

BBI II-D #02 Preexistence in the Synoptic Gospels

I. The “mystery” the Jewish scholars could not answer:

A. Matthew 22:41-46 (NKJV) 41 *While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42 saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?” They said to Him, “The Son of David.” 43 He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying: 44 ‘The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”’? 45 If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?” 46 And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.*

B. The question was from Psalm 110:1, the verse most alluded to in the entire New Testament.¹

C. In biblical genealogical succession, the ancestor always outranks his own descendants, because they come from his body, he gives them existence.

1. John 8:53-58 Jesus was “greater” than Abraham because “before Abraham originated, I exist.”
2. If “the Christ” (Messiah) is merely David’s descendant, then David would be superior to “the Christ.”
3. David calling the Messiah his “lord” (superior) implies that Christ was superior, the cause of David’s own existence.

II. The correct answer to this “mystery”:

A. Isaiah 11:1,4,10 (CSB) 1 *Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse, and a BRANCH from his roots will bear fruit. ... 4 but He will judge the poor righteously and execute justice for the oppressed of the land. He will strike the land with discipline from His mouth, and He will kill the wicked with a command from His lips. ... 10 On that day the ROOT of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples. The nations will seek Him, and His resting place will be glorious.*

B. The “BRANCH” of David is also found in Jer. 23:5; Jer. 33:15; Zech. 3:8; Zech. 6:12 from the stump cut down in the Babylonian exile.

C. Rev. 22:16 (CSB) 16 *“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to attest these things to you for the churches. I am the ROOT and the OFFSPRING of David, the Bright Morning Star.”*

D. Isaiah 11:1,10; Matthew 22:41-46; Revelation 22:16 all deal with the structure of a genealogical tree. Jesus predates Jesse and David, and is the reason David called Jesus His “lord” (superior).

¹ (Matt. 22:44; Matt. 26:64; Mk. 12:36; Mk. 14:62; Mk. 16:19; Lk. 20:42-43; Acts 2:33-34; Acts 5:31; Acts 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Phil. 2:9; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3,13; Heb. 8:1; Heb. 10:12; Heb. 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22; Rev. 3:21).

III. Biblical Unitarian Fails: “Son of David” = “Son of God”

A. **BU FAIL #1:** Jesus is only David’s superior because God exalts Him above his ancestor David.

1. If that was true, why could not the Jewish scholars make that claim?
2. They could not answer because they knew that Messiah would sit “upon the throne of His Father, David” and rule over David’s kingdom (Isa. 9:7; Luke 1:32-33), showing David’s ancestral and royal superiority over his Son many generations removed.
3. Jesus’ question had to do with ancestral rank (who’s son is the Messiah?) He was something MORE than David’s son, therefore “Son of God” is different.

B. **BU FAIL #2:** Jesus is the “Root” and “Branch” because both grow out from the trunk of a tree at the same time.

1. But the context of Isa. 11 (& Rev. 22:16) is not about the science of dendrology or horticulture. It is about a genealogical tree which do not portray generational growth that way (cf. Rom. 11:16-24).
2. Isaiah’s prophecy is about the Branch that grows out of the STUMP of Jesse. Isaiah prophesied the cutting down of the Davidic Dynasty by the Babylonian exile (Isa. 39). From that dead stump (Davidic Kingdom) a new, living “Branch” emerges. The entire root already existed before the tree was cut down.

IV. Biblical Unitarian false claims about the Gospels:

A. Matthew, Mark, and Luke teach the Son’s preexistence from this “riddle,” but John’s Gospel reveals “*the mystery of Christ*”² in plain, literal language.

B. BU attempts to explain away the “Root” & “Branch” of David, many statements in John’s Gospel, and their demonizing the earliest Christian martyrs who universally taught the Son’s preexistence = “*the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.*”³

C. More evidence in the Gospels is found in the two prophecies about John the Baptist quoted from Isaiah 40 & Mal. 3:1, and the titles given to Jesus in those prophecies.

² 1 Cor. 2:6-14; Col. 2:2-3; Col. 4:3

³ Eph. 4:14 NKJ