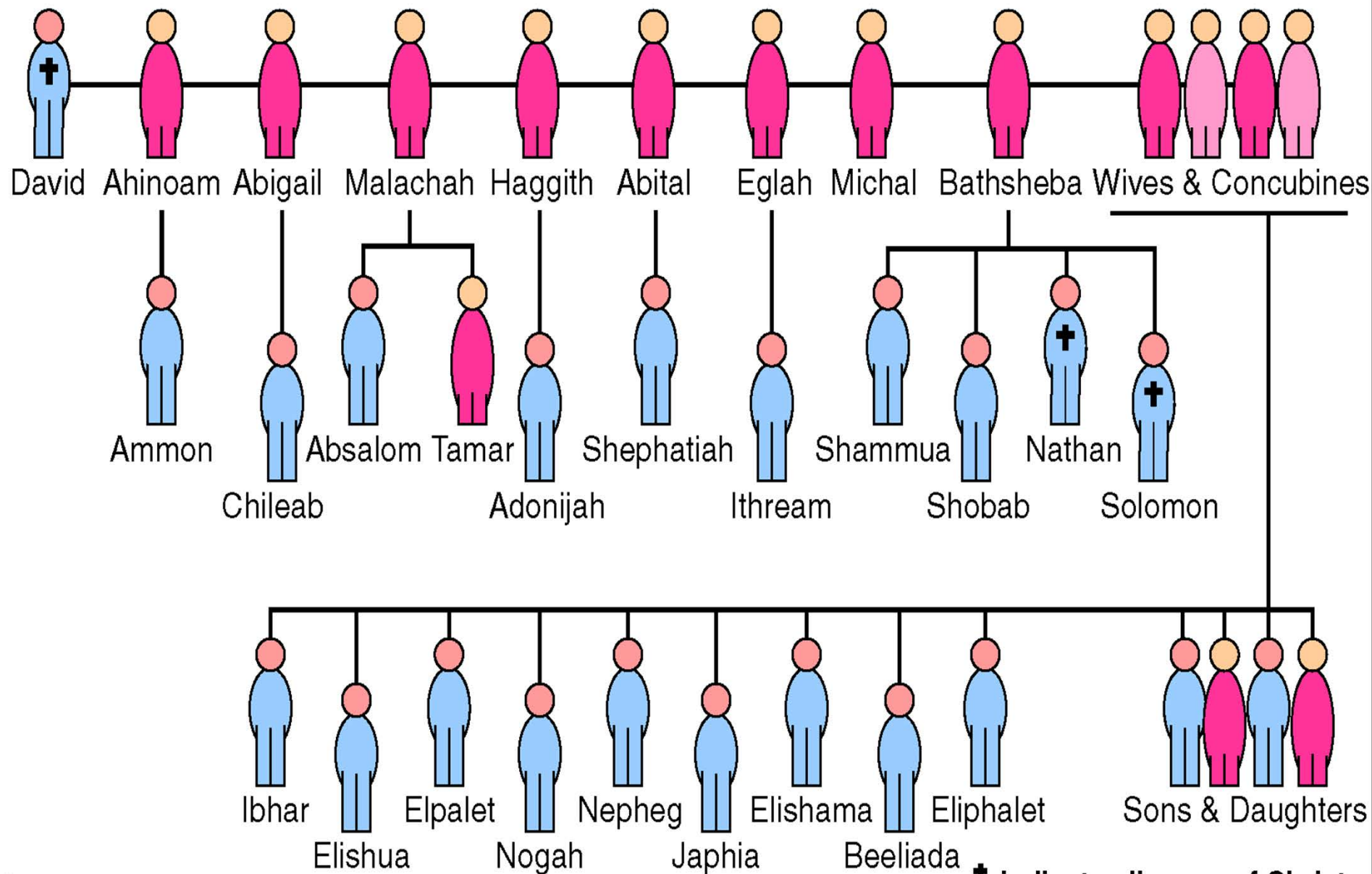
Descendants of Jacob



Descendants of Judah

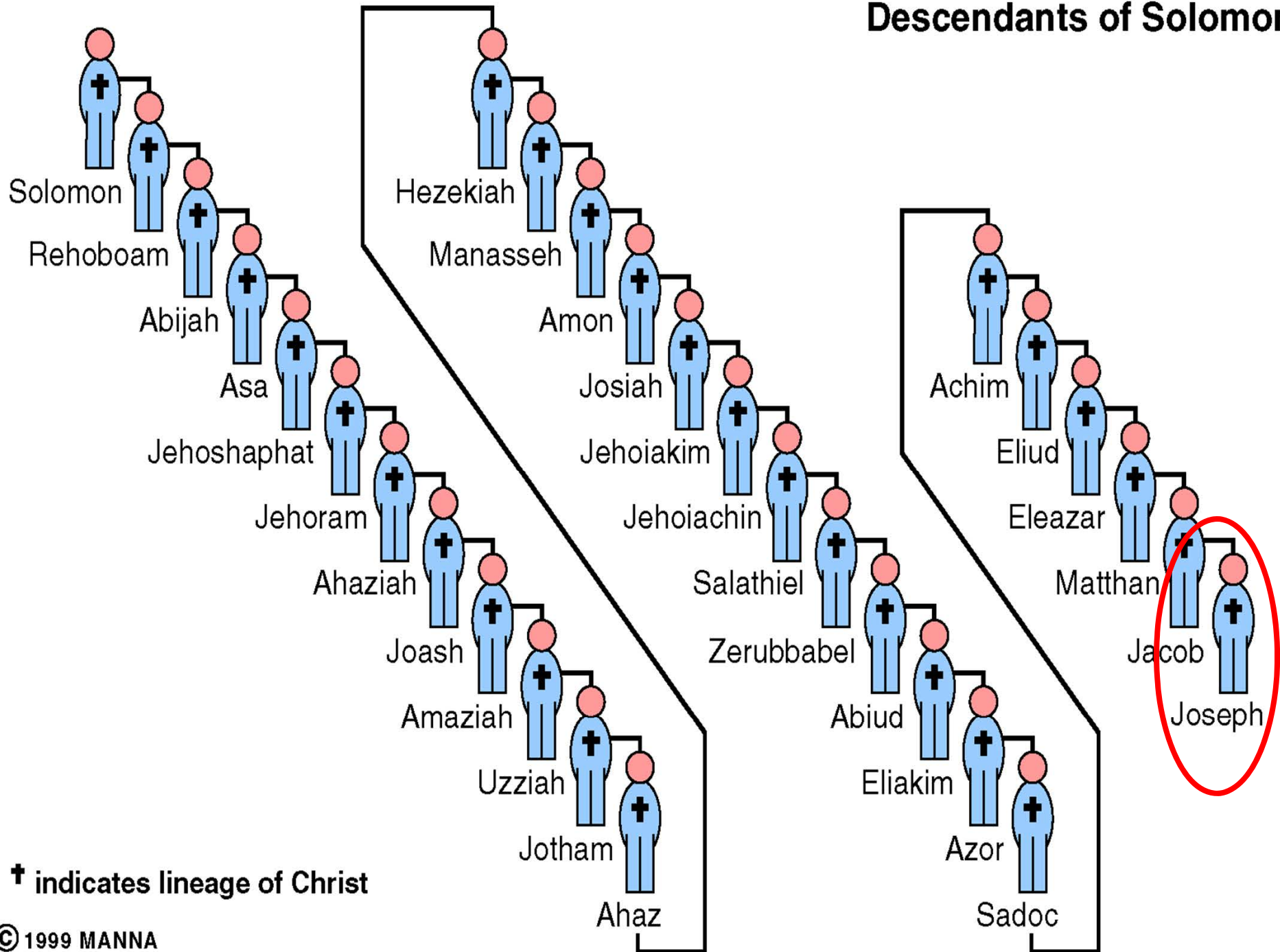


Descendants of David



† indicates lineage of Christ

Descendants of Solomon



Solomon

Rehoboam

Abijah

Asa

Jehoshaphat

Jehoram

Ahaziah

Joash

Amaziah

Uzziah

Jotham

Ahaz

Hezekiah

Manasseh

Amon

Josiah

Jehoiakim

Jehoiachin

Salathiel

Zerubbabel

Abiud

Eliakim

Azor

Sadoc

Achim

Eliud

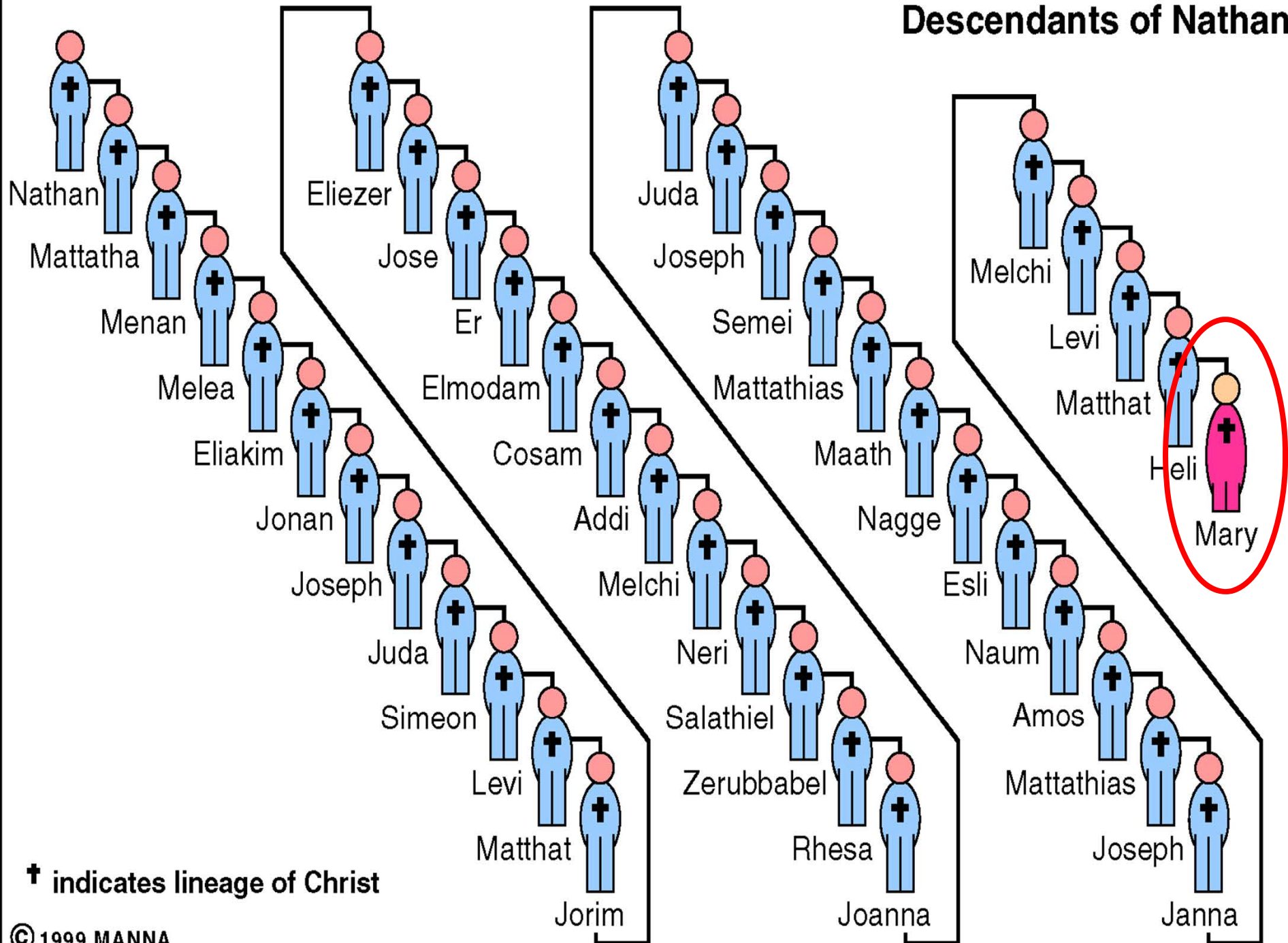
