



Jesus called himself: “Son of Man”

Good morning!

There are scholars who do not accept the divinity of Jesus---God’s Son.

They declare him to be no more than a man---a prophet perhaps or maybe a good moral teacher---certainly not the incarnation of the second person of the Triune God.

So how do they explain the early Christian belief that the fulness of God indwelt Jesus?

By claiming that the disciples fraudulently made this claim about Jesus to keep the movement going after Jesus was dead and buried (never resurrected they claim!).

BUT WHAT DID JESUS SAY ABOUT HIMSELF? Let’s consider how Jesus identified himself for the next few weeks.

We’ll begin this week with the title SON OF MAN. Jesus referred to himself as “son of man” some 65 times in the Gospels. So what did he mean by that? To answer that question we first note that “son of man” was a term deeply rooted in the Old Testament.

SON OF MAN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the Old Testament “son of man” has two very different meanings.

- First it means “man” –“human being”:

Numbers 23:19a- *“God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent.”*

Psalms 144:3- *LORD, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him?*

Ezekiel 2:1- *[God speaking to Ezekiel], “Son of man, stand on your feet and I will speak to you.”*

- Second, “son of man” has a more **divine** meaning:

Daniel 7:13- *“In my vision at night I [Daniel] looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. ¹⁴ 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.*

So in the term “son of man” which Jesus most often used to refer to himself, we find a powerful blending of humanity and divinity.

On the night Jesus was arrested and tried, the High Priest demanded he identify himself:

Matthew 26:63- *The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.” ⁶⁴ “You have said so,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”*

Jesus clearly identified himself with the Son of Man in Daniel 7, *and* the Sanhedrin clearly understood that Jesus was claiming to be divine:

Matthew 26:65- *Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy...! Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What do you think?” “He is worthy of death,” they answered.*

JESUS USED “SON OF MAN” IN THREE DIFFERENT WAYS¹:

- THE SON OF MAN CAME TO EARTH AS A MAN²

He ate, drank, slept, taught, ministered, was betrayed, falsely judged, died & rose.

- THE SON OF MAN CAME AS THE SUFFERING SERVANT³

Fulfilling **Isaiah 53:12** Jesus died on the cross to take away the sins of the world.

- THE SON OF MAN WILL APPEAR AT THE END THIS AGE TO ESTABLISH THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH FOR 1000 YEARS⁴

Matthew 24:30 “*Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.*”

SUMMARY: By the use of “son of man” Jesus claimed Messianic humanity and Messianic divinity.

QUESTIONS:

- Is this the Jesus you know?
- Is this the Jesus you worship?
- Has this Jesus forgiven your sins and given you eternal life?
- Is this the Jesus you share with others?

NEXT WEEK: Jesus continues to tell us who he is.

God bless you-

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Footnotes:

1 from- **A Theology of the New Testament**, George E. Ladd, Pp 149-158

2 see- Mark 2:10, 27; Matthew 8:20; Matthew 11:19; Matthew 13:37; Matthew 16:13; Luke 6:22; Luke 19:10; Luke 22:

48 **3** see- Mark 8:31; Mark 9:9, 12, 31; Mark 10:33, 45; Mark 12:40; Mark 14:21, 41

4 see- Mark 8:38; Mark 14:26, 62; Luke 12:40, Luke 17:24; Matthew 13:41; Matthew 16:28; Matthew 19:28; Matthew 24:30, 39; Matthew 25:31; Luke 12:8; Luke 17:22, 30; Luke 18:8; Luke 21:36