

## Giuseppe Guarino

# Christian Lineage Christian Lineage

Whose footsteps are you following in?

Preached at Higher Praise Christian Fellowship Sunday, May 23, 2010

The Genealogy of kings is their pride. Their lineage is the reason why they have a right to be kings.

If you notice Matthew gives a genealogy that traces back our Savior's descent from king David's seed, proving his birthright in the flesh to be king himself.

I am not a king. Very probably, you who are reading these lines are not a king too. My knowledge concerning my genealogy goes no farther than my grandgrandfather's name. Very probably that is the case with you too.

But if we can neglect to know where we come from in the flesh, as Christians we cannot neglect to learn what our spiritual lineage is. Because, we all can agree that knowing our family, knowing who give birth to us, is a bit like knowing ourselves better. Knowing where we come from, will tell a lot to us about where we are going to. The same thing is true spiritually.

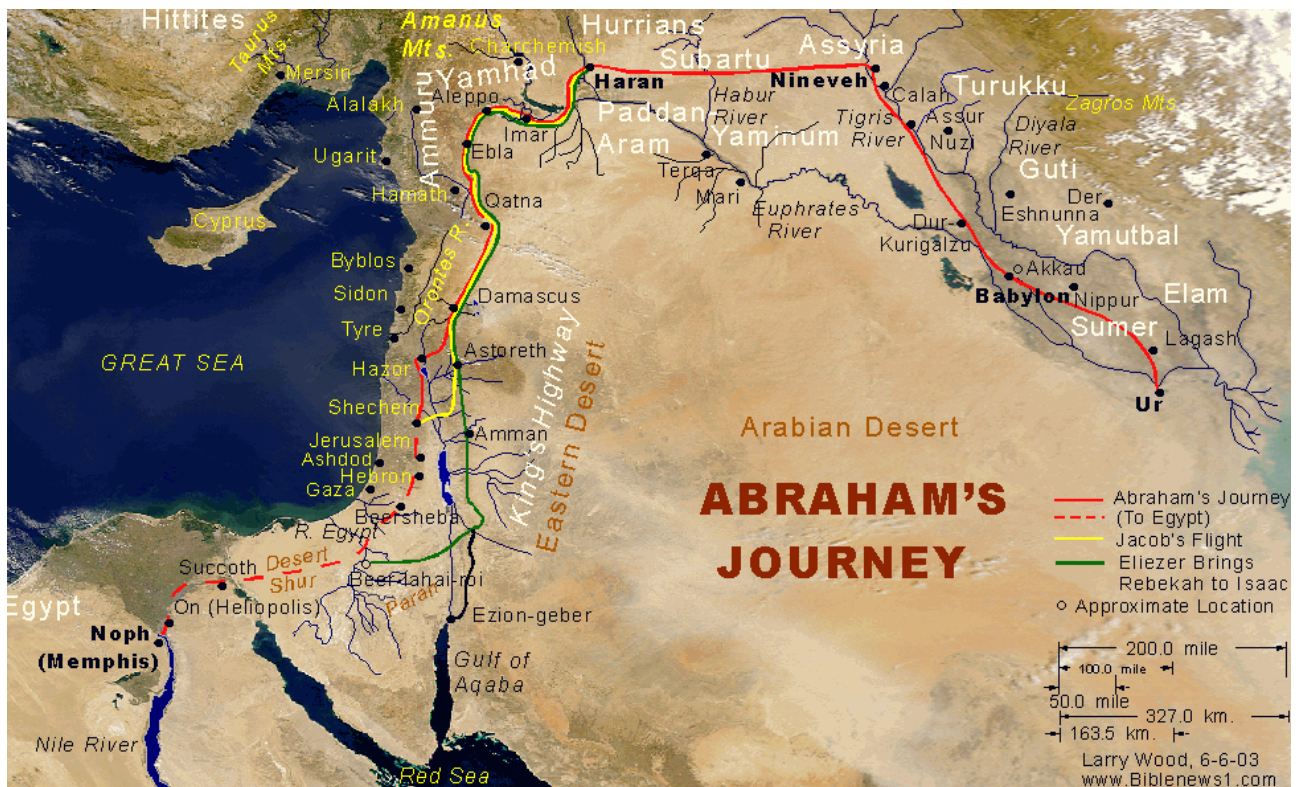
Stephen gave the ultimate testimony becoming the first to die for the name of Jesus. He spoke so clearly of the lineage of true believers. We will examine in detail our spiritual genealogy by considering his words.

### **Acts 7:2-3**

“And he said, Men, brothers, and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran. And He said to him, "Go out from your land and from your kindred, and come into a land which I shall show you.”

