

Son of Man



Identification (Part 1)
by Derek Prince

It's good to with you again at the beginning of a new week, sharing with you Keys to Successful Living which God has placed in my hand through many years of personal experience and Christian ministry.

We're drawing near to the Easter season, that special season when Christians all around the world commemorate the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, I've chosen a theme for my talks, for the next four weeks, which will help you to understand more clearly the true significance of the death of Jesus and to enter more fully into all that He obtained for us by His death.

But first, let me say thank you to those of you who've been writing to me. Before I finish this talk, we'll be giving you a mailing address to which you may write. It means a great deal to me to hear how this radio ministry of mine has been helping you and blessing you. So please take time to write, even if it's only a brief personal note.

The theme that I've chosen for this Easter season is Identification. That needs a word of explanation. To identify with someone means to make yourself one with someone. This concept of identification is the key to a true understanding of the Easter message. There are two sides to this process of identification, like the two opposite sides of a single coin, both of them relate to Jesus.

On the one side, Jesus identified Himself with us, with sinners, with the whole fallen human race. On the other side, we are invited to identify ourselves with Jesus in all that followed His death, that is, burial, resurrection and even ascension to the very throne of God.

Today we'll begin by looking at the first side of the coin: the Identification of Jesus with Us.

Have you ever stopped to consider what title Jesus used most often of Himself? If I were to ask you to venture and answer, I question many of you would come up with the right answer. The title Jesus used most often for Himself was not Savior, or Messiah, or Son of God, but, Son of Man. Isn't that remarkable? Actually this title occurs about 80 times in the gospels. Now this phrase or title, Son of Man, has a background in the Old Testament Scriptures. It's found in the

book of Daniel, chapter 7, verses 13 and 14. This chapter records a tremendous and wonderful vision that Daniel had of something that was going to happen in the future; something that was relating to the setting up a kingdom that would never pass away, a kingdom that was to ruled by a ruler specially chosen of God. And that ruler in the minds of the Jewish people became identified with Messiah. But, really the title that applies most accurately to what we're saying now is not Messiah, which means the anointed one, but this title, Son of Man. Now I'll read those 2 verses from Daniel 7, verses 13 and 14. Daniel says:

> "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 [that's God Himself] and [He, this Son of Man] was presented before Him [the Ancient of Days]. And to Him [this Son of Man] was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed." (NASB)

Now I want to say just a word or two about the language used. I've been something of a student of languages most of my life. I've studied a number of different languages, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, to a little extent Aramaic, as well as a number of modern languages. You may or may not be aware but the Old Testament as we know it was presented to us in two languages, mainly in Hebrew, but some passages in Aramaic, which was another Semitic dialect, which the Jews really picked up during Babylonian captivity. Now this particular passage of Daniel which I've read, was written or presented to us in Aramaic not in Hebrew. In Hebrew the word for Son of Man is ben adam, that means a son a Adam. It places that person right in descent from Adam, the forefather of the human race. But in Aramaic, the phrase for Son of Man, is bar anush, where anush is, again, man; bar is son in Aramaic. But anush means man, essentially in his weakness, in his frailty. It always has that connotation as man as some kind of a mortal being that's subject to weakness and frailty. So there's a kind of deliberate paradox, this son of man, this son of frailty and weakness is portrayed here as being brought into the very presence of the almighty God and there a kingdom is bestowed upon Him which is going to be the kingdom of all kingdoms that will have dominion over all kingdoms and will never pass away.

Now this is the very title that Jesus applied to Himself in his discourse is recorded in the gospel. And personally I think it's very probable that Jesus spoke Aramaic so He would actually be using this title bar anush, the Aramaic form. And for the Jewish people for His day, the moment he used that phrase, bar anush, it was virtually, without any question, a claim to be the Messiah. Jesus used this title, Son of Man, of Himself in two different aspects or contexts. He applied it to Himself in humility. For instance in Matthew chapter 8, verse 20:

> "Jesus said, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.'" (NIV)

A kind of wanderer, without a fixed residence or abode. And in Matthew 20, verse 28, Jesus says:

> "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." (NIV)

So that's humility. But He also applies it to Himself in glory, for the future. He says in Matthew 16, verse 27:

> "For the Son of Man is going to come in His Father's glory with His angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done." (NIV)

And in Matthew 26, verse 64:

> "In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven." (NIV)

That's very close to Daniel's vision. There it speaks of the Son of Man in His glorified, revealed being, as the appointed ruler by God for the whole universe.

