



JOHN 7:25-44 (PART 1)

At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, “Isn’t this the man they are trying to kill? Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Christ? But we know where this man is from; when the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from” ...

On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.”

Others said, “He is the Christ.”

Still others asked, “How can the Christ come from Galilee? Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David’s family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?”

(verses 25-27, 40-42)

-

John is brilliant in laying out this record of Jesus’ interaction with the unbelieving skeptics of Jerusalem. Just shortly before this, the crowd had reacted scornfully to Jesus’ assertion that they were trying to kill him. *“You are demon-possessed,”* the

crowd answered. 'Who is trying to kill you?'" (verse 20). Here, in our present passage (just five verses later), John records other voices in Jerusalem saying exactly the opposite: *"Isn't this the man they are trying to kill?"* (verse 25). John doesn't comment on the contradiction. He simply lays out both statements side by side. In so doing, Jesus' clear analysis of the situation is confirmed.

The irony intensifies as the people debate Messiah's origin. John gives us both sides of the debate, but separates them with a dozen or so verses. It's only as you put both sides together that you see the irony.

The people in verse 27 argue that no one knows where Messiah comes from, which therefore excludes Jesus from the running, because they think they know his birthplace. Jesus himself doesn't dispute their claim. It's only later (verses 41-42) that John tells us they're completely wrong in their supposed knowledge.

It's in those later verses that the other side of the debate is raised. These *"others"* claim that the Scripture clearly states that Messiah will be from the royal line of King David, being born in Bethlehem. They conclude that Jesus, therefore, cannot be the Christ because they assert that he was born in Galilee, nowhere near Bethlehem.

We, the readers, knowing the account from the other Gospels, catch John's winking irony. He's brilliant. Nowhere in his Gospel does he give any details of Jesus' birthplace or his lineage. Yet he knows all of it was common knowledge from the combined Gospel records. He knows, as do we, that Jesus traced his ancestry back to David himself. Further, he knows that as a result of Roman census law, Joseph and Mary had been forced to travel from Galilee to Bethlehem, right at the time of Jesus' birth. John knows. So do we. But John doesn't bring it up. He just lets that silent knowledge illuminate our understanding as we listen to the people of Jerusalem, debating back and forth, stumbling in the dark. Brilliant.

In the process, the revelation is clear. He's from David's family. His birthplace was Bethlehem. Jesus is Messiah. There is no doubt.

-

Lord Jesus, I have no doubt. I receive you as Lord and Christ. Praise your name.

-

Praise:

Reflect on Jesus' lineage. Reflect on his birthplace. Add in all the other signs that make clear he is Messiah. Take time. Give thanks. Praise him for the fullness of who he is. Pledge your devotion again.