Human Lineage: Lost Sense - New Opportunity?

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Introduction

Over the past decade, there has been an increased interest in researching one's genealogy. Various television programmes inspire people today to discover about their recent ancestors. Helping those who are struggling to trace their family tree, a proliferation of services to help people investigate historical records has emerged. According to www.ancestry.co.uk, 80 per cent of British people consider knowing their family history to be important. This and other websites are helping people research their lineages.

Since 2004, the BBC has aired the Wall to Wall production *Who Do You Think You Are?*, a genealogy documentary series that follows the journey of a celebrity tracing their family tree. In an episode originally broadcast on 19 August 2009 (series 6, episode 11), the actor Martin Freeman identified a male ancestor and was curious if he was single, engaged or married, which betrayed a subconscious recognition that the most important part of life is familial relationships. These relationships, especially those of a horizontal conjugal nature, define the vertical relationships between parents and children which, extended over many generations, affects the lineage. An understanding of one's roots has an impact on one's sense of personal identity; the memory of one's history empowers a person to know where they have come from and, perhaps, where they going.

With advancing understanding of human genetics, questions regarding genetic inheritance are being raised. The heritability of certain phenotypic features are being examined, which is helping to define the origins of various physical health, mental health and social behavioural issues. While the inheritance of some traits have been convincingly associated with the inheritance of certain genetic markers, the evidence is less convincing for other measurable qualities. Speculation about the role and function of junk DNA, for example, is illustrating how nascent this field of research really is. It has even been demonstrated that environmental factors can alter DNA in a way that allows features to be inherited without changing the DNA that constitute our genes. Described as transgenerational epigenetic inheritance, this exciting curiosity presents both challenges and opportunities to applied and theoretical research in

evolutionary biology.[1] If one's genetic inheritance is influenced, at least in some part, by the lifestyles and habits of one's parents, credence is lent to the biblical claim in Ex 34:7 about God 'visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation'.

How does progress in this and other scientific fields, such as embryology and fertility, affect the human sense of identity? If one's identity is linked intimately with one's forebears, will ignorance of one's ancestry lead to crises of identity? In this post-modern society it would seem that identity is malleable, a matter of choice, juxtaposing with the assertion that certain behaviours and lifestyles are explained and excused by virtue of being born predisposed. Challenging current norms, Barton voiced hope that 'human identity in a post-modern society need not be at the mercy of an amoral pluralism and an unbridled scientism. Families are called to witness otherwise: to the fact that our true personal identity and our deepest interpersonal kinship (within and beyond families) is found within the solidarity of the church doing the will and work of God in the power of the Spirit of God.'[2]

This work will explore the manner in which a revised understanding of lineage can empower people to do the will and work of God now and in the future. By developing a hermeneutic of lineage and interpreting contemporary society through this hermeneutical lens, new social possibilities will be discovered. Chapter 1 will probe the historical preoccupation with lineage, examining the practice of ancestor worship in various historical cultures and the role and function of genealogies in various contexts. The continuity of Jewish and Christian religion within the context of family life will also be investigated. Chapter 2 will analyse current trends in family life and relationships, revealing that a sense of the value of lineage has been virtually lost, and hence demonstrating an urgent need for renewal of marriage and family. Chapter 3 will present the hermeneutic of lineage as the means by which social memory and identity can be rescued. Adoption theology will be considered and its eschatological implications will lead to a radical proposal highlighting the importance of an awareness of lineage in preparation for marriage and in building and raising families. The hermeneutic of lineage will be exhibited as the new opportunity to address

[1] Eva Jablonka and Gal Raz, 'Transgenerational Epigenetic Inheritance: Prevalence, Mechanisms, and Implications for the Study of Heredity and Evolution', *The Quarterly Review of Biology*, 84/2 (2009), 131-176 (p. 162)
[2] Stephen C. Barton, *Life Together: Family, Sexuality and Community in the New Testament and Today* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2001), p. 49

specific pastoral situations that deal with the most intimate issues closest to the human heart: those in the context of the family.

Chapter 1: Historical Preoccupation with Lineage

Knowing one's ancestry has not just been a matter of identifying with a certain clan or tribe, for the sake of confirming kinship, but also has been used to prove authority, status or ownership. Maintaining a connection with one's ancestors, in the form of veneration or devotion, has developed in a number of cultures as a method of reinforcing the memory of one's lineage. Before investigating the function and meaning of Biblical genealogies, including that of Jesus Christ, some historical traditions of ancestor worship will be examined. Finally, lineage will be considered as a vehicle for conveying religious identity.

Ancestor Worship in Historical Cultures

Ancestor Worship in the Indian Subcontinent

In many cultures around the world, both historically and presently, an appreciation of one's lineage is important in the veneration and worship of ancestors. Keith examined the cultural roots of the Indian subcontinent borne out of the earliest Sanskrit texts that feed into the core religious ideas of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. He noted that 'the Indian in the Vedic period looks, despite his dread of death, with affection and esteem upon his ancestors, and that much of his existence should be concerned with the means of securing them nourishment.'[3] Although much of life is spent striving to avoid death, there is an understanding that those whose physical lives have expired maintain life in another form and, despite the cessation of their physical needs, require food and drink offerings to maintain their spiritual health.

These offerings can be interpreted as a superstitious bargaining. Keith explained that 'if the men care for their Fathers, it is but natural that these Fathers should be deemed to be anxious to aid and assist them, and the companionship of the blessed dead with the gods encourages the belief that they have power to aid, even as the

[3] Arthur Berriedale Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Updanishads*, The Harvard Oriental Series 32, ed. by Charles Rockwell Lanman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 425

gods have power.'[4] Fearing the wrath of spiritual agents who may otherwise be displeased, making offerings to one's ancestors is seen as a way of ensuring favours. Keith recognised references to Fathers being invoked to confer boons. Just as men would pray to gods, men also pray to their Fathers for success, for defeat of enemies, for the gift of rain, for the bestowal of eloquence, for abundance of food and for help in battle. In the majority of cases, the spirit invoked will not be an individual, but the whole body of Fathers. Keith clarified that the 'attitude of the Fathers to the living is assumed by the latter to be one of friendship: they are invoked to turn the merit acquired by their good deeds to the overthrow of the foe of the living, but to their own they are dangerous only when these sin against them by failing to provide them with due offerings'.[5]

Keith concluded that the one special end of the ancestors is the production of offspring amongst the living, without which the rites for the dead cannot be kept up.[6] There is an understanding in the culture of the Indian subcontinent that ancestors desire descendents and that the single most important act of devotion the living can offer to their ancestors is to maintain the lineage and provide offspring, in whom the lineage will continue. The subsequent descendents will maintain the memory of recent ancestors and involve them in ensuring the preservation of the lineage, particularly through guaranteeing male descendents. It is understood that these descendents possess their own unique, personal identity and do not inherit the identity of a deceased ancestor in some form of reincarnation. Thus the importance of lineage as a line connecting distinct people from the past to the present and projecting into the future is maintained and promoted through the culture of the Indian subcontinent. Our attention now turns to an understanding of lineage in Far Eastern culture.

Ancestor Worship in the Far East

Rooted in the teachings of Confucius, filial piety is so fundamental in Chinese ethics, dominating the Chinese scale of values, that anything seemingly contrary to it excites the greatest abhorrence. Early Christian missionaries found that ancestor worship would be a much tougher obstacle than idolatry.[7] In the November 1925 edition of

[4] Keith, p. 425
[5] Keith, p. 426
[6] Keith, pp. 425-6
[7] P. J. Maclagan, *Chinese Religious Ideas: A Christian Valuation* (London: Student Christian Movement, 1926), p. 163

the *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, T. W. Douglas James reflected on Chinese ancestor worship:

> To it... cling the most reverent thoughts, the deepest experiences of the Chinese religious mind. It has the sanction of antiquity. It represents a rooted belief in immortality, though more of the clan than of the individual. It calls to mind the links which bind a man alike with his past and his future, and enshrines that sense of ancestry, heritage and destiny which go to make greatness in nation and individual. It is the State of the Chinese Soul; the setting in which Hero and Sage alike visualise their life. In it is embedded that immortality of fame, 'that last infirmity of noble mind,' which great souls desire and prize above riches. A man sees himself one with an ancestry in whose glory he rejoices: and they for his life become 'the great cloud of witnesses,' spurring him on to high endeavour; and after him comes the line of those descendants who will be inspired and glorified in him, and in whom his deathless memory is to be perpetuated"[8]