Abraham obeyed God. He lived in the comfortable land of Ur, very probably during the splendid Third Dynasty. Living in the cities or near the cities of Mesopotamia was a lot easier than just wandering the fields of Palestine. But God

told Abraham to go and he did. Because of that, he was blessed by God. He was blessed becoming a great nation.



This very good picture was found at [www.biblenews1.com](http://www.biblenews1.com)

It is as simple as that: obedience always places us in the right position to receive the blessings.

Abraham became our father in the spirit. Paul says that we – Christians – are his spiritual seed, which perfectly aligns with the subject of our discussion.

Galatians 3:6-9 reads, *“Even as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Therefore know that those of faith, these are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the nations through faith, preached the gospel before to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all nations be blessed.” So then those of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.”*

We are walking in the footsteps of Abraham!

**Act 7:9-10**

“And being jealous of Joseph, the patriarchs sold *Joseph* into Egypt. But God was with him and plucked him out from all his afflictions, and He gave him favor and wisdom over against Pharaoh king of Egypt. And he appointed him governor over Egypt and all his household.”

We all know the story of Joseph. It is so wonderful that it has become famous even to people not interested in the Bible.

Only a man whose fate was driven by God's omniscient counsel could go from being sold to slavery to becoming second only to Pharaoh in the Egyptian kingdom, which at that time was the strongest and most ancient monarchy in the world.

Being interested in history as I am, I can't help but wonder for the incredible way God does things. In the great picture of history, it was all penned so that the promises to Abraham might be fulfilled.

In fact, only in Egypt God might have raised the man who would give Israel the Law.

It is clearly stated in the Word.

**Acts 7:17**

"But as the time was drawing near, of the promise which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt"

Moses' birth, both time and place, had been divinely orchestrated. Moses spent 40 years at the Egyptian Court, so that he could receive the best education and instruction available in the world of those days.

**Acts 7:22**

"And Moses was learned in all *the* wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and in deeds."

But after "secular" education, he still had a lot to learn. After an incident with an Egyptian, whom he killed, he had to flee to the land of Median. There God could deal with him. It took forty years more. At the end of which Moses was ready for his task. At very long last he was ready to learn of his true lineage.

**Acts 7:30-32**

"And forty years being fulfilled to him, *the* Angel of *the* Lord appeared to him in the desert of Mount Sinai in a flame of fire in a bush. And seeing *it*, Moses marveled at the sight. And as he drew near to see, the voice of *the* Lord came to him: *saying*, "I *am* the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

After Moses, Joshua, with whom the people took possession of the Land.

**Acts 7:44-47**

"Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus (Joshua) into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. But Solomon built him an house."

The plan of God in history is so clear. It took centuries to unfold, but today, thanks to His Word, it is so evident to those who approach those blessed pages.

Nothing happens by chance. It's Design, not coincidence – I wrote in some other study of mine.

Those man who Stephen mentions in his Sermon, truly they are our forefathers in the Spirit. And if any man has a doubt concerning whether he was born in the right family or not, at the right time or not, the Word is very clear on this matter.

**Ephesians 1:3-6**

“Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ; according as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, **having predestined us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself**, according to the good pleasure of His will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, in which He has made us accepted in the *One* having been loved.”

The problem with today's generation is that we tend to forget our true lineage. The skeptical and humanistic belief that we are here by chance creates an unquestionable conflict with the natural need of God that is in every man's life.

It is the recovery of our true spiritual lineage that will give us an awareness of our true goal in life, happiness and freedom in Christ.

And it is not by mere coincidence. “*He chose us.*” Individually, we are precious for God. He saw us “*before the foundation of the world*”: Creation was an act of pure love.

**Ephesians 1:9-11**

“having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, for an administration of the fullness of times, to head up all things in Christ, both the things in Heaven, and the things on earth, *even* in Him, in whom also **we have been chosen** to an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His own will.<sup>1</sup>”

Seeing all in this right perspective now, if we have not done it so far, let us seriously consider whose footsteps we are following in.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews put it from another, but very similar perspective.

---

<sup>1</sup> Please focus your attention in the truth of this passage: that God really loved us individually, thus choosing us, before the foundation of the world, in Christ Jesus. Do not be confused by the so many, so called theories about *predestination* of any kind. It's not the subject here, and we may lose our blessings if we fail to see the obvious, reading the Bible passage for what it says.

**Hebrews 12:1-2.**

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith.”

I must confess I don't like sports very much. But I also must agree that the way Christian life can be compared to a race is very effective.

And what connects this passage of Hebrews with our discussion is that, figuratively this race is run in a stadium where those who proceeded us in this spiritual competition are there, witnessing our race. We can spiritually imagine them supporting us as we want to give our best honoring our spiritual lineage represented there. Abraham, Joseph, Joshua, David, Stephen, Paul, Peter, we are following in their footsteps. But most of all, we are called to follow in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1Peter 2:21**

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps”