

The Son of Man: A Semantic & Historical Analysis of Jesus' Aims and Agenda

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Thesis: Jesus titled himself the “Son of Man”, to illuminate the identity of who he was at his innermost core: *A Self-Abnegating Messiah*.

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The term, “Son of Man”, is considered to be one of the oldest traditions of Christianity¹, yet it boasts significant controversy, as scholars cannot agree on what it represents. In fact, even authors who are paradigmatically close to one another cannot seem to pin this term down. Many deny that Jesus even used the phrase², while others claim that it cannot be denied that Jesus said those exact words.³ It is in light of this dispute that the debate has been sent into a stalemate.

This study seeks to reopen the debate in discerning to what degree of significance there is in trying to understand if Jesus used the term, and if he in fact did, what he meant by doing so. This will come first and foremost by looking specifically when and in what exact documents the term is used. Having established this foundation will set up the possibility of implementing a study on how the term affected history, particularly in regards to Israel. Lastly, understanding the implications from the previous sections, this opens the prospect of seeking to understand expressly how and why Jesus used the term “Son of Man.”

I. Introductory Comments

At the outset of embarking on this quest, it is necessary to speak a brief word on the methodology of this paper. The *how* of a journey is just as important as the journey itself. Likewise, the *how* behind doing proper historical analysis is just as important as *what* is being analyzed. Will Durant, reflecting on Voltaire, rightly concluded: “How many a

¹ Ferdinand Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology: Their History in Early Christianity* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969).

² Rudolph Bultmann, Marcus J. Borg & John Dominic Crossan.

³ N.T. Wright & E.P. Sanders.

debate would have been deflated into a paragraph if the disputants had declared to define their terms!"⁴ Therefore, it is proper that the same should be done in the quest for the historical Jesus.

Methodology: Is the Quest Reasonable?

René Descartes, the French philosopher and mathematician, is famous for his work, *Meditations*, because he systematically attempted to rid himself of all subjective thinking. Descartes comments, "I realized that it was necessary, once in the course of my life, to demolish everything completely and start right from the foundations...Once the foundations of a building are undermined, anything built on them collapses."⁵ While it is true that what Descartes was trying to accomplish was indeed noble, it is however impossible. "Every person thinks, writes and reads from somewhere."⁶ In regards to the quest for the historical Jesus, J.D. Crossan has it right when he states that we cannot hope to pursue Jesus "with an unattainable objectivity, but [rather] with an attainable honesty."⁷ Rudolph Bultmann was also correct in presuming that we can only formulate "subjective

⁴ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1961) 59.

⁵ Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993) 13.

⁶ N.T. Wright, qtd. in "Sounding the Alarm: N.T. Wright and Evangelical Theology," Travis Tamerius, *The Reformation and Revival Journal* Volume 11.2 (2002) N.p.

⁷ John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991) xxxiv. For those who still hold to the old style of objectivity refer to: (1) John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus: The Roots of the Problem and the Person, Vol. 1* (New York: Anchor Bible Reference, Doubleday Publishing, 1991). (2) F.J. van Beeck, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: Origins, Achievements, and the Specter of Diminishing Returns*.

judgments.”⁸ If man is created as a subjective being, then the logic follows that he will always live in a state of presuppositions. However, it also must be said that Bultmann’s final conclusions on subjectivity have missed the mark. He goes too far in assuming that we cannot make *any* good judgments.⁹ The point then becomes not that we should eliminate all of our presuppositions, but rather that we need to find a balance in striving to obtain the right suppositions. The idea that all assumptions are wrong and bad is really what needs to be eliminated. N.T. Wright, partly in response to Bultmann’s pessimism, has unequivocally concluded, “Such a confession does not mean that we are confined to a hermeneutical morass of radical subjectivity.”¹⁰ It is in such perspectival introspection that a better understanding can be had, and in this case the meaning of the term “Son of Man” will emerge. It is to this study that we will now turn our full attention to.

II. Implications & Questions

Why This Phrase?

It is quite obvious that those reading such a work as this understand, at least somewhat, the implications that arise from the “Son of Man” sayings. However, it is still important to ask why we should even bother to single out this particular phrase. In other words: Is it really *that* important? The following is a list of introductory reasons why the phrase should be singled out. First, in the New Testament writings, the term “Son of

⁸ Rudolph Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963) 102.

⁹ Bultmann 102.

¹⁰ Wright, qtd. in *Sounding the Alarm*, N.P.

Man” (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) is only used by Jesus to describe himself.¹¹ In all of the writings, including that of *Thomas*, no one refers to Jesus as the “Son of Man.” Jesus is the *only* one who gave himself this title. Therefore, it seems that even though the term *unique* is often labeled falsely upon things, this phrase is *unique* in that it is the only title in the N.T. material that was exclusively used by and for Jesus. It is from this uniqueness that the phrase has what is known as “double-dissimilarity.” For not only is it unusual that Jesus uses it as a self-designation and no one else refers to him as such, but it is highly unusual that the phrase is not used in any biblical literature except the gospel accounts. Secondly, titles do in fact matter. They bear significant weight, especially in relation to the self-disclosure of an individual. If it is true, which will be looked at more in detail later, that Jesus did label himself the “Son of Man”, this allows readers the privilege today of being able to penetrate into this self-disclosure. Lastly, the Old Testament references to the “Son of Man”, give this particular phrase an added importance. The message of a coming Messiah in Jewish culture is something that cannot be denied. It was infused into their culture, their history and into their daily lives. If Jesus was fulfilling this role, then the title he used to describe himself must have displayed at least some value.

In short, it cannot be argued that this phrase should not be given a closer look. In the least, the implications that *could* result from Jesus saying this kind of phrase is reason enough for its study.

¹¹ Mark does make two editorial remarks (8:31; 9:9) about the “Son of Man”, but they refer to the teaching that Jesus himself taught. The only other exception is in Acts 7:56 when Steven states, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” Steven however, does not specifically title this term to Jesus.