Like the culture of the Indian subcontinent, ancestors are worshipped as a group. Also, the welfare of the departed depends on the performance of certain actions by the living. A person possessing such an understanding and striving to embody filial piety will scrupulously see that those actions are performed, and would be terribly shocked by their omission.[9] Clan life centres on ancestral temples and graves, which are visited on particular anniversaries or stated times of ancestor worship. These family and clan gatherings help to keep ties of kinship strong and fresh.[10]

Maclagan made the charge that Chinese ancestor worship tends to degrade women, partly because, as in other countries, male descendents only are allowed to perform the rites, but still more because of the emphasis on having male offspring in order that the continuance of the rites may be assured.[11] This echoes the Vedic culture of the Indian subcontinent, in that an uninterrupted line of men constitute the pedigree. Maclagan objected to Chinese ancestor worship on the basis that it can be seen as idolatrous and that it 'is indifferent to moral valuations, since any parent, good or bad, must be worshipped in the same way... whatever "worship" may mean.'[12] Nevertheless, he made a Christian defence for the practice of petitioning deceased ancestors:

> since God has so ordered it that in this life children can offer and request and parents receive and respond, is that any *a priori* reason why the same relation

[8] As quoted in Maclagan, pp. 160-1
[9] Maclagan, pp. 165-6
[10] Maclagan, pp. 167-8
[11] Maclagan, pp. 169-70
[12] Maclagan, p. 171

> should not continue when one of the related persons has passed into the unseen? While allowing human interdependence here, is God so jealous of His rights in the unseen world that no petition prayer or request is to be made of anyone but of Him only?[13]

Thus the importance of ancestor worship in the Far East is demonstrated by the acknowledging of and paying homage to of one's ancestors, by making offerings for their benefit, by requesting grace from them, and by guaranteeing descendents by giving birth to (especially male) progeny. How does this compare to the culture of the Near East, the culture out of which Christianity was borne?

Ancestor Worship in the Near East

There is some considerable debate about the reality of ancestor worship in the tradition of Israel. Based on Biblical prohibitions against relating with the dead, it could be assumed that such practices were absent, having been purged from Israelite culture. Despite the prevalence of ancestor cults in the surrounding peoples of the Mediterranean, Douglas remarked that the 'Pentateuch did not just ignore its ancestors... It violently hated to be in communication with them.'[14] This is not to say, however, that there was no belief in the afterlife in Jewish culture. Segal noted the belief amongst religiously motivated contemporary Israeli settlers, who want to live in land designated for a projected Palestinian state, that pious Jews dying at the hands of Arabs are Jewish martyrs, rewarded in heaven and looking down on their surviving family members, encouraging the pioneers of a new nation to continue their occupation.[15]

Segal speculated that the word *elohim*, the alternative to the tetragrammaton YHWH, could have been understood not only as a word for describing the God of the Hebrews, but also understood as the ancestors of the land. Segal imagined that some Israelites may have prayed to them and thought they were worshipping the god of their ancestor deities.[16] Segal also noted that in 2 Kings 23:

> Josiah also throws out the *terafim*, ancestral spirits, known to be in the possession of Israelites in the patriarchal period and later. Since this occurred in 621 BCE, not all the Israelites had hearkened to the law codes of earlier times. The ancestral spirits had altars and could be consulted and may have

[13] Maclagan, p. 173
[14] Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 99
[15] Segal, p. 2
[16] Segal, p. 131

> also been referred to as *elohim* (Gen 31:19, 30, 32; 35:2, 4; Judg 17:5; 18:14, 17, 18, 20; see Isa 8:19-20; Num 25:2; Ps 106:28). It seems quite likely that one of the meanings of the word *elohim* must also be "ancestral gods." For instance, Laban's *teraphim* represent his ancestral deities - that is, his *elohim*, which were going to be outlawed as "foreign gods" in the eyes of the Biblical editors.[17]

While Segal's analysis of the Biblical texts would appear to indicate the prevalence of ancestor worship, Schmidt disagreed with the conclusion that veneration of the ancestors underlay the mortuary rituals of ancient Israel. His conviction, based on analysis of the various traditions of Biblical authorship, was that the 'belief in the benevolent dead was a late development in Israelite or Judahite religion as... evidenced by both its introduction in the ritual form of Mesopotamian necromancy not before the seventh century B.C.E. and its subsequent reununciation in the dtr and priestly traditions.'[18] Based on the investigations of Jay, who showed that the Yahwist tradition constructed a narrative world that is at least partially informed by a matrilineal descent system, in contrast to the patrilineal descent system underlying the social structure of pre-exilic Israel,[19] Schmidt claimed that there may be no ancestor cult where lineage does not receive a strict definition patrilineally or territorially. In such lineage systems, sacrifice is offered to divinities instead of ancestors, for the group is less corporate and so sacrifice is non-genealogically defined.[20] Some biblical writers, according to Schmidt, employed the mortuary cult rites, such as care and feeding of the related dead and commemoration of the virtuous dead, as a standard for the maintenance of the nation's relationship with her god, implying that the 'dedication with which a son performed his duties on behalf of the weakened family dead stood as an ideal for the Israelite's loyalty to Yahweh.'[21]

Returning to Segal's analysis, one final Biblical curiosity worth exploring is the often repeated phrase, "gathered to his fathers". The deaths of Abraham (prefigured in Gen 15:15 and described in Gen 25:8), Ishmael (Gen 25:17), Isaac (Gen 35:29), Jacob (Gen 49:33), Aaron (Num 20:24), Moses (foretold in Num 31:2 and directed in Deut 32:50) and Josiah (2 Chr 43:28) are all described with this phrase. On one hand, this phrase appears to indicate proper burial: Segal considered that the phrase 'originally

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[17] Segal, p. 128
[18] Brian B. Schmidt, *Israel's Beneficent Dead: Ancestor Cult and Necromancy in Ancient Israelite Religion and Tradition* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1994), pp. 291-2
[19] Nancy Jay, *Throughout Your Generations Forever: Sacrifice, Religion, and Paternity* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 94-111. Chapter 7 of Jay's book provides convincing evidence that lineage was inherited via women in the families of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not via the men.
[20] Schmidt, p. 279
[21] Schmidt, p. 291

indicated the practice of mixing the bones of the family in common for final disposition... Peaceful burial with one's ancestors is itself seen as reward for a good life. It is conceivable, therefore, that "being gathered to one's ancestors" refers to the whole primary inhumanation process, where the body is exposed in a tomb until only the bones remain and that "burial" proper referred to the secondary burial, the final disposition of the bones.'[22] Alternatively, Segal interpreted the phrase to perhaps suggest that there was a ritual process of merging one's individuality with the collective ancestry of the people. Or, more simply, death could be seen, in some way, as a family reunion.[23] Segal complicated the issue by suggesting that the phrase may have had a more generalised Canaanite conception, noting that the "gathered ones" in Ugarit represented 'the group of dead, divinized royal figures who are called upon with sacrifices to ensure peace for the land'. Despite its tempting curiosity, the meaning of the phrase remains ambiguous.

For the purpose of this study, the above evidence demonstrates that the Israelites had a connection with their ancestors. Whether or not the ancestors were worshipped, there was certainly an understanding of continued existence beyond temporal life and an expectation of reconnecting with one's ancestors upon physical expiration.

Ancestor Worship in Rome

Contemporaneously to the emergence of Christianity, ancestor worship existed in the culture of the Roman Empire. Segal explained that in Rome, 'once the correct funeral rituals were performed, the deceased officially belonged to the *Di Manes*, the communal, sainted ancestors.' He continued to explain in detail that graves 'and tombs were also the location of offerings to the dead. Like those of the Mesopotamians and Canaanites, tombs and graves, especially in the Hellenistic period, could be fitted with sophisticated plumbing pipes for periodic libations delivered to the remains. When the bones of ashes were laid to rest in buried urns, the pipes conveyed the gifts into the urns.'[24] As Christianity was brought to gentile pagans, it inevitably came into contact with communities whose cultures had existing provisions for devotion to dead ancestors. As Christianity rose in cultural prominence, these practices were overtaken by more modest devotion to the dead, particularly to

[22] Segal, pp. 139-40
[23] Segal, pp. 138-9
[24] Segal, p. 210

the recently departed, but no longer in the same manner as before. While echoes of these cultures remain in the feasts of All Saints and All Souls, Western Christianity has largely purged most forms of ancestor worship.

Ancestor worship continues to play a role in parts of the world outside the influence of the Abrahamic faiths. For the purpose of this study, the role and meaning of genealogies, particularly in the Judeo-Christian cultural sphere will now be studied.

