

# Matthew 13:55

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary?  
and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

## Analysis

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**Is not this the carpenter's son?** (οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός;)—The τέκτων (tektōn) was a craftsman working with wood, stone, or metal—a respectable but common trade. Mark 6:3 calls Jesus Himself 'the carpenter,' showing He worked with His hands (likely until age 30). Their question drips with contempt: 'this one,' 'the son of the carpenter'—attempting to box Jesus into their limited categories. They refused to let His divine works reinterpret His humble origins.

**Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?**—They name His family to emphasize ordinariness. These ἀδελφοί (adelphoi, 'brothers') are most naturally understood as Jesus's half-brothers, Mary's sons by Joseph after Jesus's virgin birth (the perpetual virginity of Mary is unbiblical tradition). James (Ἰάκωβος) became a church leader (Acts 15:13; Galatians 1:19) and wrote the epistle of James. Judas (Ἰούδας, not Iscariot) wrote Jude. Their initial unbelief (John 7:5) was overcome by Jesus's resurrection appearance (1 Corinthians 15:7).

## Historical Context

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In honor-shame cultures like first-century Judaism, family and trade defined social status. Jesus's family was known but unremarkable—no Davidic royalty remained except genealogical record. The mention of His mother and brothers but not Joseph suggests Joseph had died by this time (ca. AD 28-29). The naming of four

brothers and reference to sisters (v. 56) indicates a household of at least seven children.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does Jesus's ordinary upbringing demonstrate the incarnation's radical condescension (Philippians 2:5-8)?
2. What does the conversion of Jesus's skeptical brothers teach about persistent prayer for unbelieving family members?

## Interlinear Text

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οὐχ	οὗτός	ἐστιν	ὁ	τοῦ	τέκτονος	υἱός;	οὐχί	ἡ
not	this	Is	G3588	G3588	the carpenter's	son	not	G3588
G3756	G3778	G2076			G5045	G5207	G3780	
μήτηρ	αὐτοῦ	λέγεται	Μαριὰμ	καὶ	οἱ	ἀδελφοὶ	αὐτοῦ	
mother	his	called	Mary	and	G3588	brethren	his	
G3384	G846	G3004	G3137	G2532		G80	G846	
Ἰάκωβος	καὶ	Ἰωσῆς	καὶ	Σίμων	καὶ	Ἰούδας;		
James	and	Joses	and	Simon	and	Judas		
G2385	G2532	G2500	G2532	G4613	G2532	G2455		

## Additional Cross-References

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**John 6:42** (Parallel theme): And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

**Mark 6:3** (Parallel theme): Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

**Luke 3:23** (Parallel theme): And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

**John 19:25** (Parallel theme): Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

**Luke 4:22** (Parallel theme): And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

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