A Brief Analysis of Contemporary Scholarship

With this in mind, attention needs to be given to a few of the typical and most difficult questions asked in relation to the quest for the historical “Son of Man.” (1) Can we know the intentions of Jesus, or only the faith community? For our purposes here, this breaks down more specifically to the question of if we can accurately know if Jesus even used the phrase “Son of Man” himself. Accordingly, it would be critical for a historical study if one could tell which statements Jesus did in fact say, because it lets us know in the least who Jesus thought he was. In contention against those such as Rudolph Bultmann¹² and Marcus Borg¹³, it is the opinion of this author that we can in fact know the intentions of Jesus. Although there is not enough time in this paper to go completely into this debate, the following arguments will have to suffice. First, like was mentioned earlier, the term has what is known as “double-dissimilarity.” It is nearly impossible to suggest that the term came out of nowhere, was applied only to Jesus and by Jesus, and then never used after the ascension.¹⁴ Secondly, the amount of times that the phrase is used in the New Testament lends to its credibility. If the term was only used a few times, perhaps in only one gospel account, it would be hard to argue for reliability, but the fact that it is used over eighty times, in all of the gospels, makes it tough to say that it was “slipped” into the Bible.

¹² Bultmann 5.

¹³ Marcus Borg, *Seeing God Again: What's At Stake*, Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University, Feb. 2000.

¹⁴ For additional material on the New Testament writings meeting the rigor of historical scrutiny, see Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987), Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: A Trilogy* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2005), & Neil R. Lightfoot, *How We Got the Bible* (Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 1986).

Dale C. Allyson, a prominent Jesus scholar, has raised such concerns, suggesting that the writers have possibly committed fraud¹⁵, meaning that we are left with only their false ideas. However, this is simply disagreeable on the scale that he is suggesting. One could easily argue that the early church slipped in a few of their ideas, but to argue that they counterfeited the phrase this many times is highly unlikely.¹⁶

(2) A spin-off of the previous concern by Allyson becomes the assertion that the early church used the phrase “Son of Man”, to literarily say something that they already knew to be true. And it is proper to assume that even if Jesus did not claim this title for himself, he still would have fulfilled the role of Messiah through his actions. However, there are two reasons to suggest that this was not the case. First, the early church was in the process of exalting Jesus, not limiting him to an earthly persona. As will be seen later, the term suggests human qualities, as well as divine. If the church truly did intend to hoodwink the audience of the Scriptures, it would have been likely that they would have chosen a title much more exalting in nature.¹⁷ Secondly, it is not proper to assume that the Church would have jumping at the opportunity to assign titles to Jesus. It is however proper to assume that they were extremely careful when dealing with what they considered

¹⁵ Dale C. Allison, *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1999) 7.

¹⁶ See especially, N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins*, ed. William H. Bellinger, Jr. and William R. Farmer (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998) 281–297. Wright speaking on the view of Schweitzer and Sanders: “Though of course the evangelists have their own reasons for arranging things the way they have, and though of course the tradition has been shaped by the interests of the early church, the Gospels’ portrait of Jesus as the eschatological prophet of the Kingdom of God is substantially on target.”

¹⁷ Walter Wink, *The Human Being: Jesus & The Enigma of the Son of Man* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002) 62.

to be sacred, inspired Scriptures (Acts 17:11; Rom. 1:2, 3:2; 2 Cor. 4:2; Eph. 6:17; Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:15; James 1:18).

(3) Does the Jesus Seminar have a correct framework by which to measure the “Son of Man” sayings? Even though they are not necessarily representative of general scholarship, the Jesus Seminar has very boldly made claims concerning the red letters of Jesus Christ. In the late 80’s, they voted on these letters, putting them in one of four categories: Jesus *did* say it, Jesus *probably* said it, Jesus *probably* did *not* say it and Jesus did *not* say it. In John Dominic Crossan’s specific study¹⁸, in order to make a decision on the reliability of a verse, he separates them into four different stratum, with the first being the most reliable. From this, he divides the stratum into different complexes arranged by topic. For example, all texts related to Jesus’ crucifixion, are combined into one complex. In the case of the “Son of Man”, Crossan includes nine sayings in the first stratum.¹⁹ By his standard this would make it seem that the sayings were very reliable, since a first stratum source only needs to be attested to more than once to be considered trustworthy. However, he separates every single one of these phrases into different complexes. He does not include any of the “Son of Man” sayings in the same complex, even though they are the same topic. Crossan’s theories and presuppositions seem to be driving the evidence, instead of the evidence driving his theories. If Crossan would put the “Son of Man” sayings in their proper complex, even by his standard, which is considered to be on the

¹⁸ Crossan 243ff.

¹⁹ Crossan 454.

liberal side of scholarship, would point to the conclusion that Jesus did use the term “Son of Man”.²⁰

At this point, we have looked at both why the issue of the “Son of Man” is important, as well as just having established that Jesus did in fact use the term himself. It is from this framework that we can now examine the etymology of the term by seeking out the sources in which phrase “Son of Man” is used. It is through such a semantic study that we will be able to trace the meaning of the term throughout its history.

III. Sources For Historical Inquiry and their Divisions

Sources to Be Considered

Unlike most phrases, which cross all cultural and religious barriers, the “Son of Man” phrase is limited to the confines of Hebrew, Jewish and Christian writings. The following is a list that represents the sources to be considered: (1) The New Testament: The Gospels, Acts 7:53, Heb. 2:6, Rev. 1:13; 14:14. (2) The Old Testament: Numbers, Job, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. (3) Extra-Biblical Documents: The Similitude’s of Enoch, 4 Ezra, 1 Enoch, Ezekiel the Tragedian. (4) Some late Aramaic texts.

Even though the term does occur in all of these writings, it is however difficult to determine which data is reliable, if only the dating process is used. By this I simply mean that if we look at the sayings on a timeline of when they were used, it will be difficult to argue that the meaning of the term changed over time. For instance, both the book of Daniel and Ezekiel are conservatively taken to have been written around the 6th century

²⁰ For a more thorough critique of Crossan, see Dennis Ingolfsland, “A Critical Comment: The Historical Jesus According to John Dominic Crossans First Stratum Sources,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 45.3 (9/1/2002) 405-14.