The Role and Meaning of Genealogies

Robert Wilson, who conducted both a broad anthropological survey of existing tribal societies and a thorough examination of biblical genealogies, defined "genealogy" as 'a written or oral expression of the descent of a person or persons from an ancestor or ancestors'.[25] He goes on to qualify that, as an expression of a person's descent, a genealogy must express or imply a kinship relationship between the persons named in it. These kinship relationships are especially important in tribal and most nonurban societies. Status, rights and obligations can be defined by such relationships.[26] Genealogies provide a mnemonic of the lineage. Lineages can be characterised by segmentation (in which separate lines may converge upon a shared ancestor)[27], depth (how far back in the ancestry individuals can be remembered or, in the case of "telescoping", certain unimportant generations may be skipped in order to recall only significant ancestors)[28] and fluidity (in which genealogical connections, in especially segmented lineages, may be justifiably adjusted or outright invented as required by particular situations).[29] Genealogies may be changed when there is societal consensus for the support of social, political or religious claims, perhaps after adoption or other processes of filiation, or to hide shamed or dishonoured ancestors.

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[25] Robert R. Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World*, Yale Near Eastern Researches 7, ed. by William W. Hallo, Marvin H. Pope and William K. Simpson (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 9
[26] Wilson, p. 18
[27] Wilson, pp. 19-20
[28] Wilson, pp. 22-6. (For a New Testament demonstration of "telescoping" cf. D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, ed. by Frank E. Gaebelein and others, 12 vols (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1977-1992), VIII (1984) p. 65: 'the Greek verb translated "was the father of" (*gennaō*) does not require immediate relationship but often means something like "was the ancestor of" or "became the progenitor of".')
[29] Wilson, pp. 27-34

Wilson outlined three general areas in which genealogies function: the domestic or familial domain, the politico-jural domain, and the religious or cultic domain.[30] The last function is of particular interest to this study. In those societies having a developed ancestor cult, deceased ancestors are thought to retain in interest in lineage matters, intervening in the affairs of the living. The ancestors may then become the focus of cultic practices designed to influence the way in which the intervention takes place.[31] Genealogies are also used religiously in those societies possessing a concept of divine kingship or having some other type of royalty cult. In societies where people holding certain genealogical positions only may be members of religious organisations, genealogies serve to demonstrate eligibility of membership.[32]

Wilson concluded that oral and written genealogies cannot be seen to function primarily as historical records, rather having sociological function in the life of the society that uses them.[33] Nevertheless, oral genealogies may in fact contain a great deal of accurate information:

> They are frequently reliable statements of the domestic, political, and religious relationships recognized by the people who use the genealogies. They can therefore provide the modern historian with helpful insights into the social perspectives of these people. In addition, although genealogies may be highly fluid, they do not change capriciously. They are not usually invented by their users, but changes are made in existing genealogies on the basis of contemporary information or disputed and poorly remembered historical information.[34]

Once a genealogy is transcribed, however, formal change is severely limited, with the result that a number of genealogical functions that require such change are proscribed or at least severely hampered.

In his work on the purpose of the biblical genealogies, Johnson identified at least 9 functions of genealogies in the Old Testament. These included: demonstrating existing relations between Israel and neighbouring tribes by tracing them back to common patronyms; the interrelating of previously isolated traditional elements concerning Israelite origins, by the creation of a coherent and inclusive genealogical system; establishing continuity over those time periods not covered by material in the tradition; chronological speculation concerning year and world cycles; demonstrating

[30] Wilson, p. 38
[31] Wilson, p. 44
[32] Wilson, p. 45
[33] Wilson, p. 54

the office succession of military leadership; demonstrating legitimacy of office or rank by connection to a worthy family or past individual; establishing and preserving the homogeneity of the race; asserting the importance of the principle of the continuity of the people of God through a period of national disruption; and finally the literary function emanating from priestly circles.[35] Of particular relevance to the development of the hermeneutic of lineage is the concern for the purity of 'the holy seed' (Ezra 9:2), which was taken up and strengthened in the Rabbinic tradition to maintain the homogeneity of the Jewish race.

Johnson's evaluation that Old Testament genealogical forms were used above all for nationalistic and theological apologetic purposes,[36] resonates with the understanding of genealogies promoted by Wilson. Johnson thus reasoned that 'biblical genealogies are closely attached to their contexts and to the narrative in which they occur in regard to language, structure, and theology.'[37]

In examining the genealogies of Jesus presented in the gospels of Matthew and Luke, Johnson asserted that they cannot be the result of accurate genealogical records. Rather, both lists 'fall into the category of Midrash, which has a homiletical and hortatory function, and thus may be considered part and parcel of the tendency towards historification of "non-historical" materials.'[38] Matthew's genealogy communicates the author's deep sense of eschatological fulfilment and the author's emphasis on the title 'Son of David'. In contrast, Luke's genealogy historicises the title 'Son of God', thus avoiding metaphysical and adoptionistic connotations, and serves as an example of the Lucan idea that the history of salvation is the continuity of the will and word of God.[39]

A starkly alternative interpretation of the infancy narratives is provided by Schaberg, who claimed that various silences in the text, particularly the male silence about women and women's own silence, reveals some fascinating implications, concluding that Jesus was conceived illegitimately.[40] The mention of four women in Matthew's genealogy, according to Schaberg, leads the reader to expect a 'story of a woman

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[34] Wilson, p. 55
[35] Marshall D. Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies: With Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 77-80
[36] Johnson, p. 81
[37] Johnson, p. 253
[38] Johnson, p. 254
[39] Johnson, pp. 254-5

who becomes a social misfit in some way; is wronged or thwarted; who is party to a sexual act that places her in great danger; and whose story has an outcome that repairs the social fabric and ensures the birth of a child who is legitimate or legitimated. That child, Matthew tells us (1:1), is "the son of David, the son of Abraham."'[41] Luke presents Joseph as only the supposed father of Jesus. The physical father of Jesus is never named either because it was unknown or suppressed, reinforcing an illegitimacy understanding that Jesus was fathered by an unnamed man.[42] Schaberg argued that the New Testament infancy narratives incorporate a tradition, which is most likely historical, of Jesus' illegitimate conception, a tradition that was minimally theologised but subsequently repressed and erased within the patriarchal community of early Christianity.[43] She thus demonstrated that genealogies can 'acquire new meanings as they live on in different communities and situations.'[44]

The above study of genealogical form indicates its adaptability to widely varied literary purposes. Johnson concluded that the 'genealogical form was made to serve the interpretation of history and, as such, illumines the author's view of historical relationships more than the actual course of historical events itself.'[45] A hermeneutic of lineage should thus communicate, whether implicitly or explicitly, something meaningful about one's own genealogy.

Lineage Maintaining Religious Identity

Lineage can be seen as the vehicle through which identity can be conveyed. Maintaining the lineage is not only a matter of ensuring the survival of the community (whether racial or spiritual) but especially for religious people it is also the means of securing the faith and the sacrificial practice of the next generation. Linking religion and identity, Segal explained how the Jewish people defined themselves:

> The Bible suggests that the people of Israel and its God, whose proper name is YHWH, usually designated by the word "Lord" in English Bibles, have entered into a specific agreement called a "covenant" (Hebrew: *Berîth*). The agreement says that YHWH will look after the people if they keep His laws,

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[40] Jane Schaberg, *The Illegitimacy of Jesus: A Feminist Theological Interpretation of the Infancy Narratives* (San Francisco, CF: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 18
[41] Schaberg, p. 33
[42] Shaberg, p. 101
[43] Schaberg, p. 195-6
[44] Schaberg, p. 197
[45] Johnson, p. 256

> which include worshiping Him, Him alone, and observing a variety of laws for the religious, social, and moral benefit of the people, at least as those values were understood at that time. This covenant has a history; recounting the history of the covenant, in fact, is what creates the historical narrative of the Hebrew Bible. It also means that fortune and misfortune depend on controllable variables - the behavior of the people.
>
> Not only does this make people responsible for their own fortunes in nature, it also has consequences for the conception of the self. In place of locating themselves geographically in the great forces of nature, the Israelites locate themselves in the unique history of Israel and, later, in the history of the dispersed Jewish people. That necessarily makes each individual more aware of the unique aspects of public and private moral experience. The Bible demythologizes nature and mythologizes history.[46]

Jewish identity, thus, is rooted in knowing the history of the Jewish people, particularly the history of their covenantal relationship with God. Interestingly, Jay discovered that 'where intergenerational continuity is figured through fathers and sons, sacrificing directly supports descent structures. Where intergenerational continuity is figured through women, in bilateral or matrilineal systems, sacrificing may work separately from, or even in opposition to genealogical structures.'[47] Since Jewish identity is passed down from mother to child, it serves as an example of an effective matrilineal system for successfully conveying faith from one generation to the next.

Barclay specified that, despite being open to embracing Gentile proselytes, Judaism is fundamentally an ethnic tradition. The practice of the religion is bound up with ethnic identity. To be Jewish and practice 'ancestral customs' involves a range of distinctive family practices which are of profound religious significance. Especially where Jews are the minority, the fear of intermarriage heightens the sense of ethnic identity.[48] The family, thus, is a crucial bulwark against social and cultural assimilation:

> Children were born into a tradition which it was assumed they would perpetuate, and they learnt from their parents what it meant to be a Jew. The family constituted the key arena for the socialisation of each new generation, who would be equipped to raise the following generation, in turn, as Jews.[49]

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[46] Segal, p. 123
[47] Jay, p. xxv
[48] John M. G. Barclay, 'The Family as the Bearer of Religion in Judaism and Early Christianity', in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and* Metaphor, ed. by Halvor Moxnes (London: Routledge, 1997), 66-80, (p. 69)
[49] Barclay, p. 69

By contrast, Christianity could not function simply as an ethnic tradition. For those who converted from Gentile background, belief in Christ caused a fundamental rupture with any prior ancestral customs, abruptly and offensively breaking religious traditions that may have run continuously through thousands of generations.[50] Practically, the early Christian movement undermined family loyalties for significant portions of its adherents. It became distinguished by this characterisation, leading to a fundamental reconsideration of the worth of family loyalties and of the family as such.[51] Barclay concluded that primitive Christianity was 'ill-equipped to ensure its propagation from one generation to the next.'[52] Likewise, contemporary Christianity faith is not ethnically inherited. Every generation needs to be evangelised. Nevertheless, some Christians have developed strong family cultures which facilitate the inculturation of children.

This chapter has revealed that in cultures where ancestor worship exists the devoted actions of the living can invite the blessing and support of the related deceased. The identity and social status of living descendents can be moulded by association with specific ancestors. While Judaism is an ethnic faith, having developed family-centred traditions to uphold and maintain religious identity, Christians must face the challenge that without a developed hermeneutic of lineage, their family structures are vulnerable to apostasy. The next chapter will further explore the challenges faced by Christian families today.

Chapter 2: Contemporary Relationships, Marriage & Family

The previous chapter explored the historical importance of lineage, highlighting its role in anchoring a sense of identity and providing a vehicle through which social memory can be retained. This chapter will test the extent to which lineage plays a role in contemporary society. The importance of the notion of lineage will be examined by reflecting on issues of marriage law and cohabitation, mixed marriage, divorce and remarriage, and surrogacy and gamete donation. Each reflection will demonstrate different problems arising out of absent or distorted concepts of lineage, illustrating the need for a renewed understanding of lineage, which will be exposed in the next chapter.

[50] Barclay, p. 73
[51] Barclay, p. 74
[52] Barclay, p. 76

Marriage Law & Cohabitation

Shannon identified that, over the last century, domesticity had three major impacts on the traditional family: arranged marriages were replaced by courtship, mother-child relations were emphasised, and the family became sealed off from the larger community. He observed that the 'contemporary family presents a zone of privacy, a barrier between the world and the members of the family. What constitutes the modern family is its self-awareness as a voluntary grouping based on mutual affection between partners and extending to offspring, while existing as an autonomous unit within a larger social system.'[53] No longer the basic unit of society, Shannon describes the nuclear family as a unit of consumption rather than of production.

The landscape of marriage has also been evolving. Recent legislation changes in many countries, including the UK, have now broadened the institution of marriage to recognise same sex relationships. The process of marriage redefinition is not a recent phenomenon, however. Outhwaite evidenced the accompaniment of English marriage with the interchange of property between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Bargaining over the terms of marriage could be lengthy where meaningful property was at stake. Eldest sons were likely to inherit patrimony, but daughters could purchase status or security through their dowries. Because of the various social, economic and political implications, marriage was deemed to be far too important an event to be left entirely to the couple themselves, even though the latter had some freedom of choice.[54] Outhwaite articulated the role of courtship in the traditional marriages of this period by recognising three stages, whereby a courting couple would firstly pledge themselves to each other, followed by a formal betrothal before assembled kin and finally they would go through a public church ceremony.[55] He also explored the reality of hasty courtships, common law marriages and marriage by pledge. What commonly occurred was that relationships would be consummated after only the first or second degrees of betrothal had been confirmed. Issues of bigamy and spousal abandonment thus led to the development of marriage law in England in an effort to protect families, especially wives and children.

[53] Thomas A. Shannon, *Surrogate Motherhood: The Ethics of Using Human Beings* (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1988), p. 37
[54] R. B. Outhwaite, *Clandestine Marriage in England, 1500-1850* (Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon, 1995), p. xvi
[55] Outhwaite, p. xx

The picture of marriage painted by Outhwaite illustrated that lineage is only of importance when considering the inheritance of family fortunes, in which privilege was given to the eldest male offspring, or handsome dowries for daughters could afford marriage into wealthy families. There is a possibility that the god being worshipped in such arrangements was not the god of love, but rather Mammon.

The parental involvement in marriages of that period contrasts starkly with the contemporary reality of privatised, individualistic relationships. Cohabitation is commonplace, with young people rejecting the traditional view that the period between puberty and marriage should be without sex. In most countries, cohabiting unions tend to be short-lived, either converting to marriage or dissolving.[56] The trend for cohabitation is rendering people less committed to their relationships, allowing promiscuous behaviour to become more prevalent.[57] There is a more general acceptance at all social levels of the high rates of out-of-wedlock births and single parenthood, which is associated with worsening economic conditions.[58] By not involving their parents in their conjugal relationships, young men and women are corroding the longevity of their relationships and hurting the economy of the country.

According to Don Browning's interpretation of this reality, the 'deinstitutionalisation of marriage has led to a new brand of coercive, state-enforced regulation of the family.'[59] While Outhwaite demonstrated how English law had changed in order to legislate marriage and protect families, especially children and mothers, Browning's fear is that changes in US law are leading to the unsatisfactory replacement of husbands and fathers with governmental programmes. He cautions against programmes that 'treat children as if they were not a part of families, thereby undermining family solidarity and parental responsibility.'[60] One of the observed phenomena as a result of weakening marriage structures is the virtual adoption of children by the state. The issue of adoption will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter, but for now it is enough to suggest that, with the state seen as a replacement father for many children, identity is confused and memory is interrupted. Rather than inheriting the lineage of their father and mother, the paternal line can sometimes be replaced by the anonymous state. Just as shamed ancestors are removed from tribal genealogies in

[56] Jack Dominian, *Let's Make Love: The Meaning of Sexual Intercourse* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2002), p. 106
[57] Dominian, p. 109
[58] Don S. Browning, *Equality and the Family: A Fundamental, Practical Theology of Children, Mothers, and Fathers in Modern Societies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), p. 53
[59] Browning, p. 55
[60] Browning, p. 57

order to better the social position of the descendents, children are now forgetting their direct parentage.

The above discussion demonstrates that the 'meaning of marriage in our time is profoundly different from its meaning throughout previous history, when it was tightly embedded in the economic and social fabric of society. The changing role of women and the increasing mobility of our culture, along with the dramatic effects of widely available contraceptives, are forcing us to redefine marriage.'[61] These developments in marriage have implications on the inheritance of lineage.

