



DIGGING DEEPER

Rooted: Introduction

Wanna do some more study, follow a few rabbit trails and get a more rich understanding of this past week's sermon? Here are some of the things that either got briefly mentioned in the sermon or had to get omitted due to time.

Have fun!

Comparing Jesus' Baptism

Read Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; and Luke 3:22. How does the Father speak in these passages? What differences do you see? What similarities? What is the significance of these? (Check out the footnotes!). Also be sure to check out Genesis 22:2 and Hosea 11:1 on the usage of the phrase "Beloved Son" and how it relates and connects (a hyperlink to these OT passages by NT authors).

For fun, check out 2 Peter 1:17 to see how Peter interprets this event. For more fun, check out these passages that use the quote "This is my son" Deut. 14:1; 2 Sam 7:14; Isa 42:1; Jer 31:9; Ps 2:7. Enjoy!

The Importance of Naming

Adonai (God) said, "It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a fitting helper for him." And Adonai God formed out of the earth (ha-adamah) all the wild beasts and all the birds of the sky and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that would be its name. And the man gave names to all the cattle and to the birds of the sky and to all the wild beasts; but for the man no fitting helper was found. (Genesis 2:18-20). Why does God empower Adam to name the animals if naming had previously been a divine activity? The text states that the animals were brought to the man "to see what he would call them." From whose perspective is this text presented? Why did God not create a companion for Adam from the beginning?

"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" (Psalms 8:5) God answered them, "The man whom I desire to create will possess wisdom that shall exceed yours [the heavenly hosts.]" What did God do then? Assembling all the cattle, beasts, and fowl, God made them pass before them [the heavenly hosts] and asked them, "What are the names of these?" They did not know. When, however, God created man and, making them pass before him, asked him what the names of these were, he replied, "This should fittingly be called an ox; that, a lion; that, a horse; that, an ass; that, a camel; and that an eagle," as may be inferred from the text, "And the man gave names to all the cattle." Then God asked him, "And you, what shall be your name?" He answered, "Adam." God persisted, "Why?" And he explained, "Because I have been created from the ground."

The Holy One, blessed be God, asked him, "And I, what is My name?" Adam replied, "Adonai." "Why?" "Because you are master over all created beings." Hence it is written, "I am Adonai, that is My name." (Isaiah 47:8) It means, "That is the name by which Adam called Me; it is the name that I have accepted for Myself; and it is the name on which I have agreed with My creatures." (Numbers Rabbah 19:3). "And you shall no longer be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I make you the father of a multitude of nations..." And God said to Abraham, "As for your wife Sarai, you shall not call her Sarai, but her name shall be Sarah." (Genesis 17:5,15)

Since a number of women [in the Bible] are nameless, it is ironic that naming often appears in Genesis as a mother's prerogative. Eve, Sarah, Hagar, Rebekah, Rachel, Leah, the daughter of Shua (Judah's wife), and Tamar are all involved in the naming of their children. In a number of cases, the child is named after a prophecy or utterance made by its mother. (Jane Rachel Litman, "Themes of Genesis" in Lifecycles: Jewish Women on Biblical Themes in Contemporary Life, Volume 2, edited by Debra Orenstein and Jane Rachel Litman, Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 1997)

In adam and adamah there is an obvious play on words, a practice that the Bible shares with other ancient literatures. This should not, however, be mistaken for mere punning. Names were regarded not only as labels but also as symbols, magical keys, as it were, to the nature and essence of the given being or thing. (Ephraim A. Speiser, Genesis: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, Anchor Bible, volume 1, 1964)

In life, you discover that people are called by three names: One is the name the person is called by his father and mother; one is the name people call him; and one is the name he acquires for himself. The best one is the one he acquires for himself.

(Tanchuma, Vayak'heil 1). Each of us has a name given by God and given by our parents. Each of us has a name given by our stature and our smile and given by what we wear./ Each of us has a name given by the mountains and given by our walls./ Each of us has a name given by the stars and given by our neighbors./ Each of us has a name given by our sins and given by our longing./ Each of us has a name given by our enemies and given by our love./ Each of us has a name given by our celebrations and given by our work./ Each of us has a name given by the seasons and given by our blindness./ Each of us has a name given by the sea and given by our death. (Zelda, "Each Man Has a Name," as adapted by Marcia Falk in The Book of Blessings, New York: Harper Collins, 1996, p. 106ff.)

