

Tracing the world's ancestor: How many generations does it take before someone alive today could be the ancestor of everyone on the planet?

The bloodline between Jesus and King David raises a wider genealogical issue. How many generations does it take before someone alive today is the ancestor of everyone on the planet?

Listeners to the More or Less programme on Radio 4 have been challenging me to answer any fiendish question they can throw at me. A question about Jesus's genealogy was rather interesting and the answer has astounding ramifications.

The Bible says Jesus was a descendant of King David. But with 1,000 years between them, and since King David's son Solomon was said to have had about 1,000 wives and mistresses, couldn't many of Jesus's peers in Holy Land have claimed the same royal ancestor?

Theory tells us that not only would all of Jesus's contemporaries be descended from King David, but that this would probably be the case even if Solomon had been into monogamy. We can make this sort of prediction because over the past 15 years or so, these ideas have been studied as part of the research into understanding patterns in our own [genome](#).

View the original article here: [Family trees: Tracing the world's ancestor – BBC News](#)