Mixed Marriage

Even in marriages where both partners come from the same ethnic, national or religious backgrounds, decisions will need to be 'made about which family traditions and rituals to retain and which ones the partners will develop for themselves... The joke that there are six in the marital bed is really an understatement. It has been said that what distinguishes human beings from all other animals is the fact of having in-laws.'[62] The associated pressures are multiplied when the husband and wife are of very different backgrounds. In our globalised world, the likelihood of intermarriage, or mixed marriage, is increasing. It is not always welcomed, however:

> Intermarriage is feared because it threatens the survival of the group. Cultural and religious groups have always had prohibitions against intermarriage. Generally the greater the difference in cultural background, the more difficulty spouses will have in adjusting to marriage[63]

Exogamic couples are usually seeking a rebalance of the characteristics found within their original ethnic background. While a fiancé(e)'s differentness may initially attract a person during courtship, later the same qualities may become sources of frustration. Tolerance for such differences diminish when stresses, from the marital relationship or even the extended family, are added to the system.[64]

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[61] Monica McGoldrick, 'The Joining of Families Through Marriage: The New Couple', in *The Changing Family Life Cycle: A Framework for Family Therapy*, ed. by Betty Carter & Monica McGoldrick, 2nd edn, (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 1989), p. 209
[62] McGoldrick, 'The Joining of Families', p. 210
[63] Monica McGoldrick, 'Ethnicity and the Family Life Cycle', in *The Changing Family Life Cycle: A Framework for Family Therapy (2nd Edition)*, ed. by Betty Carter & Monica McGoldrick (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 1989), p. 73
[64] McGoldrick, 'Ethics', p. 74

Interfaith marriage presents an added set of challenges, especially associated with religious upbringing.[65] Up until the 1970s, Catholic marriage partners were expected and explicitly required to endeavour prudently to convert the other partner to the Roman Catholic faith. Such requirements caused a good deal of tension and distress in the past for the non-Roman partners,[66] especially in the context of 'interchurch marriage', a marriage 'between a Roman Catholic and a baptised Christian who is a member of another Church. Such marriages are commonly called "mixed marriages", but the term "interchurch" is used in order to distinguish them from others which are also called 'mixed', namely marriages between a Christian and an unbaptized person and also marriages between people of different races.'[67] It is worth clarifying, however, that less than one in ten mixed marriages can be described as interchurch.[68]

Roman Catholics are not allowed to marry non-Catholics without dispensations, such as promising to remain faithful and to ensure that any children are baptized and brought up in the Catholic Church. Before 1966, the non-Catholic partner would also be required to promise to raise the children as Catholics, although since then they need only be informed of the promise made by the Catholic party.[69] The teaching of the Catholic Church on Christian marriage is based on the idea that children are born into families so that they can not only have their physical development provided for but also so that they can receive training in spiritual duties and moral responsibilities.[70] The best thing for a Catholic child, Heenan proposed in the late 1940s, is to have a Catholic mother, explaining that it would be 'extremely difficult for a non-Catholic mother, however conscientious, to provide that spiritual nourishment which a Catholic child needs. Others can supply it. But there is no teacher like a good

[65] John C. Heenan, *They Made Me Sign: A Series of Talks to a Non-Catholic About to Marry a Catholic* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1949), p. 106
[66] John Gordon Williams, *Marriages Between Anglicans and Roman Catholics* (Saffron Walden: SPCK, 1972), p. 6
[67] Joint Working Group of the British Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church in England, Wales and Scotland, *The Joint Pastoral Care of Interchurch Marriages in England, Wales and Scotland: Recommendations by the Joint Working Group of the British Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church in England, Wales and Scotland in the Light of the Presentations of the Apostolic Letter, Matrimonia Mixta, Issued Motu Proprio by Pope Paul VI, and the Practice of the Member Churches of the British Council of Churches* (London: British Council of Churches/One in Christ Benedictine Priory, 1970), p. 1
[68] Episcopal Conference of England and Wales, *A Directory by the Episcopal Conference of England and Wales Based Upon the Apostolic Letter Issued 'Motu Proprio' on 31st March 1970, by His Holiness Pope Paul Paul VI Determining Norms for Mixed Marriages* (London: Mildner & Sons, 1970), p. 6
[69] Joint Working Group, p. 2
[70] Heenan, p. 95

mother.'[71] More recently it was recognised that the religious upbringing of children must be accepted as the joint responsibility of both parents, who should agree to act together and not leave the decision entirely to the other.[72] With this in mind, the following pastoral recommendations were made by the joint working group of the British Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church in England, Wales and Scotland:

> (a) Each couple and the concrete situation of each is unique, and there is no single satisfactory 'solution' which can be used as a blueprint for all cases.
> (b) The upbringing of the children is the *shared* responsibility of both parents, and it should not be left *simply* to one parent.
> (c) Children are brought up in one Church but should also be helped to understand the teaching of the other Church and to respect it.
> (d) If the children go only to one Church to worship with one parent the other will tend to feel isolated and a dangerous cleavage may grow in the family. The children should learn to worship, at least occasionally, in the church tradition of both parents...
> (e) Both parents should feel free to speak naturally of their beliefs and religious attitudes before the children, while avoiding a tug-of-war attitude. If the parents are convinced that what they share in common is of far greater importance than that in which they differ, this should be possible without setting up a sense of insecurity in the children.[73]

It is encouraging that Christian churches are cooperating to ensure that the children of interchurch families are raised with a healthy appreciation of the different Christian traditions embodied by their parents. Fundamentally, a relationship with God through Christ is what should be nurtured, but it is recognised that this relationship is best developed in the context of a family in which the husband and wife are in harmonious unity with each other. It must be especially convincing for a child to witness how different church traditions can work in an ecumenical marriage, inspiring hope in Jesus' prayer for Christian unity (Jn 17:20-26). A commitment to cooperation must come, however, not only from the churches but from the married couples themselves. As long as they possess the conviction to invest the love of God into their lineage, the chances are they will succeed. Single men and women prioritising their commitment to create a lineage dedicated to God may need to be discerning, or even discriminating, when choosing a spouse. The spiritual suitability of a potential partner who shares a common commitment to creating a lineage devoted to God should guide courtship more so than attraction, physical or otherwise.

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[71] Heenan, p. viii
[72] Williams, p. 10
[73] Joint Working Group, p. 9

Divorce & Remarriage

Before the twentieth century, large proportions of men and women could not hope to marry, whereas today almost everyone in Western countries marries at some time in life. Just as marriage has become more widespread, so has divorce, particularly since the early 1970s.[74] Phillips recognised 'that divorce has become far more acceptable in the course of the twentieth century'.[75] The increasingly positive attitude to divorce is growing in spite of the fact that divorce 'is almost always a traumatic experience for children and the effects of divorce appear to be long lasting.'[76] Despite the competing evidence, the myth of a 'good divorce' with - minimal distress for the parties, including the children - is common.

The impact of divorce is most profoundly felt by children aged six to eight. Old enough to realise what is happening, but without the adequate skills to deal with the disruption, they 'often feel a sense of responsibility, experience tremendous grief, and have a pervasive sadness and yearning for the departed parent. At the same time, they experience recurring fantasies of reconciliation and often think that they have the power to make it happen.'[77] Some children may also assume prematurely parentified roles, taking on adult responsibilities that are damaging emotionally. Divorce is also very hard for preschoolers who may regress developmentally. They may later on struggle with their sexual identity by demonstrating sexual acting-out behaviour during adolescence.[78]

Divorce can either present teenagers with increasing emotional problems, for those who are already having difficulties, or with maturing experience as a result of the change in family life participation. However, they may get drawn into unwanted loyalty conflicts or assume positions of blame. The teenager's experience is further complicated by the convergence of many similar issues for adolescents and parents - dating, dealing with one's sexuality and learning to be independent.[79] The effect of divorce on babies appears limited to experiencing the distress of the parents. As

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[74] Roderick Phillips, *Untying the Knot: A Short History of Divorce* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. ix
[75] Phillips, p. 252
[76] Barbara Leahy Shlemon, *Healing the Wounds of Divorce: A Spiritual Guide to Recovery* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1992), p. 65
[77] Judith Stern Peck and Jennifer R. Manocherian, 'Divorce in the Changing Family Life Cycle', in *The Changing Family Life Cycle: A Framework for Family Therapy (2nd Edition)*, ed. by Betty Carter & Monica McGoldrick (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 1989), p. 353
[78] Peck & Manocherian, 'Divorce', p. 349
[79] Peck & Manocherian, 'Divorce', pp. 355-6

emotional ties are formed, however, they start to become aware of the changes, of the comings and goings of both parents and other caretakers.[80]

Although adult children can have separate, well-defined relationships with each parent, and despite the fact they may be out of the parental home, divorce create the stresses related to an increased responsibility for the parents and a vulnerability to loyalty conflicts.[81] Adult children can be especially unprepared for the reality of a broken home if they never observed violent behaviour or constant outbursts of anger, remembering childhood years being filled with happy memories of family togetherness.[82] Divorce even in later life can send shockwaves throughout the entire family, exaggerating the problems of financial insecurity and emotional adjustment. Even when the marriage has been unsatisfactory for many years, an unwanted or unexpected divorce will be traumatic. Where there are three or more generations of family members, the younger generations will feel the brunt of the hostility and bitterness.[83]

