

Answered Questions

by H.J. Vine

The sermon explores the significance of Jesus' lineage and identity as both the Son of David and the Son of God, emphasizing the necessity of divine drawing for true faith.

Scripture: Isaiah 61:1, Matthew 22:45, Luke 4:22, John 6:41, Acts 1:14, Hebrews 2:16

Topics: "Christology", "Divine Nature"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches about the unanswered question posed by Jesus to the Jews regarding His identity as the Son of David and Lord, emphasizing the importance of understanding the dual nature of Christ as both fully God and fully man. The sermon delves into the lineage of Jesus, highlighting His royal descent from David and Abraham, His miraculous conception by the Holy Ghost, and the significance of His titles such as 'Jehovah Saviour' and 'Emmanuel'. The preacher explores the roles of Joseph and Mary in Jesus' life, shedding light on their legal and familial connections to Him, and the unique aspects of His earthly lineage and divine origins.

Transcript

The Lord Jesus asked a question of the Jews that remains unanswered by them to this day, What think ye of Christ, whose son is He? was the first challenging question. They replied, "The Son of David." Then came the question that they refused to answer then, and have not answered since: "IF DAVID THEN CALL HIM LORD, HOW IS HE HIS SON?" (Matt. 22:45). And no man was able to answer Him a word. Nor have recent writings by great scholars among the Jews honestly faced this question. Those who have believed the gospel know the answer, they have learnt the truth by the grace of God, but it is the will of God that they should know it better, and grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, both in His Godhead and human glories, for both alike shine out in all their perfection in Him. The inspired Word of God and Spirit-given ministry unfold these glories to us.

"Is not this the Son of Joseph?" (Luke 4:22).

This question raised by the Jews (involving the rightful lineage of our Lord Jesus Christ) has been clearly answered by the Holy Ghost, in the Gospels.

When, as the anointed One, Isaiah 61:1 was fulfilled in Him--in the preaching at Nazareth, they "wondered at the words of grace which were coming out of His mouth And they said, Is not this the son of Joseph?" (Luke 4:22 N.Tr.). Again, after He had fed the five thousand miraculously, when He spake of giving the

Bread which abides to life eternal, having come down out of heaven, the Jews therefore murmured about Him, because He said, I am the Bread which has come down out of heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we have known?" (John 6:41-42). Now God had foretold again and again that the One who was to bring in the promised blessing and glory would be Israel's true King of David's royal line. Psalm 2 said He would be God's Son, and Psalm 45 that He would be God the Son, moreover Zechariah 14:9, and many other Scriptures point out that Jehovah Himself is to be the "King over all the earth"; yet this glorious distinction is to be taken in the line of David, therefore the New Testament opens with the words, "BOOK OF THE GENERATION OF JESUS CHRIST, SON OF DAVID." This is followed by taking us further back still, and by designating Him, "Son of Abraham," for in that line also was the great Messiah to come; and then He is called Jesus, i.e., Jehovah Saviour; and Emmanuel, i.e., God with us; fulfilling the promise as to the Virgin-born Son, "the Woman's seed." All this, however, is brought to pass in the house and lineage of David.

But what has it to do with Joseph? He was of the royal line. The angel of the Lord addressed him as son of David thus: "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take to thee Mary, thy wife, for that which is begotten in her is of THE HOLY GHOST" (Matt. 1:20). In obedience to God's Word Joseph took her, "and" (the Holy Spirit carefully records) "knew her not until she had brought forth her first-born son and he called His Name Jesus" (v. 25). Joseph was therefore rightly regarded as the legal father of Jesus. In every true sense legally the firstborn Son of Joseph's wife was his rightful Heir, and that as given of God according to the promise, that of a Virgin there should be a child born, and son given (Isa. 9:6).

He was begotten of the power of the Holy Ghost and His fivefold name = "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace" who should sit upon the throne of David, shows how able He was to take up the question of Israel's salvation and ours also. All who put their trust in Him will prove that they have made no mistake in so doing.