B.C., yet the phrase “Son of Man” denotes different things in each book. It is true, which will be seen, that the meaning of the term did evolve over time, but this is not the most accurate way in which to examine the phrase. It seems that the best way in which to perform a semantic study is by examining the context in how the term was used by the author. It is in the context of authorship that it will be argued that the meaning of the phrase evolved. Looking at all the evidence, the data can be broken down into three stratum.

The Son of Man = Only Flesh

Numbers 23:19, Job 25:6: There is evidence that these early Old Testament books refer to the “son of man” in a generic way, translating into “humanity”, or emphasizing the “flesh-ness of man”. The book of Job has an especially interesting take on the “son of man” phrase. More than any other time, Bildad, who is speaking in the text, gives the term a negative injunction: “How much less man, who is but a maggot –a son of man, who is only a worm (25:6).” In biblical Hebrew, the term *adam*, which translates into mankind, refers to man as a whole. Similar to this is the “son of man” (*ben adam*), which singles out man.²¹ It is with this phrase that Bildad is simply referring to the weakness of man.²² As well, Moses writes in the book of Numbers: “God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?” Moses uses this comparison to show that God is not like man who is made of “flesh.” It is in these two Old Testament texts that give the best evidence

²¹ O. Michel, *Dictionary of New Testament Theology: Volume III*, Ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978) 613.

²² James E. Smith, *The Wisdom Literature & Psalms* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2000) 127.

to support the claim that both Job and Moses merely used the term to refer to a “fleshly” human being.

Late Hebrew & Semitic Texts: When dealing with the “fleshly” side to the “son of man”, it would be nearly impossible to overlook the work of Geza Vermes. Vermes emphatically promotes the idea that the “son of man” phrase can refer to nothing more than “man.” His evidence suggests that the term actually originated in Aramaic (*bar-nasha*) and is simply a substitute for the indefinite pronoun (*one*). In its variants the term could refer to oneself, anyone, someone or even humanity in general.²³ In addition to these claims, Vermes also purposes that when Jesus uses the term, it is an oblique or humble²⁴ way of saying “I”, and Jesus in no way used it as a title. However, Vermes simply does not use good evidence to site his claims. He uses only second century and later data, yet still claims to be making valid arguments for Jesus’ lifetime in the first century. Even in the documents he alludes to, there is no conclusive evidence, either implicitly or explicitly, that “son of man” is a type of “surrogate expression” for his humbleness, and not a title.²⁵

²³ Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian’s Reading of the Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1974) 163-168, 188-191. Vermes has done tremendous work in the translation of ancient Aramaic texts, but he misses a big portion of how the term can be used. Although the Aramaic (*bar nasha*) can be translated generically, as *humanity* or *someone*, the expression could be used as a title. For more on this, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *A Wondering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula, MT: Schoars Press, 1979) 143-160. The Hebrew writers may have been the first to do so, but this does not discount it as a possibility. Expressions have to start somewhere and the Hebrew Bible seems to have coined the phrase in this unique way.

²⁴ It is true that Jesus used the term to denote “humbleness”, but this does not mean that Jesus did not use it to denote something more than just this.

²⁵ Crossan, *The Historical Jesus*, 242-43.

The Son of Man in Transition

Psalms & the Prophetic Literature (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel): It is in these writings that we will examine the possibility of the authors changing the etymology of the “son of man.” While Numbers and Job are no doubt references to the “flesh-ness” of man; these Old Testament books are not quite so easy to translate. The prophetic and eschatological language that is used in connection with many of the books, make it much more difficult to place the writing in its proper context. There are too many references to cite in a paper such as this, but a good starting place is the book of Psalms: “What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him (8:4)?” This verse has displayed a bit of controversy over whether or not there is a messianic tone present in David’s meditation, but the context in which David wrote is supplied by the surrounding verses. This context however, could suggest that David is talking about humanity in general, or he could be speaking about someone in the future. Even though the New Testament writers quote and apply this verse directly to Christ on four separate occasions (Matt. 21:16; Eph. 1:20ff; 1 Cor. 15:27; Heb. 2:6-9)²⁶, this does not necessarily mean that David knew that this was a prophecy. So, is he writing about the future? Even though it cannot for sure be known whether David was consciously prophesying, this does not seem to be the case. He was simply using the term to describe God’s relationship to man. It was only when the New

²⁶ For more on the “Son of Man” in Psalms, see Michel 614.

Testament writers looked back that they made this same comparison of Jesus' relationship to God.²⁷

Another book in which the meaning could have possibly been developed is in the book of Ezekiel, which boasts the term "Son of Man" a total of 93 times. Consider the following examples: "He said to me, "*Son of Man*, stand up on your feet and I will speak to you." (2:1), "*Son of Man*, set your face against the Ammonites and prophesy against them" (25:2), "*Son of Man*, describe the temple to the people of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their sins" (43:10). More examples could be given, but it would merely become repetitive. Each time the term is used, God himself assigns it to the prophet Ezekiel. In fact, the prophet is never referred to by his actual name. In calling Ezekiel a "son of man", it could be said that God is expressing the human frailty of the prophet.²⁸ Even though the term had not been designated for a specific man up until this point, it still resembles the "flesh-ness" described in Job and Numbers. However, it has also been purposed that God's designation of Ezekiel as the "son of man", is actually a reference to a man coming in the future. It is argued that in his foreknowledge, God uses this term for Ezekiel, not to label

²⁷ Smith, *The Wisdom Literature & Psalms*, 222-23. Smith goes on to comment how Christ fits in directly to chapter 8 of Psalms: "God's condescension to "man" in his creaturely weakness (*enosh*) points to his glory [8:3-4]. The ultimate manifestation of God's glory came when the Son of Man was made for a time to be lower than the angels [8:5]. Messiah was given universal authority at the time of his ascension. The original dominion over the earth given to Adam and subsequently lost is restored in the Messiah. During his earthly ministry the Son of Man on many occasions demonstrated his authority over nature. All things now have been put under his feet. Christ now reigns from his throne on high (Heb. 2:5; Eph. 1:22; 1 Cor. 15:25-27)."