Thus it can be seen that divorce has powerful negative effect on lineage, impacting descendents even several generations down the line. The risk of divorce in men and women who themselves had divorced parents is higher than for those from intact families of origin.[84]

Children function best after divorce if they are able to maintain satisfactory contact with both parents. Unresolved issues from past relationships, however, will make children sensitive in new relationships, such as in remarriage. Children will react either in a self-protective and closed off way, or become intensely expectant and demanding that the new relationship make up for or erase past hurts.[85] At the time of remarriage, children will be concerned with issues such as loss, divided loyalties, confusion about belonging and relationship definitions, membership of two households, unreasonable expectations, guilt over causing divorce and, for adolescents, problems with identity and sexuality.[86] Nevertheless, it is possible for stepfamilies to function well under three recognised conditions: when the child has a less intense relationship with the stepfather than the father of the intact first family;

[80] Peck & Manocherian, 'Divorce', p. 349
[81] Peck & Manocherian, 'Divorce', p. 358
[82] Shlemon, p. 67
[83] Peck & Manocherian, 'Divorce', pp. 361-2
[84] Andrews, pp. 126, 317
[85] Peck & Manocherian, 'Divorce', p. 405
[86] Peck & Manocherian, 'Divorce', p. 412

when stepfamilies less often want to exclude a family member; and when there are fewer parent-child coalitions.[87]

When remarriage occurs later in life, the major factor in three-generational adjustment is found to be the amount of acrimony or cooperation between the ex-spouses: 'Where the relationship is cooperative enough to permit joint attendance at important family functions of children and grandchildren, and where holiday arrangements can be jointly agreed upon, family acceptance of a new marriage tends to follow.'[88]

Whenever divorce occurs, even in the later years of life, it has profound effects on the family members involved. The words of Mal 2, admonishing the priests who neglected the wives of their youth, are relevant. Berquist interpreted this chapter to represent faithlessness among the followers of God, using the marriage metaphor to describe God as the deserted wife.[89] However, even as he himself admitted, God is nowhere else in the Bible portrayed as a divorced wife, rather as a divorced husband. Mason assumed that the text does condemn divorce outright. Acknowledging that such prohibition would be unique in the Old Testament, he wondered if it suffered from scribal efforts to soften it, as the verses are obviously corrupt and difficult to translate.[90] Since the first marriage of a Hebrew male took place before the age of twenty, Smith's natural interpretation of the Malachi text is that large numbers of the men of Judah have in mature life divorced their youthfully contracted wives, following their desire to marry foreign women.[91] For Buttrick, the 'point seems to be that the purpose of marriage is the strengthening of God's chosen people by the rearing of children who will hold fast to the ancient traditions (Godly offspring), a purpose which is defeated when wives and mothers in Israel are daughter "of a foreign god" (vs. 11).'[92] This perspective resonates with the hermeneutic of lineage.

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[87] Peck & Manocherian, 'Divorce', p. 404
[88] Peck & Manocherian, 'Divorce', p. 413
[89] Jon L. Berquist, 'Malachi', in *Mercer Commentary on the Bible*, ed. by Watson E. Mills and Richard F. Wilson (Macon, GE: Mercer University Press, 1994), 799-802 (p. 801)
[90] Rex Mason, *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi*, The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible, ed. by P. R. Ackroyd, A. R. C. Leaney and J. W. Packer, 54 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973-1979), XXXII (1977), p. 150
[91] John Merlin Powis Smith, 'A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Malachi', in *The International Critical Commentary: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah*, ed. by Hinckley G. Mitchell, John Merlin Powis Smith and Julius Brewer (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912), pp. 52-3
[92] George Arthur Buttrick and others, *The Interpreter's Bible: The Holy Scriptures in the King James and Revised Standard Versions with General Articles and Introduction, Exegesis, Exposition for each Book of the Bible*, 12 vols (1951-57), VI (1956), p. 1136

Returning to the contemporary situation, Instone-Brewer ironically noted that the laws of Western nations are largely based on Biblical principles, and yet the issue of grounds for divorce has been deliberately avoided by allowing no-fault divorce.[93] Andrews explained that lawmakers are struggling to resolve the modern strain between marriage as a private arrangement and the now observed negative effects of marriage dissolution,[94] yet Philips has cynically remarked that 'changes in divorce law have often coincided with political change, so closely associated are doctrines of marriage and divorce with political ideology.'[95] The hermeneutic of lineage must inform legal debate about protecting marriages, while holding back the state from interfering too much into family matters.

Surrogacy & Gamete Donation

For some, the meaning of marriage and self-identity hinges on reproductive capability. The desire and quest for a child, especially for individuals with fertility problems, drives people to explore alternatives, such as surrogacy.[96] The biological possibilities are now limited only by the technical capabilities. A process which began when contraception separated sex from reproduction has been completed now that reproduction has been successfully separated from sex. Surrogacy creates a different type of blended family, allowing a woman to be a birth mother only, having had no prebirth relation with the biological father and no relation with the child postbirth according to contract.[97] Thus surrogacy establishes an intentional separation of the roles connected with marriage and parenthood. Shannon confirmed that lineage is an important issue that runs deeply in people and questioned the ethical fairness of introducing a potentially problematic situation into the life of a child born through traditional surrogacy.[98] Without any choice, the child will be socially denied what it has genetically inherited, namely relationships with the surrogate and the extended relatives of the surrogate.[99] Shannon further warned that a rather large part of a parent's reality would also be cut off by ignoring the implications of surrogacy on one's identity, one's marriage, one's relations with others, the responsibilities

[93] David Instone-Brewer, *Divorce and Remarriage in the Church: Biblical Solutions for Pastoral Realities* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003), p. 3
[94] Andrews, pp. 154-6
[95] Phillips, p. xii
[96] Shannon, p. ix
[97] Shannon, p. 8
[98] Shannon, p. 160
[99] Shannon, p. 76

associated with creating a child, and the bodily dimensions for one's psychic well-being.[100]

Techniques now exist that allow the in vitro fertilisation of a husband's sperm and a wife's egg to be followed by the implantation of the fertilised embryo into the womb of a surrogate carrier. While there is no genetic relation between the carried child and the surrogate mother, Verrier argued that an important prenatal bond is nevertheless formed between the surrogate and the baby, a bond the genetic mother cannot reproduce:

> As far as surrogacy is concerned, it should first be noted that the wrong mother is labelled the surrogate in this practice. A woman who gives birth to a baby *is* the mother of that baby, not a surrogate mother. The surrogate is the substitute mother, the one who acts in place of the mother, or in this case, the adoptive mother for whom the misnamed "surrogate" is giving birth... infants separated from their mothers suffer a narcissistic wound. Therefore it would seem obvious that to conceive a child with the *intention* of separating from that child would be setting the child up for psychological distress... If contracts for human life take precedence over maternal instincts and the psychological well-being of children, we are in trouble as a society...
> I think that the profound connection is in the prenatal bonding and that the emotional trauma of separation will occur even when the child is in no way genetically connected to the gestating mother.[101]

Verrier links this discussion with the issue of using anonymous donors for sperm or egg banks. She admits that artificial insemination, 'when necessary, may be all right, but not if the donor, whether it be a sperm or egg donor, wishes to remain anonymous. No one should be anonymous. Everyone has a right to know his or her biological heritage.'[102] Reporting online for a popular UK tabloid, Hardy and Appleyard explained the resentment experienced by a woman conceived with sperm from an anonymous donor, who 'feels like she is only half a person because she will never know who her father is'.[103] According to a survey of adults conceived with donor gametes by the Commission on Parenthood's Future, Hardy and Appleyard reported that nearly half of those surveyed were disturbed that money was involved in their conception; more than half admitted to wondering if they were related to strangers

[100] Shannon, p. 163
[101] Verrier, pp. 204-5
[102] Verrier, p. 204
[103] Frances Hardy and Diana Appleyard, 'Caroline was fathered by a sperm donor - so why does she bitterly resent the stranger who gave her life?', *Daily Mail Online Femail*, 25 June 2010 <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-1289042/Caroline-fathered-sperm-donor--does-bitterly-resent-stranger-gave-life.html> [accessed 27 May 2014]

who look like them; and two-thirds affirmed the right of donor-conceived children to know the truth about their origins.