Joseph was a just man and he fulfilled every lawful obligation in regard to circumcision, purification, and the keeping of the Passover, and when Caesar Augustus had decreed a census, Joseph took Mary with him to Bethlehem, where they were inscribed in the census roll, for "he was of the house and family of David" (Luke 2:4). There Jesus was born, and the great prophecy of Micah 5:2 was fulfilled.

Fully and faultlessly has the Spirit answered the question, Is not this Jesus, the Son of Joseph? but though He has done this, all the more confirming to faith is the way He guards against any thought of Joseph being the natural father or human begetter of the Christ, as we have seen; and the words of Luke 3:23 concerning Jesus "being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph," beautifully confirm what has been pointed out regarding the legal sonship and heirship of the Christ in David's line, whilst guarding the other. Now, although the Holy Spirit shows so vividly the honour and dignity which God has bestowed upon Joseph, the descendant of royal David, He nevertheless soon withdraws Him from our gaze, while Mary, his wife, is kept before the reverent mind right on to the time of the ascension of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

"Is not this . . . the son of Mary?" (Mark 6:3).

It was in His own country where He was well known, that the people said, "From whence has this Man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that even mighty works are wrought by His hands? Is not this the Carpenter, THE SON OF MARY, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Judah and Simon? and are not His sisters here with us?" (Mark 6:2-3). The Holy Spirit answers this question in

the inspired writings and instructs the believer more deeply, and prepares him for the witness of the apostles.

MATTHEW, who gives the genealogy of the Lord as the rightful King, speaks of an angel appearing to Joseph, LUKE, who speaks of Him as the perfect Man, traces back His genealogy to "Seth, of Adam, of God" (3:38 N.Tr.); records the fact of the angel Gabriel coming to Mary and announcing the birth of a Son who should sit on "the throne of David His father" (1:32). John the Baptist was of the priestly line by both his father and mother (1:5); Jesus was of the royal line. Elizabeth (of Aaronic descent) spake of Mary, as "the mother of my Lord" (1:43), and Zacharias (of the course of Abia) spake of Mary's Son as "a Horn of salvation" for Israel in the house of David. Just and pious Simeon blessed Joseph and Mary, but, addressing the mother, he spake of her Child as being set for the fall and rising up of many in Israel, and for a Sign spoken against (2:34). It was Mary who addressed Jesus after He had remained behind at Jerusalem, when He was but twelve years old; and it was she who pondered these things in her heart. It is beautiful, however, to observe the lovely demeanour of this divinely given Son. He went down with "His parents" to Nazareth "and was subject unto them." What a salutary lesson is found here for the children of believing parents today, when the beauty of natural affection is so fast disappearing, and when disobedience to parents is rife.

What we have said indicates that Mary was of the royal line as well as Joseph, and, comparing this with the genealogy of Luke 3, where Joseph (v. 23) is said to be "of Heli," not "son of"--whereas Matthew 1:16, distinctly says, "Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ"--we conclude therefore, that, according to Jewish custom, the line of Mary, the wife of Joseph, is traced. In this way, although begotten of the Holy Ghost, we have the Seed royal preserved in the Son of Mary, just as the rightful Heirship is found in the Son of Joseph, and in Him Jesus--Jehovah Saviour--all Israel's dignities and distinctions centre, and through redemption are secured on Israel's behalf. MATTHEW speaks ten times of "the Son of David," MARK four times, and LUKE four times, but it is remarkable and significant that JOHN does not once so designate Him, and yet as "the Son" he does so no less than fifteen times, as "the Son of God" twelve times, and "the Son of Man" twelve times also

All this is encouraging to the faith of those to whom the Saviour is precious, and the realities of His various distinctions become more clearly delineated before our hearts. The mother of Jesus knew and honoured His grace and power. At the marriage at Cana in Galilee, she said to Him "They have no wine", but here she must stand aside, the exercise of His divine power and the manifestation of His glory must not be directed by her. So He said, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." Nevertheless He turned the water into wine, and when His hour did come she stood by the cross of Jesus; and, even amidst the sufferings of that unparalleled time, He thought of her and ordered for her future, "and from that hour the disciple (John) took her to His own home" (John 2:3; 19:27). When Joseph, the legal father of Christ, was seen with Mary, His mother, she was always given precedence, and when pious Joseph disappears from the pages of the Gospels, she is still seen, not as an object for faith, but as owning the power of the Lord, and being dependent upon Him.

