

Themes In The Gospel Of Matthew

The Son of Man

In Matthew Jesus is often (33 times) referred to as "The Son of Man."

- 1.) What does this phrase mean?
- 2.) Why call Jesus by this title?
- 3.) What does Matthew say about "The Son of Man?"

I. Word Usage Narrowed Over Time

A. Simply Man

Numb. 23:19 "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

Ps. 144:3,4 "O LORD, what is man, that Thou dost take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that Thou dost think of him?"

4 Man is like a mere breath; His days are like a passing shadow."

Jer. 49:18 "Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah with its neighbors," says the LORD, "no one will live there, nor will a son of man reside in it."

B. A Man Of God

Ezek. 2:1-3 "Then He said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet that I may speak with you!"

2 And as He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet; and I heard Him speaking to me.

3 Then He said to me, "Son of man, I am sending you to the sons of Israel, to a rebellious people who have rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day."

also **2:6,8; 3:1,3,10; 5:2; 6:2; 7:2; 8:5,6,8,12,15,17; 11:2,4,15; 12:2,3,9,18,22,27; 13:2,27; 14:3,17; 15:2; 16:2; 17:2; 20:3,4,27,46; 21:2,6,9,12,14,19,28; 22:2,18,24; 23:2,36; 24:2,16,25; 25:2; 26:2; 27:2; 28:2,21; 29:2,18; 30:2,21; 31:2; 32:2,18; 33:2,7,10,12,24,30; 34:2; 35:2; 36:1,17; 37:3,9,11,16; 38:2,14; 39:1,17; 40:4; 43:7,10,18; 44:5; 47:6**

Dan. 8:16-18 "And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this man an understanding of the vision."

17 So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end."

18 Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright."

C. A Special One

Somewhat obscure Messianic Psalm referring to the one who is made strong and brings restoration and salvation.

Ps. 80:14-19 "O God of hosts, turn again now, we beseech Thee; Look down from heaven and see, and take care of this vine,

15 Even the shoot which Thy right hand has planted, And on the son whom Thou hast strengthened for Thyself.

16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down; They perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance.

17 Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, Upon the son of man whom Thou didst make strong for Thyself.

18 Then we shall not turn back from Thee; Revive us, and we will call upon Thy name.

19 O LORD God of hosts, restore us; Cause Thy face to shine upon us, and we will be saved."

Daniel makes a clearer reference to the Son of Man as Messiah.

Dan. 7:13 "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him."

D. About Christ - 80 times, 33 times in Matt.

Jesus tells us who the "Son of Man" is.

Jn. 9:35-38 "Jesus heard that they had put him out; and finding him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

36 He answered and said, "And who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"

37 Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you."

38 And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him."

II. Significance Of Jesus' Use Of "Son Of Man"

A. Humanity

In the gospels Christ Himself always speaks this - not by others.

In the very beginning Jesus did a few times directly call Himself the Messiah, but later adapted this title to refer to Himself. Why?

This emphasizes the true humanity of Christ.

1.) Fully human

Heb. 2:14 "Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil"

2.) Flesh And Bone

Luke 24:39 "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."

3.) Emmanuel, God With Us (In Our Nature)

Matt. 1:23 "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US."

4.) God In Flesh

1 Tim. 3:16 "And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed in in the world, Taken up in glory."

B. Obscure And Yet Familiar

Those who knew the scriptures would recognize the phrase, but not know exactly how it was meant. The scribes and lawyers would not be able to figure out what he was talking about at all.

Was this like in Daniel? The Messiah

Was it like in other places - a term of humility and nothingness?

Why would Jesus use an ambiguous phrase? So that His enemies could not charge Him before His time.

Matt. 16:13-18 "Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He began asking His disciples, saying, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it."

People didn't know who He was and it was better for a time that some didn't.

III. "Son Of Man" In Matthew

A. Human

Matt. 11:19 "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

B. Humble

Matt. 8:20 "And Jesus said to him, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.'"

C. Soon To Be Revealed

Matt. 10:23 "But whenever they persecute you in this city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes."

Matt. 16:28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

D. Powerful

Matt. 9:6 "But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" --then He said to the paralytic-- 'Rise, take up your bed, and go home.'

Matt. 12:8 "For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

E. Servant

Matt. 20:28 "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

F. Would Die and Be Resurrected

Matt. 12:40 "for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Matt. 17:9 "And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, 'Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.'"

Matt. 17:22,23 "And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men'"

Matt. 20:18 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death,"

Matt. 20:28 "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

23 and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day." And they were deeply grieved."

Matt. 26:2 "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be delivered up for crucifixion."

G. Will Judge All

Matt. 13:41 "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,

Matt. 16:27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS."

H. Will Reign Eternally

Matt. 25:31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne."

Matt. 26:63,64 "But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, 'I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.'"

64 Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."