

JESUS QUESTIONS THE PHARISEES

Whose Son Is Christ?

Matthew 22:41-46

I. THE INQUIRING QUESTION: (vs. 41-42a)...a probing question

Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question: “What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?” (vs. 41-42a)...

After conclusively answering the *three questions* that the Jewish leaders had asked designed to entrap Him (Matthew 22:15-40)... Jesus continued to teach in the Temple where He had been since early that morning (Matthew 21:23).

After all that has previously taken place that morning, He then took the opportunity to ask them a question **about the Christ**. Notice that He didn’t ask this question directly about Himself...instead He asked it in the *second person*. Even though He had often declared His *Messiahship* and His *divinity*, He now wanted the **Pharisees** to focus on what they believed about the identity of the **Messiah...the Christ. Whose son is He...**from what Jewish line was He to descend from?

II. THE INADEQUATE ANSWER: (vs. 42b)

They said to Him, “The son of David.” (vs. 42b)...

To the **Pharisees**, as well as to most other Jews, the answer was obvious and simple...the identity of the **Messiah** was that of being the **Son of David**. Unfortunately, they saw this lineage as being no more than a man. They were looking for an earthly king.

There was much in Scripture that taught the Jews to look for the **Messiah** as coming through the lineage of **David**:

- The **scribes** had long taught...“*the Christ is the son of David*” (Mark 12:35)
- Through **Nathan**...the Lord had promised **David** that the *Kingdom of God* would be established through his descendants (II Samuel 7:12-13, 15-16).
- **Psalm 89** makes repeated references to the **Messiah**.
- **Amos** prophesied that the building of this Kingdom will rise up *from the fallen booth of David* (Amos 9:11).

- **Micah** prophesied that the **Messiah** would be born in **Bethlehem** and come from the clan of **David** (Micah 5:2).
- **Ezekiel** prophesied the reuniting of **Israel** into one nation following their division (**Israel** and **Judah**) and that there would be one king for all of them and that king would be from His servant **David** (Ezekiel 21-25).

Throughout his gospel, **Matthew** focused on Jesus being the **Son of David**:

- Begins with the *genealogy* (Matthew 1:6; Luke 3:31).
- **Matthew** recorded Jesus being hailed by various groups as the **Son of David** throughout His earthly ministry.
- At the **Triumphal Entry** the people shouted and called Him, **Son of David** (Matthew 21:9).
- The *two blind men* in **Galilee** cried out, “*Have mercy on us, Son of David*” (Matthew 9:27).
- The *two blind men* of **Jericho** made the same plea...“*Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David*” (Matthew 20:30).
- After Jesus healed the *demon-possessed man* who was also *blind* and *dumb*...“*All the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, ‘This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?’*” (Matthew 12:23).

It was the fact that the multitudes had acclaimed Jesus as the **Son of David** that made the Jewish religious leaders so indignant...and especially the fact that Jesus wouldn’t renounce their acclamation (Matthew 21:9, 15-16).

It was partly because of the fact that Jesus’ lineage from **David** was so irrefutable that the Jewish authorities were so distressed. Until the Temple was destroyed in **70 A.D.**, meticulous genealogical records of all Jews were kept there...for men as well as their wives, along with unmarried women. That information wasn’t only essential in establishing *Levitical* and *priestly lineage*...but for many other purposes as well (such as *inheritance rights*). No one could hold a position of responsibility in **Israel** whose genealogy wasn’t verified.

It is therefore certain that the authorities had carefully checked Jesus’ genealogy and discovered that His descent from **David** was

legitimate. Otherwise, they would simply have exposed His as a *fraud*...having no claim to **Davidic** heritage and all discussions about His possible Messiahship would have ended.

III. THE INFINITE TRUTH: (vs. 43-45)

He said to them, “Then how does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet”?’” (vs. 43-44)...

In the Spirit...This phrase is identical to that used by **John** relating to his vision on the **Isle of Patmos**, when he wrote that he “*was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day*” (**Revelation 1:10**). It refers to *being under the control of the Holy Spirit in a unique and powerful way*.

Lord...Gk. *Kurios*...Heb. *Adonai*, are the most common words used to designate *deity* in the New and Old Testaments. Because God’s *covenant name* in the Old Testament, **Yahweh** or **Jehovah**, was considered to be too holy to be spoken...the Jews would always substituted it with the word *Adonai*. So when God is called “**Lord**” (small case letters) it is used as a *title*. But when God is called “**LORD**” (all capital letters) it’s designating His *covenant name*.

So, Jesus’ point was this...if the **Messiah**, *the Christ*, is no more than a man...that is, the human son of **David**...**Then how does David in the Spirit call Him “Lord,”** saying, “**The Lord said to my Lord.**”

Every Jew recognized **Psalm 110** as being written by **David** and it was considered to be one of the clearest *messianic passages* in the Old Testament. The first **Lord** in this passage is *Yahweh*, whereas the second is *Adonai*. So the idea is this...“**The Lord God Almighty (Yahweh), said to David’s Lord (Adonai)...**the **Messiah**, ‘**Sit at My right hand, until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet.**’” In other words, **David** addressed the **Messiah** as *his* **Lord**.

Sit at My right hand...**David** had just declared that God told the **Messiah (Lord)** to **sit at My (God’s) right hand!** The **right hand** was a place recognized by Jews to be *a designation of coequal rank and authority*. This was declaring the **Messiah’s deity**.

If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his son?” (vs. 45)....If the **Messiah** were simply an *earthly son* of **David**...why did **David**

ascribe *deity* to Him? If **David** called this **Son “Lord,”** He certainly must be *more than a human son*.

This proclaims that the **Son of David** is *synonymous* with **Son of God**.

- Jesus was the **Son of Man (God incarnate)** in every way (He was *tempted*...He *ate, drank, slept, felt pain, bled, and died*).
- It was *obvious* and *provable* by the *Temple records* that He was specifically the **Son of David**.
- The *miracles* that He performed for everyone to see revealed that He was the divine **Son of God**.

“Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”

~John 20:30-31

“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written.”

~John 21:25

IV. THE INAPT RESPONSE: (vs. 46)

No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question (vs. 46)...

The complexities of this theological discussion was too much for the **Pharisees**...mainly, because they were not ready to acknowledge the *deity* of this **Son of David**.

They were:

- *Dumbfounded*...but *not convinced*.
- *Silenced*...but *not convicted*.
- *Humiliated*...but *not humbled*.
- *Reluctantly impressed*...but *still unbelieving*.

Since **no one was able to answer Him**...they **dared** not try to question Him or debate Him on any other theological matters or practices any more. All His opponents had been silenced...including the *chief priests and elders (Matthew 21:23-27)*...the *Pharisees*’

disciples and the *Herodians* together ([Matthew 22:15-22](#))...the *Sadducees* ([Matthew 22:23-33](#))...and the *Pharisee lawyer* ([Matthew 22:34-36](#)).

LESSONS:

- This is the same question that every one of us must answer...and the most important question in the world...**Who is Jesus Christ?**
- Just as important as **who He is...** is **what He did...** *He died on the cross and rose from the dead, to pay the penalty for our sins, and to purchase a place in heaven for us which He offers as a free gift.*