So we have this interesting paradox of the Son of Man representing frailty and weakness and yet being the one who the Jewish people looked for to as the one who would restore the kingdom to Israel and become the ruler of all nations.

This phrase that we're talking about, Son of Man, when applied to Jesus, who was also Son of God, portrays a unique combination of humanity with divinity. He's perfectly God, but He's also perfectly man.

Now this was predicted in various places in the Old Testament. For instance, in the well-known passage in Isaiah 7:14:

> "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." (NIV)

Immanuel, God with us. So this child born of a virgin, though he's a human child, is also God with us. And that word, that main title, Immanuel, is not two words it's one, which beautifully betrays humanity and divinity blended into one person. And then a little further on, Isaiah 9:6:

> "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he [this child] will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (NIV)

So here's this person, born as a child, but given as the eternal son, and yet this child is also the might God. So there we have bar anush, human frailty and yet divine authority and might, blended in the same person.

This is also beautifully brought out in the genealogy of Jesus. For instance in Luke, chapter 3, where his genealogy is given in the fullest form, he's traced right back to the Son of Adam, the Son of God. He was the representative of the whole human race. He became totally identified with all humanity, not merely with his own Jewish people. Interestingly in Matthew, which is a gospel primarily addressed to the Jewish people, his genealogy is traced back only to Abraham. But in Luke, which is the message in a sense to all humanity, his genealogy is traced back to Adam the Son of God.

And then in 1 Corinthians 15:45, Paul bestows upon Him this exciting title which contains so much in it. He speaks about Him as the Last Adam. What does that mean? Well as the last Adam, first of all, he's perfectly a member of the human race, he's totally identified, he's perfectly human, and then he's the last, not the last in time because millions and millions of descendants have been born since the time of Jesus. But he's the last in a sense that when he died on the cross, all the sins, all the frailties, all weaknesses, all the problems that stem from the sin of Adam and all his descendants, both past and future. All that came upon Jesus when he died on the cross. This is the point I want to emphasize throughout this week it all came on Jesus. He became our substitute. He was the Son of Man, he was the last Adam. And when he died it was all terminated. It was finished, it was dealt with, all problems were solved by the death of Jesus on the cross.

Well, our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time and I'll be continuing with this theme of identification.

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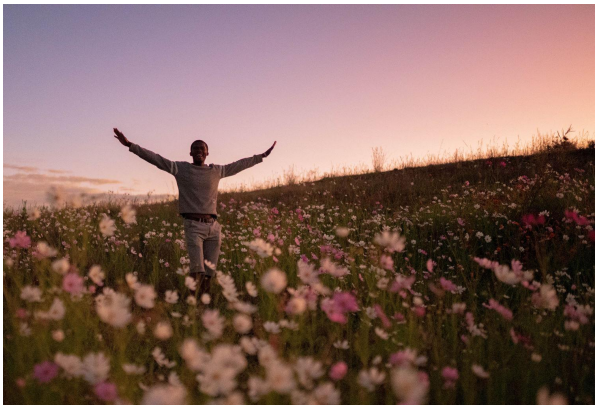

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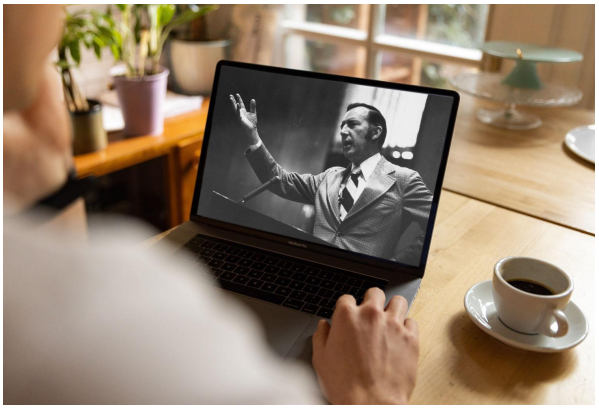

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