²⁸ James E. Smith, *The Major Prophets*, (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2001) 371.

him as a Messiah, but rather that Ezekiel is a type of savior that would come in the future.²⁹ Even though Jesus himself was a prophet and resembled the prophets of the past, there is however not enough evidence to make this argument. Even though it might be easy to look back into history to see this connection, we are trying to get at how the authors originally used the term.

The Son of Man = More than “Fleshly”

The Book of Daniel: It is in this book that a clear connection exists of an author “almost” obviously assigning more to what the “son of man” phrase had meant in the past. In fact, Daniel is the only author in the Old Testament that seems to recognize that the future “son of man” possessed abnormal qualities compared to just any normal man. The following is an excerpt from Daniel’s vision:

In my vision at night I 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. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed (7:13-14).³⁰

The context of this passage is that while the beasts in the vision are rendered powerless or destroyed, the “one like a son of man” ascends to be with God. Not only is this “son of

²⁹ Henry Morris, dir. *Ezekiel – Son of Man*. ICR. n.d., 2 April 2006
<<http://www.icr.org/index.php?module=articles&action=view&ID=21701>>

³⁰ Rev. 1:13 & 14:14 also reflect this same type of apocalyptic imagery: “like a son of man.” Just like Daniel, John somewhat veils the identity of this Messiah figure.

man” with God, but he is able to approach God himself. And not only is he able to approach God, God gives him “everlasting dominion” and is “worshipped” by other men. One does not have to be a Jewish expert to understand how blasphemous this passage looks at an initial glance. First, no one had ever seen God, yet alone approached him. According to the Old Testament, one could not even see God and live. Secondly, God is the only one to be worshipped. No one (Deut. 5:7) or no idol (Deut. 5:8) was to be worshipped besides God.

This passage is difficult to translate, especially two and a half millennia after the fact, but there are two options, which seem to make the most sense. First, the “son of man” could be a depiction of the nation of Israel. In the verses following 7:13-14, Daniel is given an explanation for what had just happened in the vision: “The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth. But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever (7:17-18).” The “saints” then would represent God’s people (Israel) and the relationship described in 7:13-14 would be a description of the nature of the relationship between God and Israel. In other words it could be taken as a prophecy concerning the reinstatement of Israel to God. As will be seen in the next section, Israel was in a state of exile during the writing of Daniel and the covenant relationship between God and his people had been broken, but Israel was still looking for God to act. Secondly, the “son of man” imagery could be a prophecy concerning a future prophet that would “save” Israel from exile. Once again, this would make sense given the past history of Israel. God had sent countless prophets in the past, so the idea of a future “messiah” would have been on the minds of Daniel’s listeners.

In trying to determine which of these ideas are correct, it really becomes an uphill battle. Both of these ideas were present in Daniel's time. The question then becomes what did Daniel intend to mean when he wrote down these passages? Even though understanding this particular passage is difficult, there is one factor that ties these two ideas together. This connection is seen in the state in which Israel was living: exile from God. Because they were living in exile, Daniel's writing of this passage would have been done in light of both the hope of a future savior, as well as the hope that Israel would one day be at peace with their God.³¹ Now, it is true that Israel may not have been looking specifically for a figure bearing the title "son of man", but they would have been looking for a Messiah.³² In the least, from the writings of Daniel there is a clear connection between the "son of man" and a glorious future.

Extra-Biblical Texts (Ezekiel the Tragedian [Exodus], 1 Enoch [The Similitude's of Enoch], 4 Ezra): Even though specific dates of these writings are very controversial, the argument here is not to hammer out specific dates. The point of examining these documents is to see the context in which the authors coined the phrase "son of man" into their writings. The content is very similar in each of these documents, so the following example from *The Similitude's of Enoch* will easily suffice.

³¹ Michel 614.

³² There has also been much discussion over whether or not Israel would have seen the "one like a son of man" as purely angelic or more as a symbol/representative of Israel. The problem lies in whether it can be both. Dualism seems unwarranted in this case. Just like the prophets, the Messiah would also bear qualities that would make him angelic in a sense. In addition, the Messiah would also be seen as a symbol/representative of Israel. For more on this particular discussion, see Crispen H.T. Fletcher-Louis, dir. *Second Oxford Lecture on the Development of Christology*, Saint Andrews, 1998, 9 April 2006
<http://www.standrews.ac.uk/~www_sd/med_oxford2.html>

He answered and said to me, This is the Son of man, to whom righteousness belongs; with whom righteousness has dwelt; and who will reveal all the treasures of that which is concealed: for the Lord of spirits has chosen him; and his portion has surpassed all before the Lord of spirits in everlasting uprightness (46:2). They shall be terrified and dejected; and pain shall seize them when they see that Son of Man sitting on the throne of his glory (62:6)

Even though the *Similitude's* may have been written in the late first century,³³ they still show how the term “Son of Man” had made semantic developments in how the author used the phrase. In this specific instance, the “Son of Man” has become heavenly in his greatness and is endowed with attributes of God.³⁴ The point, much like in Daniel, is that the “son of man” simply cannot refer to just a “man.”

The New Testament Writings (The Gospels, Acts 7:53, Heb. 2:6, Rev. 1:13; 14:14): Even though several authors had made a shift in the way in which the term “son of man” was to be translated, no one used the term quite like Jesus. He used it in a much more specific and understandable method. In fact, in the New Testament, the “Son of Man” phrase is used either implicitly or explicitly in every usage as a designation of Jesus.³⁵ Consider the following examples: (1) “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be

³³ Michel 615.

³⁴ Wink 56.

³⁵ “Son of Man” is used some 86 times in the New Testament. This count does not include Matt. 18:11 or Luke 9:56, both of which are poorly attested to. It does however, include the quotation of Ps. 8 in Heb. 2:6. Many withhold Heb. 2:6 on the basis that it refers simply to humanity, but the Messianic tone in the surrounding verses and the fact that the chapter was applied to Christ four times in the N.T. (Matt. 21:16; Eph. 1:20ff; 1 Cor. 15:27; Heb. 2:6-9) give reason to add it to the total count. See page 274, note 2 in Wink for a different total count. See also, Vermes 160ff.

ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels” (Lk. 9:26). (2) "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” (Jn. 1:51). (3) "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Mk. 14:61b-62). In each example, Jesus does not infer that the “Son of Man” is merely a “man.” It is his language in passages like these and his actions throughout the gospels that make it clear that the “Son of Man” is much more than just any man.

As well, up to this point no one had ever claimed the phrase for themselves. Ezekiel had it given to him in a nebulous sort of way and Daniel did not assign the phrase to any particular person. However, it is by Jesus that the “Son of Man” is used for himself, as a title. The following example leaves no room for it being anything else: “We are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise” (Mark 10:33-34).

In the beginning of this section we looked at the very earliest usages of the “son of man” by both Moses and Job. It was clear in these accounts that the term was used to denote nothing more than the “flesh-ness” of humanity. After examining these two accounts, we then moved to several other Old Testament passages in which the term is more undefined, but was still used by the authors as a designation of humanity. Concluding this section, we spent most of the time exploring the possibilities of the

excerpt in the book of Daniel and made the connection that the “son of man” was directly related to the exile that Israel was experiencing when Daniel had his vision from God. We then briefly looked at the ways in which Jesus used the term in the New Testament. The conclusion was made that Jesus used the term to refer to something more than just humanity, and that he used it as a designation for himself. However, knowing that Jesus used the term is not enough to understand his intentions. A question that must be answered before we can examine Jesus more completely is why did Jesus use this particular term? It obviously has a connection to passages such as Daniel, but why would Jesus use a phrase such as “son of man?” The following section will take a closer look at the context in which Jesus was living and ministering in. It was mentioned earlier that Israel was in a state of exile when Daniel and Ezekiel wrote their books, but it will now be beneficial to look at the evidence that suggests that even in Jesus’ day, Israel was experiencing an exile and that they were still looking for God to act on their behalf.

IV. History, Politics & Broken Expectations

“Christianity appeals to history, to history it must go.”³⁶

- N.T. Wright

This section will attempt to uncover the fact that Israel was truly living in a state of exile and that Jesus himself would have recognized this fact. Historical analysis can be a difficult, ominous practice, but there are certain known facts of Israel’s history that will aid in recovering a brief background of their past experiences. The following then, is a glimpse of these experiences that will begin with the destruction of the first temple in BC 587, and

³⁶ N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1997) 11.

will stretch all the way to the destruction of the second temple in AD 70. Over the course of this time, Israel was thrown into exile during the following periods.

A Brief History Lesson: Seven Periods

(1) *The Babylonian Period.* With the destruction of the first temple, all of Israel was uprooted from their land and put into captivity because of their corruptness.³⁷ They had broken their covenant commitment to God and they were now reaping the harvest of wrath from God. (2) *The Persian Period.* Making the tension worse, when the Persians took over the Babylonians in BC 538, Israel did not become free. Instead, she was taken out of slavery, but was still lorded over by another people.³⁸ (3) *The Greek or Macedonian Period.* Israel was lorded over by the Persians until BC 332, when Alexander the Great gained control of the Persian Empire. In this conquest, Israel was not only ruled over by a people, but the Greek culture was superimposed upon them. It was during this time period that the Greek language became commonplace over much of the Mediterranean.³⁹ In fact, it is realistic to say that this was the end of a non-Hellenistic Judaism.⁴⁰ Alexander was relatively kind to the Jews, but once again, Israel was not out of exile. (4) *The Egyptian Period.* Alexander's career ended with his death in BC 323 and the kingdom was divided

³⁷ Marcus J. Borg, *Conflict, Holiness & Politics in the Teachings of Jesus* (Harrisburg, PN: Trinity Press, 1998), 68.

³⁸ N.T. Wright, *The New Testament & The People of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992) 157.

³⁹ Seth Wilson, "Special Study - Between the Testaments", in *Old Testament History: An Overview of Sacred History & Truth*, Wilbur Fields, (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2001) 646ff.

⁴⁰ Martin Hengel, *Judaism & Hellenism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2003), 1:252

up between four of his generals. Two of the generals, Seleucus and Ptolemy, claimed the land of Palestine, but it was Ptolemy that stretched a welcoming hand into Alexandria, Egypt.⁴¹ (5) *The Syrian Period*. However, 25 years later, the descendants of Seleucus recaptured Palestine from Egypt. This was “the darkest yet most glorious”⁴² of all the periods of exile. The Syrians were tyrants towards the Jews, especially during the rule of Antiochus Epiphanes. The following gives a description of his rule:

Returning on one occasion from defeat in Egypt, he vented his vengeance on Jerusalem. He massacred forty thousand of its population, stripped the temple of its treasures and outraged the religious sense of the Jews by sacrificing a sow on the altar and sprinkling the interior of the temple with the liquor in which a portion of the unclean beast had been boiled. He sought every means to stamp out the Hebrew religion and spirit and transform the nation into Greeks. He shut up the temple and, on pain of death, prohibited the Jewish religion. Multitudes heroically sacrificed their lives rather than their faith.⁴³

(6) *The Maccabean Period*. Three years to the day after Antiochus defiled the temple, the Maccabean family, led by Judas Maccabeus, cleansed and re-consecrated the temple. It was also in this event that the Hanukkah festival was installed because God had vindicated

⁴¹ During this time, the Old Testament was translated into Greek, which is known as the Septuagint version of the Bible. This just goes to show that Jewish culture was very welcome in Alexandria.

⁴² B.S. Dean, *An Outline of Bible History* (Cincinnati, OH: Standard Publishing, 1912) qtd. in *Old Testament History*, 647.

⁴³ Dean 647.

the land, the temple, the torah and his people.⁴⁴ Decades of revolt finally led to independence, but this would only last a time. The son of John Hyrcanus (the great, great nephew of Judas Maccabeus), allowed ambition and pride to take over and sixty years of civil war followed. The Maccabean period was obviously not all glorious. The time of revolt gave the Jews a sense of independence, but it still seemed like they were in exile. The vindication that took place was victorious, but the Hasmonean⁴⁵ regime that took over in later years was not exactly a perfect picture of God being pleased with his people. The Jews would have still been looking for a greater vindication to take place. (7) *The Roman Period*. However, amidst their confusion, Pompey of the Romans took over Jerusalem in B.C. 63.⁴⁶ Only decades before God had vindicated the temple from defilement, but now a new pagan enemy was arising. Even thirty years later, when Pompey died, the Jews were ready

⁴⁴ Borg 70. Borg goes on to comment concerning 1st century Palestine, “Each year in Jerusalem for eight days the Maccabean defense of Torah and Temple was commemorated at Hanukkah.” For more on this, see W.R. Farmer, *Maccabees, Zealots & Josephus* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1982) 125-53.