We have seen Mary in various places, but perhaps the final mention of her in Scripture honours her Son, and rebukes the darkening superstitions of Mary's worship more than any other. She had seen Jesus upon the cross, He had risen from among the dead, and He had ascended to the throne on high after He had instructed His own to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit; and now "Mary the mother of Jesus with His brethren" were among the hundred and twenty that gave themselves to continual prayer as they waited (Acts 1:14-15). Mary thus expressed her full confidence in Jesus exalted to the right hand of God; nor was

she herself an object before the hearts of those gathered together in prayer, but was in one accord with the others who were in dependence before the Lord. It is to be noticed, too, that His brethren also were present; and how confirming it is to find James afterwards speaking of himself as the Lord's bondman (James 1:1) when he addresses the twelve tribes.

He is not only David's SON, however, and his Heir with full legal rights through Joseph and Israel's Messiah Jehovah, but actually DAVID'S SEED as we have just seen. Moreover, He is ABRAHAM'S SEED, bringing for faith the blessings of righteousness according to unconditional promise (Gal. 3:16-19; Rom. 4:1-3). Again, the defeat of Satan was to be brought to pass through the WOMAN'S SEED (Gen. 3:1), so Jesus took part in blood and flesh that through death He might annul him in regard to the terror of death, setting the children of God free from its bondage, although this brings us also to the truth of the Son of Man in Hebrews 2 (the only place Paul so names the Lord), for it there says, "He does not indeed take hold of angels (by the hand). but He takes hold of the Seed of Abraham" (v. 16, N.Tr.). This also brings us to the truth of Christ's Priesthood as the following verses show. Israel's high priest must be of Aaron's line, and that is the only earthly priesthood recognized of God. Even Christ's priesthood could only be established in resurrection (Heb. 8:4), but because of who He is, the order of Melchizedek's priesthood belongs to Christ (see Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:6; 7:1-17). He is truly THE ANOINTED, THE CHRIST. This One was to be raised up in Israel--among that people exclusively, though universal blessing results, The KING was to be from among Israel's brethren (Deut. 17:15) not a stranger. The PRIEST likewise (18:2), also the PROPHET (v. 18). He came to Israel with full credentials. God's words were in His mouth, and the signs and works He did showed who He was. Some said, "This is truly the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. Others, Does then the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said, the Christ comes of the Seed of David, and from the village of Bethlehem, where David was"? (John 7:41-42, N.Tr.). We have seen the answer. Jesus was truly Mary's Son, born in Bethlehem of Judea, not Nazareth of Galilee, though brought up there Israel's eyes will be opened soon; but, meanwhile, faith again sings on her glad song of anticipation;

"Kings shall fall down before Him,

And gold and incense bring;

All nations shall adore Him,

His praise all people sing."

"OUT OF HEAVEN"

Finally--having shown the answers given as to the royal lineage of Christ--we will conclude with the Lord's own remarkable answer to the question already quoted from John 6:42. "Jesus therefore answered and said to them, Murmur not among yourselves. No one can come to Me except the Father who has sent Me draw him, and I will raise him up in the last day."

In other words it can be said: questions may be raised and settled satisfactorily, even concerning Christ's genealogy, but unless there be a work divinely wrought in a man, he will never become a possessor of eternal life in Christ Jesus as drawn by the Father to the Son. A man may be religiously minded or otherwise, and be interested enough to examine and be satisfied in regard to the royal descent of Jesus, and yet remain in a state of soul-distance from the Saviour. Those referred to who questioned concerning the Lord, were very religious, but they were in soul darkness and death. That Jesus should say, "I am

came down out of heaven," is what they took exception to. And until true soul-hunger is awakened in a man, he will have no desire beyond what is of the earthy and earthly. The Jews "murmured about Him, because He said, I am the Bread which has come down out of heaven" (v. 41). He had previously said, "I am the Bread of life: he that comes to Me shall never hunger, and he that believes on Me shalt never thirst at any time" (v. 35, N.Tr.). What good news this is for everyone whom the Father has drawn to Him!

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