Eleazar

Matthan

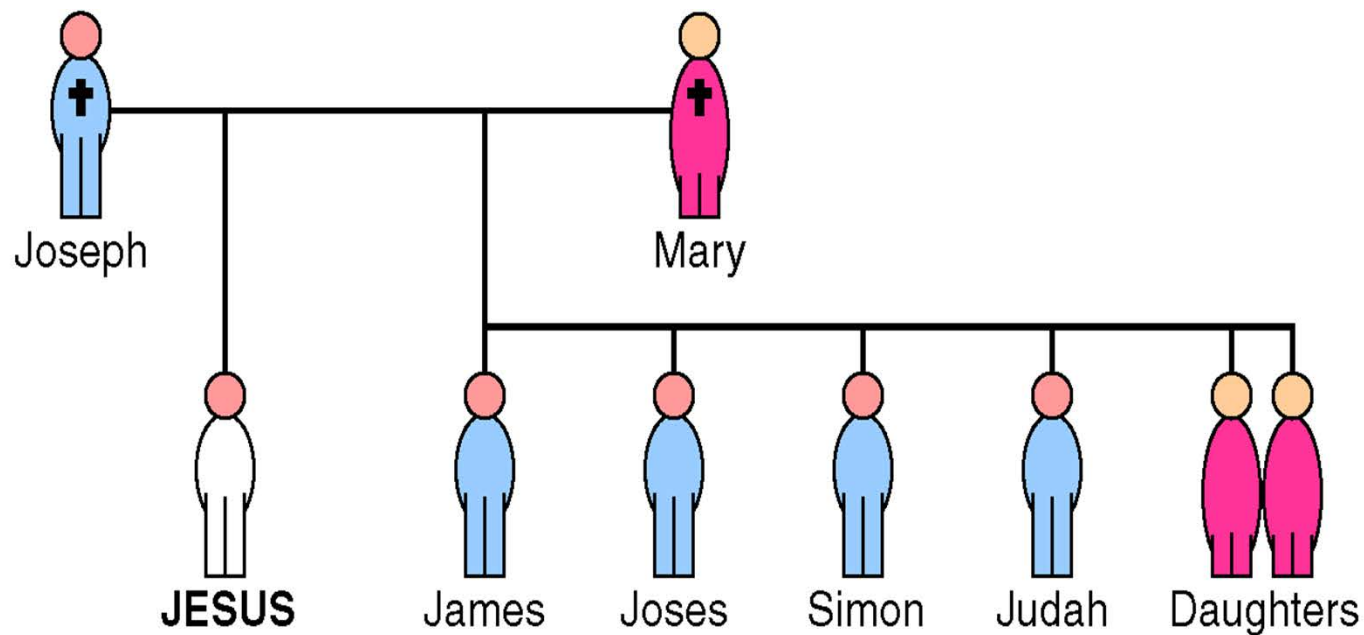
Jacob

Joseph

Descendants of Nathan



Descendants of Joseph



† indicates lineage of Christ

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D. Conclusions to the prologue of the life of Christ

1. Luke 1:1-4 – Christianity is a faith that is based on historical reality, on true events.
 - a. Faith should have knowledge of a fact as its object.
 - b. Faith can always be expressed in a truth claim that can be affirmed or denied.

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- c. Our faith in Christ is faith in the historical reality of His Person and work.

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2. John 1:1-3 – The Son has always existed as God, coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.
3. John 1:6-7 – John the Baptist came as the forerunner to proclaim that the Light, Jesus Christ, had come into the world.
4. John 1:16-18 – All Scripture reveals the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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5. Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38 – These genealogies prove Jesus' legal and physical right to sit as Messiah on David's throne to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant.
6. Our faith is inseparably connected to the historical facts concerning the life of Christ.