⁴⁵ Hasmonean, who was ancestor to the Maccabean family, ruled by means of combining the roles of Priest/King. For more on his rule, see Josephus, *Ant.* 12.265.

⁴⁶ On this event, see Josephus, *War* 1.133-54; *Ant* 14.37-79.

to celebrate a new era, but no new true Maccabean family arose.⁴⁷ Instead, the ancestors passively gave into the demands of Caesar and Herod the Great became their new King in B.C. 37. The external splendor Herod gave in rebuilding the temple and his marrying an heir of the Maccabean family, however did not impress the Jews. He was never accepted as their true king and the aura of revolt and return from exile was flying about in the air. In AD 6, Judas the Galilean led a revolt, which ended with Rome putting procurator's, such as Pontius Pilate over Judea.⁴⁸ Events such as these ultimately led to a much larger revolt in A.D. 66, and the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70.

First, one must keep in mind that this analysis is only a portion of the history of Israel's exile. As well, it must also be remembered that "exile" represents far more than just geography. "Exile was the state of political servitude, cultural domination, and above all theological un-redeemed-ness that Israel continued to experience."⁴⁹ They might have been in their homeland, but Israel was in no way fully vindicated. However, even though their story was full of the same repeated failures, they still were still confident in God's mercy,

⁴⁷ Borg 72. Borg goes on to speak on what did arise out of the Maccabean period: The Pharisee's and Essenes. He makes the following comment, "Both represented a new form of 'religious association' in Judaism – a voluntary association with its own communal identity and polity, with membership based on the decision or 'conversion' of the individual. Both emerged from the Hasidim of the Maccabean period, both centered in Torah and Temple, and both intensified the quest for holiness." It is in both of their quests for holiness that made it so hard for them to accept the teachings of Jesus. The Essenes, who separated themselves from society, lived a highly disciplined life, but did not become the light to the nations that Israel was supposed to be. For more on the Essenes, see Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Viking, 1997). As well, the Pharisees, although separated inside of society, formed an un-loving barrier around themselves in their meticulous rules, which again kept them from being a light to the nations. For more on the Pharisees, see Jacob Neusner, *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70*, 3 Volumes (UK: Leiden, 1970).

⁴⁸ Josephus, *Wars*, 2:8, 17:8.

⁴⁹ N.T. Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2000) 32.

even regardless of rulers like Antiochus Epiphanes. During this time Israel was stripped of their land, their temple, their freedom, their dignity, etc. To suggest that they were not looking for God to act in a huge way is to dismiss the entire history of Israel. They had made a covenant with God, and even though they broke that covenant, they were optimistic about God restoring them to himself.

It is in this history and this environment that “Jesus was born, lived, worked and died.”⁵⁰ Jesus was not separated from the same expectations that other Jews were looking forward to. The people of Israel were in a state of exile and Jesus, just as anybody else, could have seen this plainly. Israel was in effect, looking for a Messiah,⁵¹ a “Son of Man” per se, but we will see that what they got was not what they expected.

Defunct Perceptions

In light of the events just described, it is no wonder that Israel was looking for some kind of big event to alter their current affairs. There were no doubt some who were fine with their present situations, but for the most part, Israel saw herself in exile.⁵² The question comes in what kind of event were they looking for? N.T. Wright comments, “They were expecting a new exodus, the messianic age, the dawn of a new era...[The hope was] that their long and chequered history would come to a great climax, in and through which their god would do for them what they believed he had promised in the prophets and guaranteed in the covenant.” This perception of what God would do for them might

⁵⁰ Wright, *The New Testament & the People of God*, 427.

⁵¹ See Appendix A for a list of Scriptures that speak on the hope of a future Messiah.

⁵² Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus*, 32.

seem fanatical today, but not for Israel.⁵³ They believed what prophets like Isaiah proclaimed: “A child who is coming, who is Immanuel (God with us)! He will bring peace and righteousness (Is. 7:14).”

The problem proceeds not in the fact that Israel was looking for a Messiah, but rather that they only wanted a certain type of Messiah. Even though the prophets spoke about his love for the poor (Is. 61:1-2) and his outreaching to Gentiles (Is. 49:6), Israel had already painted a portrait in their mind of what their Messiah would look like. They were looking for an exclusive ruler, one who would specifically bring about the kingdom of God to Israel (Matt. 21:9, Mark 11:9-10, Luke 19:38). As well, this ruler would establish his throne in Jerusalem and throw off all oppression from pagan influences.⁵⁴ This would come first and foremost in the destruction of eternal Rome. The “Son of Man” figure they were painting would act as a judge over all nations.⁵⁵ Israel would receive their land back, their dignity back, their temple back and God would shine his face upon his chosen people once again. It is no wonder then that when John the Baptist and later Jesus, came proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand (Mk. 1:15), that many listened (Mk.

⁵³ N.T. Wright, “Jesus & the Identity of God,” *Ex Auditu* 14 (1998) 42–56. Wright comments, “Classic Jewish monotheism, then, believed that (a) there was one God, who created heaven and earth and who remained in close and dynamic relation with his creation; and that (b) this God had called Israel to be his special people. This twin belief, tested to the limit and beyond through Israel’s checkered career, was characteristically expressed through a particular narrative: the chosen people were also the rescued people, liberated from slavery in Egypt, marked out by the gift of Torah, established in their land, exiled because of disobedience, but promised a glorious return and final settlement. Jewish-style monotheism meant living in this story and trusting in this one true God, the God of creation and covenant, of Exodus and Return.”

⁵⁴ A.J.B. Higgins, *The Son of Man in the Teaching of Jesus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980) 3.