SON OF MAN [Heb ben 'ādām (בֶּן אָדָם); Aram bar 'ēnāš (בַּר אֲנָשׁ); Gk (ho) huios (tou) anthrōpou (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου)]. A Semitic expression that typically individualizes a noun for humanity in general by prefacing it with “son of,” thus designating a specific human being, a single member of the human species. Its meaning can be as indefinite as “someone” or “a certain person.” Used in Dan 7:13–14 to describe a cloud-borne humanlike figure, the expression—or at least the figure so designated in Daniel—became traditional in some forms of Jewish and early Christian speculation which anticipated a transcendent eschatological agent of divine judgment and deliverance. In the NT that agent is almost universally identified with the risen Jesus.

The New Testament

The term “son of man” occurs in the NT, with four exceptions (Acts 7, Hebrew 2, and Revelation 1, 14), only in the gospels, and there always on the lips of Jesus. With one exception (John 5:27), the gospels always use the definite article (“the son of man”), thus introducing the term as a known quantity, even in contexts where it has not been previously defined.

Read the following verses and look at what conclusions you can gather about this title, this identity of Jesus:

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| A. Matt 24:43–44 = Luke 12:39–40. | H. Matt 4:1–11 = Luke 4:1–13. | R. John 5:25–29. |
| B. Matt 10:32–33 = Luke 12:8–9; | I. Mark 8:38. | S. John 6:27, 53, 62. |
| C. Matt 19:28 = Luke 22:28–30. | J. Mark 14:62.(3) Mark 13:26–2 | T. John 8:28. As in 3:14, |
| D. Matt 12:38–42 = Luke 11:29–32. | K. Mark 2:1–12. | U. John 9:35. |
| E. Matt 11:16–19 = Luke 7:31–35. | L. Mark 2:23–28 | V. John 12:23–41. |
| F. Matt 12:32 = Luke 12:10. | M. Mark 8:31; 9:9–12, 31; 10:33–34, 45 | W. John 13:31. |
| G. Matt 8:20 = Luke 9:58. | N. Matt 13:24–30, 36–43 | X. 1 Cor 15:23–28. |
| | O. Matt 25:31–46. | Y. 1 Cor 3:10–14; 4:1–5 |
| | P. John 1:43–51. | Z. 2 Cor 5:10 |
| | Q. John 3:13–16. | AA. 2 Thess 2:1–12. |
| | | BB. Heb 2:5–9. |

Summary of NT Evidence. In a wide variety of ways, NT texts evidence knowledge of the forms, themes, and conflations in Jewish traditions about the son of man. Often taken for granted is the Jewish interpretation that identified the heavenly figure in Daniel 7 as God’s anointed one and, sometimes, God’s servant. The gospels usually echo the language of Daniel rather than 1 Enoch, although occasionally the Enochic form of the text is especially evident (e.g., Matthew 25). Outside of the gospels, one finds in many places the belief in an eschatological parousia of the transcendental messiah, which is most probably traceable to a conflate tradition from which the Danielic and Enochic term “son of man” has disappeared.

Perhaps the most remarkable fact about the NT son of man traditions is their consistent ascription of judicial functions to the exalted Jesus. In spite of the frequent use of Danielic language and imagery, these texts, with the exception of Revelation, do not emphasize the Danielic motif of “kingship,” much less an eternal reign. Constitutive and central is Jesus’ role as judge (or, occasionally, witness), an element introduced into the tradition from non-Danielic, albeit royally oriented sources. This judicial element, more than any other, identifies the NT texts as derivative from the conflated Jewish traditions.

Most of the gospel texts about the exalted eschatological son of man presume that this figure is identical with the risen and exalted Jesus. Reference to the earthly Jesus as “son of man” reflects a complex process of speculation. The Wisdom-1 Enoch parallels, and perhaps the identification of Enoch as son of man, allowed one to find for the future son of man and exalted servant an earthly existence as the persecuted one. By the same token, the Enochic idea that the future son of man/Chosen One had an existence before creation allowed Christians—different from the author of the Parables—to posit the descent, suffering, and death of the preexistent son of man. This viewpoint was further facilitated by other Christian speculation about Jesus as the incarnation of heavenly Wisdom. The complexity of these speculations is further attested in Phil 2:6–11, which imposes the myth of descending and reascending Wisdom (cf. 1 Enoch 42) on the story of the suffering and exalted servant of the Lord.