Since 2005, English law allows donor offspring the right to identify their biological parents when they reach adulthood. Similar changes in the law in other countries have resulted in a sharp decrease in anonymous sperm donation. Dutchman Ed Houben is a notably unusual sperm donor, helping lesbian couples, single women and heterosexual couples with fertility problems have children free of charge, but doing so through regular sexual intercourse. He has sired 98 children so far and continues to publicise his service through the internet.[104] Websites, like www.prideangel.com, allow single, lesbian, gay and infertile couples have children with the help of people who wish to voluntarily donate sperm and eggs. In an antagonistic response, Shannon argued that while there is both a legal and moral right to reproduce, it does not include the right to obtain a child:

> What is protected legally and morally is the right to exercise a capacity, not the securing of the end of that capacity. It is not the obligation of law, philosophy, medicine, or theology to guarantee that one actually achieve that for which one strives. What is minimally required is that one not be interfered with in attempting to obtain a goal. The right to free speech does not require that one be listened to, simply that one be able to speak... Similarly, the right to reproduce does not ensure those exercising that right that they will receive a child... For those wishing a child, infertility is frequently a crushing blow. Yet no sense of justice has been violated because of this biological incapacity.[105]

Especially in cases where the individuals who want to conceive a child are homosexual or single, the child is being denied the right to relate with and receive the unique caretaking qualities of one of the parents who helped to create them. Verrier held the belief that all children have a right to have both parents in their lives, which especially puts her at odds with some single women who want to have children without acknowledging the biological father or without having a male influence in the life of the child.[106]

Verrier warns that the 'need for women to work, plus women's wanting to exercise their hard-won place in the work force, may be placing children at risk. Women certainly have a right to be whatever they want to be, but not at the expense of their children. When one gives birth or adopts a baby, there is then a responsibility to

[104] John Laurenson, 'Is Ed Houben Europe's Most Virile Man?', *BBC News Europe*, 19 March 2014 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-26636166> [accessed 27 May 2014]
[105] Shannon, p. 164

nurture and care for the child. Having someone else do it... compromises the emotional health of the baby. This almost always means that parents have to make some sacrifices for their child.'[107] Browning noted that parents, even those in regular, committed relationships, are progressively becoming more ephemeral, detached and unauthoritative. He warns that parents and children are obtaining their moral sensibilities from the logics and patterns of state and market.[108] Children are thus inheriting their social memory and identity less from their parents and more from their peer groups and from the media they consume. Rather than supplementing the education children receive from their parents, nurseries, schools, youth clubs and other state-organised programmes are replacing what should be provided by ever increasingly disengaged parents.

It is probably fair to say, based on the evidence above, 'that the institutions of marriage and the family are widely perceived to be in a state of crisis.'[109] A new approach is urgently demanded.

Chapter 3: Recovering & Reinventing Relationships, Marriage & Family

This study calls for a renewed understanding of relationships through the lens of lineage. This chapter will present some proposals that may ensure that future generations will cement their identity and social memory in the context of a true lineage rooted in God.

A Philosophical Understanding of Identity & Memory

Philosophically, Locke defined a person as 'a thinking, intelligent Being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider it self as it self, the same thinking thing, in different times and places'.[110] Shoemaker acknowledged Locke's view when stating that persons 'have, in memory, a special access to facts about their own past histories and their own identities, a kind of access they do not have to the histories

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[106] Verrier, pp. 203-4
[107] Nancy Newton Verrier, *The Primal Wound: Understanding the Adopted Child* (Baltimore, MD: Gateway, 1994), p. 202
[108] Browning, pp. 93-4
[109] Barton, p. 7
[110] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. by Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), p. 335

and identities of other persons and other things.[111] He prioritised the importance of memory in understanding not only who one is currently but also who one might become in the future:

> A person's past history is the most important source of his knowledge of the world, but it is also an important source of his knowledge, and his conception, of himself; a person's "self-image," his conception of his own character, values, and potentialities, is determined in a considerable degree by the way in which he views his own past actions. And a person's future history is the primary focus of his desires, hopes, and fears.[112]

One assertion of this study would be to claim that through an awareness of lineage one inherits a history and a memory that stretches beyond one's own lifetime. Socially and genetically, the actions of one's ancestors echo down through the generations to today. If they etched the notion of belonging to God into their relational legacy, that would be the inheritance of one's lineage. Children nurtured in the love of God would, with a higher degree of probability, become the parents who nurture the next generation with a similar sense of identity. Belonging to God, loving God, having identity rooted in God, would become the metanarrative of the lineage that shapes one's identity:

> A person's identity is not to be found in behaviour, nor — important though this is — in the reactions of others, but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going. The individual's biography, if she is to maintain regular interaction with others in the day-to-day world, cannot be wholly fictive. It must continually integrate events which occur in the external world, and sort them into the ongoing 'story' about the self.[113]

Following Shoemaker's explanation of 'self-image', one's attitude will influence what one's progeny has the chance of becoming. If one's identity is shaped by the idea that our lineage originates in God, that is the identity and memory we wish our descendents to inherit and subsequently bequeath. If one has inherited God's lineage, one would behave in a divine way, for 'we become patterned after what we love as ultimate.'[114] But are we descended from God? Do we belong to God's lineage?

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[111] Sydney Shoemaker, *Identity, Cause, and Mind: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 19
[112] Shoemaker, p. 48
[113] Anthony Gidden, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991), p. 54
[114] Desmond, p. 207

Adoption into a New Lineage

The Sufficiency of Abraham's Lineage

When Jesus referred to the Sadducees and Pharisees as a 'brood of vipers' in Mt 12:34 and Mt 23:33 he was probably implying not that they were cunning but rather that they were children of Satan, evil by birth with poison in their blood.[115] Despite claiming to be God's people, they demonstrated through their behaviour a closer affinity to the lineage of Satan, rather than the lineage of God. The prevailing assumption at the time was that to 'be born a Jew of a Jewish mother was to be born a member of the covenant community, and for many that was enough: Abrahamic descent was not only a necessary condition for salvation but a sufficient condition - unless one denounced the covenant or committed some other deed of apostasy and became a heretic'.[116] In Mt 3:9 John the Baptist challenged the belief in covenantal monism, that mere biological descent from Abraham was enough for salvation, arguing that God could raise up stones to be children of Abraham:

> In the OT God repeatedly cut off many Israelites and saved a remnant. Yet in the intertestamental period the general use of descent from Abraham, in the context of a rising merit theology, supported the notion that Israel was chosen because it was choice and that the merits of the patriarchs would suffice for their descendants... But not only may God narrow Israel down to a remnant, he may also raise up authentic children of Israel from "these stones" (perhaps stones lying in the river bed - both Hebrew and Aramaic have a pun on "children" and "stones"). Ordinary stones will suffice; there is no need for the "rocks" of the patriarchs and their merits[117]

This metaphor hearkens to Isa 51:1-2, with the prophet reminding the Israelites that God took the barren Abraham and Sarah - lifeless rocks - and miraculously gave them descendants as numerous as the stars.[118] Rather, for John the Baptist, 'salvation would come only to those who made a radical, one-time repentance',[119] rejecting to the very root their association with Satan and instead rooting themselves in God through repentance. Thus belonging to Abraham's lineage was dependent on one's attitude and behaviour; if they were inconsistent with the identity of belonging to

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[115] W.D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew,* The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, Part 2, ed. by J. A. Emerton, C. E. B. Cranfield and G. N. Stanton, 59 vols (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1895-2010), XXX (1988), p. 304

[116] Davies & Allison, p. 307

[117] D. A. Carson, D. A., *Matthew*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, ed. by Frank E. Gaebelein and others, 12 vols (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1977-1992), VIII (1984), 3-599 (p. 103)

[118] Davies & Allison, p. 308

Abraham's lineage, one could be cast off. Conversely, repentance and conversion would allow one to be engrafted back into the lineage of Abraham.

