

The Son of Man

Jesus use of the title Son of Man

Jesus referred to himself as "the Son of man" about 81 times in the Bible's four canonical gospels. This was his primary way of referring to himself.

- **Explanation**

Jesus used the title to emphasize his humanity. It may also refer to his sufferings, exaltation, and rule over humanity. It may also refer to his designation as the Messiah. Jesus associated himself with Daniel's "son of man" (Matt. 26:63–64). Jesus intentionally lowered his status from King of Heaven to Son of Man. Examples of "Son of Man" in the Bible Matthew 12:32, 13:37, Luke 12:8, John 1:51, and Luke 24:7.

- **Related information Hebrew & Aramaic**

The equivalent Hebrew expression "son of man" [Hebrew-Ben-'adam/ Aramaic- Bar nasha] appears in the Old Testament 103 times.

Son of man in the Book of Daniel

The description "son of man" appears in the Book of Daniel, and most sources allude specifically to this particular verse. In Daniel 7, one "like a son of man" is seen. The Aramaic original means "like a human being". He is seen "coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed." (Daniel 7:13–14)

Interpretations/Opinions

- **Scholarly views**

The interpretation of the use of "the Son of man" in the New Testament has proven to be challenging, and James D. G. Dunn and separately Delbert Burkett state that it is a prime example of the limits of New Testament interpretation because after 150 years of debate no consensus on its meaning has emerged. Near the end of the twentieth century, Reginald H. Fuller stated "The problem of the Son of Man is a can of worms. No one can write anything about it which will command general assent or provide a definitive solution". The earliest approaches, going back to the Fathers of the Church, relied on the Greek expression and interpreted "son" in a parental sense. This approach continued into the Middle Ages. By the time the Protestant Reformation was under way, three new approaches had emerged, one that saw it as an expression of the humanity of Jesus, another that viewed it as a messianic title derived from the Book of Daniel (7.13) and a third which considered it as a general idiom for self-reference. By the 17th century, the first approach (focusing on his humanity) had gained ground, yet by the 19th century the messianic view had increased in popularity.

[Quote] What is clear from the evidence is that "Son of man" did not function in pre-Christian messianic expectations as a title for a deliverer expected to come in the last times. But to the Israelites and other readers and followers of the Torah this phrase would have meaning and point to the Messiah.

Context of the Son of Man

According to the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus referred to himself as "Son of man" in three contexts, each with its own circle of fairly distinct meanings. He used this self-designation of ;

(1) his earthly work and its (frequently) humble condition (e.g., Mark 2:10, 28 parr.; Matt 11:19=Luke 7:34; Matt 8:20=Luke 9:58);

(2) his coming suffering, death, and resurrection (Mark 9:9,12; Mark 14:21 and, above all, Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34 parr.);

(3) his future coming in heavenly glory to act with sovereign power at a final judgement (e.g., Mark 8:38; 13:26–27 parr.; Matt 24:27=Luke 17:24; Matt 25:31–32; see John 5:27). These classifications show how the "Son of man" served as a way of indicating Jesus' importance and even universal relevance. This was especially true of the class (3) sayings. In other words, "Son of man" was used to say what Jesus did rather than what he was. It was not and did not become a title in the normal sense—at least not on the lips of Jesus himself.

Son of man & Son of God

Researchers often see Son of man and Son of God as contrasting titles. Originally, these designations were understood in light of Christ's two natures: Son of man expressed Jesus' humanity, while Son of God expressed his divinity.

Jewish views

In Judaism, "son of man" denotes mankind generally, in contrast to deity or godhead, with special reference to their weakness and frailty (Job 25:6; Psalms 8:4; Psalms 144:3; Psalms 146:3; Isaiah 51:12, etc.) or the term "ben adam" is but a formal substitute for the personal pronoun.

[Source-wikipedia.org]