⁵⁵ They saw the Messiah as an eschatological judge – Both Daniel and Ezekiel associated the “Son of Man” with a judge.

3:7). The Jews were looking to start a revolt and they needed a leader to start such a thing. However, Jesus' program for eschatology was quite different from the portrait they had already painted. In fact, Jesus' agenda went directly against the hopes and dreams that Israel longed for.

Jesus then, was using the term "son of man" because he was claiming something for himself. Due to the current environment of exile, he was claiming to be the "vindicator" that was spoken about in Daniel 7 and so many other passages.⁵⁶ There was an agenda in Jesus' mind, both politically and spiritually, that led to Jesus literally declaring that a prophecy was being fulfilled through him. Therefore, Jesus used the term because he was that future "son of man" that was prophesied about. He was in other words, acting upon the preparations that were made exclusively for him. However, even though this brings us closure to the quest for the historical "son of man", it does not complete it. It is to this conclusion that we will now look forward to.

V. The Praxis of the Messiah: A Politic of Self-Abnegation

This last section touches specifically on the agenda and aim of *how* Jesus portrayed himself as the "Son of Man." Understanding now that through both history and semantics, God was preparing the way for Jesus to bring about the kingdom of God, it cannot be dismissed that the title Jesus used, was and is tantamount in understanding his mission. In fact, it will be argued here that this title was far more than just a declaration of status; it was a purposeful way of life that was performed by Jesus. The first way, in which this idea can be sought after, is by looking at the specific instances of when Jesus used the term. As said earlier, Jesus used the phrase as a self-designation, so in every occurrence, Jesus is at

⁵⁶ See Appendix A.

the forefront of the discussion. Many of the thoughts and intentions of Jesus can be discovered at the base of this phrase, and looking at the red letters will give one a better understanding of *how* and *why* Jesus used this title.

The Tripartite Usage of “The Son of Man”

It is often agreed upon that Jesus used the phrase “Son of Man”, in three different contexts. Not necessarily three different intents, but rather referring to three different periods of time. The tripartite usage of the term can be broken down into the following complexes: (1) Referring to when Jesus used the term to ascribe his own *earthly ministry*. An example of this usage comes from Mark 2:10 – “But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...”⁵⁷ It is clear that Jesus is using this term to denote his power on the earth as something that is presently taking place. (2) Referring to the *predictions* that Jesus made about his being put to *death and resurrected*. An example of this usage comes from Mark 10:33 – “And the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death...” And again, it is clear that Jesus is describing that which will take place when he is put to death. (3) Referring to the *future coming* of the “Son of Man” at the end of the age.⁵⁸ An example of this usage comes from Matthew 24:30 – “At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.”

⁵⁷ Wright also purposes that Jesus’ forgiving sins was a direct way of symbolically stating, “return from exile (*Jesus & The Victory of God*, 268).”

⁵⁸ The problem that arises with this last complex is in trying to distinguish whether Jesus was referring only to A.D. 70, or his own future 2nd coming. This is however, not the direct concern of this paper.

Even though Jesus uses the term referring to three different events, there are universal aspects in each of the uses. (1) Every time that Jesus uses this phrase he is a human. This might seem like a ridiculous thing to mention, but there is validity in doing so. The point is that Jesus is not speaking down to humanity – he is speaking directly to humanity. He came as one of us and he speaks as one of us (Heb. 4:14-16). This reflects the prediction in Daniel 7 that “one like a son of man” would have dominion. (2) Every time Jesus uses the phrase, he does so with intention. It would be ridiculous to suggest that Jesus had no intention behind this title. It was a part of who he was and the times that he used it were a reflection of this identity. (3) Every time Jesus uses this phrase it relates in some way to his own self-abnegation. In the first complex, this comes mainly through the fact that Jesus considers humanity important enough, that he would abnegate himself to the point coming to the earth. In the second complex, Jesus abnegates himself to the point of being convicted as a criminal and crucified on a cross. In the third complex, Jesus knows that there will be a time when he will be worshipped, but he still abnegates himself to the service of those around him, as well as the will of God.

Indiscriminate Love & Truth

Having looked at when Jesus used the term “Son of Man”, we can now look at how this specifically played out in his agenda. It is often the case that because Jesus did not take control of a literal kingdom, that many conclude that he did not have a political agenda. However, it is arguable that it was because of his political stance that many of the Jews were so irate with him.

As was concluded earlier, the Jews were looking for a Messiah that would come and throw off Roman oppression. Jewish eschatology characteristically taught that peace would come, but that God would vindicate his people in the process of bringing such peace.⁵⁹ However, the weapons that Jesus used to fight such a battle were complete opposite of the political weapons normally used. Instead of violence and propaganda, Jesus came displaying indiscriminate love and truth.⁶⁰ It is in this controversial stand that the Jews saw their expectations being broke. Wright notes the following:

He [Jesus] advocated the deeper revolution of loving one's enemies, taking up one's cross, losing one's life in order to gain it. This, it gradually appears, was not simply a way of life he urged on his followers, an ethic to be implemented at any time and place where people felt bold enough to do so. It was, much more sharply, an agenda and vocation to which he knew himself called, and that he announced as the way of being God's true Israel...the [true] light of the nations.⁶¹

It is in Jesus' distinct political statements that relates directly back to the title that he purposefully gave to himself. However, "The Son of Man" is much more than just any title. It meant much more than his being able to relate to man as one who has come in the flesh. As well, it meant much more than just being a Messiah. Although these aspects are clearly a part of what it means to be "The Son of Man", the actions of Jesus tell us that it was a description of who he was at his innermost core. It was the illumination of an

⁵⁹ Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus*, 32.

⁶⁰ Mark Moore, *Life of Christ Class Lecture*, Joplin, MO: Ozark Christian College, April 5, 2006.

⁶¹ Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus*, 48.

identity. It will be argued here that this title that Jesus designated for himself was directly related to his mission as a self-abnegating Messiah. This will perhaps be best seen in the following three passages.

(1) “For the Son of Man came to seek and save what was lost” (Luke 19:10). In this passage, Jesus’ role of being a Savior of the world is tied to his title of “Son of Man.” Man was living at odds with God because of the separation that sin brought back in the Garden of Eden. And at this point, even God’s chosen people were not in a right relationship with him. So, part of Jesus’ mission then was that he came as God, and being God, abnegated himself to be this Messiah for not only Israel, but for the entire world.