Adoption into a New Lineage

For St. Paul, Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection created a new understanding of God: 'No longer was he primarily lawgiver and judge, but creator of spiritual offspring: one who generated life out of Jesus' sterile-like death and a power who made "lawless" non-Jews his offspring and members of the family of God.'[120] Although Gentiles had been admitted into God's people as proselytes virtually from the beginning, Paul's idea was that they no longer had second-class status within the community. A person's true status no longer came from nobility of birth or recognition of accomplishment in the community, but from God and what God is able to make of one's life.[121] Nevertheless, 'since Gentiles were clearly not God's race through physical descent from Abraham, Paul had to use the metaphor of adoption to justify their status as Abraham's children'.[122] This metaphor, however, presented a paradox:

> [Paul asserted] that all of God's "legitimate" offspring are adopted, including the founder of the race, Abraham! Even Christ, Abraham's promised offspring, was empowered to effect the Gentiles' inclusion only by means of his own resurrection and anointing at God's hands (spiritual adoption).[123]

It would seem, then, that from Paul's conversion viewpoint only spiritual offspring, those whom God has admitted through grace, were truly Abraham's race. Scott's research into Paul's use of the adoption idiom is helpful in clarifying the extent to which adoption into God's lineage is limited only to a spiritual dimension. Scott demonstrated the Old Testament, rather than Greco-Roman, roots of the Pauline references:

> the word ["adoption of sons" (υιοθεσια)] occurs four times in the sense of adoption expected by the 2 Sam. 7:14 tradition (cf. 2 Cor. 6:18), and that in either a present (Gal. 4:5); Rom. 8:15) or future aspect (Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:5), depending on the Christological and heilsgeschichtliche moment stressed in

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[119] Davies & Allison, p. 307
[120] John L. White, *The Apostle of God: Paul and the Promise of Abraham* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson,1999), p. xix
[121] White, p. xx
[122] White, p. xxii
[123] White, p. xxiii

> each context; once the word occurs in the sense of the Exodus type which underlies this υιοθεσια of messianic salvation in the other four occurrences (Rom. 9:4; cf. Gal. 4:1-2).[124]

This adoption process is thus a two-step process: in the present aspect, believers begin to participate in the Son of God's Spirit-led sonship at baptism; in the future aspect, believers participate in Jesus' resurrection to messianic Son of God in power when Christ comes at the Parousia, entering into the Abrahamic inheritance of universal sovereignty with the Son as the firstborn among many brothers.[125] Thus 'the language of inheritance is eschatological'.[126] There will be a future, physical process by which, at Christ's return, his sovereignty, and lineage, will be established on earth.

Limitations of Adoption

Before expanding on the eschatological aspect of the lineage-changing process for humanity, the limitations of the adoption process are worth exploring. Wilson explained how it is possible in tribal societies to be engrafted into a new lineage:

> In the same manner that individuals become part of a new lineage group, entire lineages may be grafted into a foreign lineage structure. This grafting is expressed genealogically by placing the founder of the grafted lineage in the proper position on the host lineage's genealogy. Once again, the kinship relation expressed in the genealogy is an index to the incoming group's status within the total lineage, although groups that are attached in this way are seldom fully assimilated.[127]

This adoption process, which for all intents and purposes is a fabricated grafting, results in an incomplete assimilation. Could the same be said for spiritual adoption? Despite having our names written into the lineage of God, by merit of our trust in God's power to save us, are we fully assimilated into the family of God?

To provide a sociological perspective, Verrier discovered in her thorough study of adopted children what she called 'the *primal wound*, a wound which is physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual, a wound which causes pain so profound as to have been described as cellular by those adoptees who allowed themselves to go

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[124] James M. Scott, *Adoption as Sons of God: An Exegetical Investigation into the Background of* ΥΙΟΘΕΣΙΑ *in the Pauline Corpus* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992), p. 269
[125] Scott, pp. 265-6
[126] Mark Forman, *The Politics of Inheritance in Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 234
[127] Wilson, p. 32

that deeply into their pain'.[128] She understood this wound as having been caused by the separation of the child from its biological mother. (In the case of surrogacy, this is defined as the woman who gestated the fetus and gave birth to the baby.) She described the bond between adopted child and parent as having been 'forged in the fire of sacrifice and pain, not the easy, fluid, continuity of bonding she might have had with her birthmother.'[129] Translating these ideas to adoption theology, we may be bonded with God through Christ, but it is a painfully artificial bond, not a naturally healthy bond. According to contemporary doctors and psychologists, 'bonding doesn't begin at birth, but is a continuum of physiological, psychological, and spiritual events which begin in utero and continue throughout the postnatal bonding period. When this natural evolution is interrupted by a postnatal separation from the biological mother, the resultant experience of abandonment and loss is indelibly imprinted upon the unconscious minds of these children,' causing, what Verrier calls the "primal wound".[130]

Thus the qualitative difference between a child of God, who is incubated in the womb and raised in early childhood by the mother who represents the maternal heart of God, and an adopted child who suffers from this primal wound can be speculated. Rather than being violently transferred into the lineage of God, a child who is born directly into God's lineage bonds with God both prenatally and postnatally, enjoying the secure confidence of a serene sense of identity anchored in their relationship with God.

Beyond Adoption

Barton maintained that 'what we say about family life will have a strong eschatological dimension. It will be oriented, like the New Testament itself, on what God's spirit makes possible in the present as an anticipation of a new, heavenly reality yet to be revealed. It will therefore be something to do with hope, the overcoming of sin, oppression and despair, and growth towards full humanity.'[131] The full meaning of life together in families past and present thus lies in the future. For Barton, the measure of relations that characterise such a life will be existence 'in the Lord'.[132] For Browning, such a life is characterised by the ethic of mutual regard:

[128] Verrier, p. xvi
[129] Verrier, p. xvii
[130] Verrier, p. 1
[131] Barton, p. 40
[132] Barton, pp. 52-3

> When an ethic of mutuality is at the center of a family ethic, parents raise children to grow gradually toward genuine mutuality. Attaining mutuality may not be accomplished fully until adulthood, but if this central value is firmly in place, children sense that patterns of equal regard are progressively being realized.[133]

Forman claimed that the manner in which Christ's power will assert sovereignty in the world will be characterised, not by the aggression and violence associated with earthly kingdoms, but by the self-giving suffering of Christ.[134] Self-giving must characterise the relationships of the family - between husband and wife, between parents and children, etc. - for those in order to resemble Godly relationships. A genealogy characterised by such relationships qualifies as a Godly lineage. In choosing to belong to God, the suffering may include the severing of former family ties. Jesus cautioned against the idolatry of the family interfering with his disciples' relationship with him (Mt 19:29; Mk 3:33; Lk 14:25-27). Instead, belonging to the new family of Christ will be the most profound 'reality to which human beings are called and in terms of which human relationships, including familial relationships, are to be judged. It says to us that children are important, not just for their parents' fulfilment, but because they are loved by God who in Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them... and who entrusts them to parents and the church for their nurture and growth into mature human beings.'[135]

The decision to be open to conceive a child should be motivated by the desire to sacrificially give oneself to the purpose of raising up children of God. The decision to marry should be motivated by the desire to sacrificially give oneself exclusively and faithfully to a son or daughter of God. The decision to sacrificially give oneself to all people and the world should be motivated by the desire to worship God through God's creation and make all people and all things holy through interaction with them. The efforts invested now into creating lineages offered to God will bear fruit when Christ returns. Having been conditioned into Godly fashion, those lineages will be ready to be joined into Christ's lineage, created by the firstborn sons and daughters of the second resurrection.

Conclusion

[133] Browning, p. 99
[134] Forman, pp. 231-3, 242
[135] Barton, p. 48

Recovering meaning in lineage could transform human relationships. If a genealogy can be forged which is characterised by subsequent generations of couples devoted in their worship of God through love for each other, love for their children, family and society, and love for the world around them, the identity inherited by future generations of children will be richly imbued with a sense of belonging to God in the practice of God's ways. Considering the painful realities most contemporary people find themselves in, a tremendous sacrifice of giving up family, friends, and homeland may be required in order to become God's people, similar to Abraham, who was himself a model for Jewish proselytes.'[136]

Given the eschatological expectations underscored by this study, it is worth remembering that 'our status with God is something that lies outside our own ability to effect. After all, we are mortals and God is creator. But if we offer our creaturehood and mortality back to God, in the willingness to be spent in his service to others, God can raise us up, as he raised up Christ, to be his own true heirs of creativity and life.'[137]

While it would be optimal for marriages and families to be formed from the outset with the characteristics of self-giving centred on God, there is a requirement for sensitivity to the varied pastoral realities of individuals whose lineages could be described as false rather than true. In her reflection on the pastoral care of personal relationships, Walrond-Skinner promoted optimism:

> If there is hope for those individuals who have been severely damaged in their early years, then the newly formed family group of adult life may be the vehicle through which that hope is realised.[138]

Through the intentional construction of families focused on establishing a heavenly lineage, it is possible for committed men and women to receive the healing from God they need within the context of such structures. By devoting themselves to recovering their true identities, replacing old bad habits with new heavenly habits, couples can create the family platforms from which to provide for their children the opportunity to belong to God's lineage. With such hopefulness, the proposals offered in this study may transform human relationships for the better.

[136] White, pp. xx-xxi
[137] White, p. 249

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[138] Sue Walrond-Skinner, *Family Matters: The Pastoral Care of Personal Relationships* (London: SPCK, 1988), p. 44

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