(2) “Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you” (John 6:27). “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10). These two passages tell us that Jesus came not only to save us, but also to give us life that is abundant and eternal. Jesus, being the “Son of Man”, is the giver of this “life.” Apart from him there is no life, but Jesus has come willingly, offering himself as the only way in which humanity can be forgiven and be restored to God. As well, this abundant life that is found in him is neither dull nor monotonous. It has purpose, it has hope and it possesses the key in which humanity is able to be restored to the life they were meant to live.

(3) “Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:43b-45).⁶² The

⁶² Parallels found in Matthew 20:26-28 & Luke 22:26ff.

first two passages that were examined all fall under this last verse. Jesus did come to “seek and save what was lost” and he did come to give “life to the full”, but this passage from the book of Mark describes the way in which he did these things. They illuminate the *why* and the *how* behind his intentions. Even more than this, they depict the way in which Jesus lived out his life and how he encouraged his followers to do the same. It is in these statements recorded in the gospels that we can truly get closer to the intentions of the historical Jesus. He was doing something in his life that was completely paradoxical and even absurd to the onlooker. Serving as a leader might seem like a common practice today, but at this point in history this was unheard of. Never before in the history of the world had there been a king quite like Jesus. This is not an overstatement, but it is a fact that no one led like he did up until this point in history.⁶³ It is in this specific mission statement of Jesus that we can see him installing a program of indiscriminate love and truth, over such tools as violence and propaganda. These tools led to a lifestyle of self-abnegation that is clearly present in what it meant for Jesus to be the “Son of Man.”

Conclusion

The importance of the “Son of Man” statements cannot be understated. There is extreme value in looking and studying and meditating on Jesus as one who came “not to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45b).” The quest for the historical Jesus leads to many places, but no matter what, it has to lead to understanding the identity and agenda of Jesus.

⁶³ Mark Moore, *LOC Class Lecture*, Joplin, MO: Ozark Christian College, 13 April 2006. Moore went on to lecture that two of the closest examples, which aren't even really close, are the following: (1) Nero's advisor informed him that he was a slave to the people. (2) Socrates commented that in order to lead well, one has to be a slave first. Both of these examples miss the point of what Jesus taught. Jesus' point is that even when you become a leader - lead like a servant, a slave.

Bridging the gap of history is not always easy to do, but tools such as semantics and proper historical analysis have paved the way in getting closer to the original Jesus. It is clear in analyzing these two areas that the “Son of Man” came to mean more than just “fleshly”, and that Israel, while perhaps not looking specifically for one bearing the title, “Son of Man”, was looking for vindication to come in and through a future Messiah. Through both word and action, Jesus, as the “Son of Man”, was essentially claiming that he was the “focal point of Israel’s long and twisted history.”⁶⁴ However, because of their defunct perceptions, Jesus as Messiah broke Israel’s expectations. He switched up the characters and those who thought that they were in, were actually out, and those that thought that they were out, actually ended up being included. The restoration and vindication of Israel would occur, but it would occur only through Jesus of Nazareth.⁶⁵ In displaying indiscriminate love and truth, Jesus, as the “Son of Man”, eventually chose to throw off all selfishness, all pride, and all earthly status and walked into Jerusalem to be crucified. Titling himself the “Son of Man” did put Jesus on a “fleshly” level with all humanity (1 Jn. 4:2). It did fulfill prophecy that one would come “like a son of man” (Daniel 7:13). But more than this, Jesus titled himself the “Son of Man”, to illuminate the identity of who he was at his innermost core: *A Self-Abnegating Messiah*.

⁶⁴ Wright, qtd. in *Sounding the Alarm*, n.p.

⁶⁵ Wright, *Sounding the Alarm*, n.p.

APPLICATION

The application for this paper is very simple, yet it is extremely hard to live out. Mark 10:45 forms the basis of the fact that not only did Jesus come to serve, we are to serve as well. Luke 9:23 states that, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." This surrender of the will has to be one that will forfeit all selfish and self-seeking interests and be willing to accept any and all sacrifices that might come with following after Jesus. Jesus' life then, is a perfect model by which his followers are to imitate. However, this can only be done by making a daily choice to become sealed by the possession that Christ places on you. One must understand that he is not his own, and that he has been bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20). Jesus used this title to designate his own self-abnegation, and as followers of Christ, we are called to use his example as a model for our own self-abnegation.

Appendix A: The Hope of the Messiah⁶⁶

The Prophets – like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel – spoke often about the Messiah who was to come. The Faith and hope that the Messiah would come and “redeem” Israel supported the Israelites during the four “silent centuries” between the Old and New Testaments (Luke 24:21).

1. A child is coming, who is *IMMANUEL* (God with us)! He will bring peace and righteousness (Is. 7:14; 9:6).
2. *GOD* is coming! (Mal. 3:1; Micah 5:2; Isa. 7:14; 9:6).
3. A righteous *BRANCH* will grow up from King David’s offspring, and he will be called The *LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS* (Jer. 33:15-16).
4. A ruler will be born at *BETHLEHAM* in Judah (Micah 5:2).
5. *ELIJAH* will come before the Lord (Mal. 4:5-6).
6. An announcer in the desert will prepare the way for the Lord (Isa. 40:3-5).
7. The Lord’s servant will preach good news to the poor (Isa. 61:1-2).
8. The *KING* will come to Jerusalem riding on a donkey (Zech. 9:9). The *REDEEMER* will come to Zion (Isa. 59:20).
9. The Lord’s servant will bear our iniquities (Isa. 53:5-6).
10. The body of the Lord’s holy one will not decay (Ps. 16:10)
11. The Holy Spirit will come upon all people (Joel 2:28).
12. The Lord’s servant will be a light to the *Gentiles* (Isa. 49:6).
13. Israel will come back and seek the Lord their God and David their king (Hosea 3:4-5).

⁶⁶ This chart is taken from Wilbur Fields, *Old Testament History* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2001) 650.

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