

## A STUDY IN THE PHILOLOGICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SON OF MAN CONCEPT

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The Son of Man concept is one of the most important concepts with its rich and complex implication in New Testament Studies. The title, the Son of Man, was the favorite self-designation of Jesus. It was never employed to address or acclaim Him as a divine title,, and rarely to make confession of Him by the disciples, Evangelists or even by the demons, or by the early Christian writers; it was exclusively referred to Him by Jesus Himself, with only a few exceptions.<sup>1)</sup> There was a pronounced fondness for the Son of Man appellation upon the lips of Jesus like *ἰαμήν, ἀμήν, λέγω σοι*...other

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1) Acts 7:56; Rev. 1:13; 14:14. Cf. John 9:35f, where the reading "the Son of Man" is to be preferred to "the Son of God."

turns of speech with liturgical and sacrosanct flavor. He never called Himself Messiah. But openly and purposefully He designated Himself as the Son of Man. As far as the New Testament records it is the only title that Jesus applied to Himself.

In this paper, we focus our attention on the Philological meaning of the Greek expression  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \alpha\upsilon\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\nu\omicron\upsilon$  in the New Testament.

Scholars generally agree that this expression is Semitic in origin, and thus does not depend for its elucidation on Greek idiom. Therefore, we must go back to the Semitic expressions  $\text{בן אדם}$  <sup>2)</sup> and  $\text{בן נאשה}$  which are equivalent to the Greek phrase.

A literal rendering of  $\text{בן אדם}$  and its corresponding Hebrew expression  $\text{בן אדם}$  is a "son of man," "a man's child," and it is not an unusual but a natural, normal and appropriate expression in Hebrew and Aramaic, which in itself means no more than an individual of the human species, a human being<sup>3)</sup>

Apart from the adjunctive genitive, the literal sense of the word  $\text{אדם}$  or  $\text{נאשה}$  itself is a man or mankind. Frequently, however, in Hebrew and Aramaic, an individual member of a species is commonly denoted by prefixing "son (of)" to the name of the species. Thus this usage with the genitive expresses a very intimate relationship..... whether of connection, origin or dependence. Evidently the expression indicates a reciprocal affinity in the philological nuance of the Semitic origin<sup>4)</sup> and thus by an idiom somewhat peculiar the Semitic language, the phrase "son of" is used to express like-

2) There is no definite article in Aramaic as there is in Hebrew  $\text{בן}$ . But there is in Aramaic a final  $\text{א}$  which is called "the *status emphaticus*," which corresponds to the definite article in Hebrew. This, when added to  $\text{אנשה}$  theoretically changes the meaning so that  $\text{אנשה א}$  mostly denotes "man" in a general or collective sense, though occasionally in an individual sense. E. A. Abbott, *The Son of Man* (Cambridge: University Press, 1910), pp. 72-73.

3) Vide S. Mowinkel, *He That Cometh* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1956), pp. 346-347. Vide also S. Case, "The Alleged Messianic Consciousness of Jesus," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XLVI (1927), 17. R. P. Casey, "The Earliest Christology," *Journal of Theological Studies*, IX-X (1958/59), 263. P. Fiebig, *Der Menschensohn* (Tübingen und Leipzig: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1901), p. 2.

4) A. Buttmann traces it back to an "influence of the oriental spirit of language"; according to Grimm, these phrases do spring "*ex ingenio linguae hebraeae*"; Cremer describes them as "Hebrew-like turns of expression in which  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  is used analogously to the Hebrew  $\text{בן}$ ; Deissmann is of the opinion that this expression is a translation of Semitic originals, at least in the majority of cases in the New Testament passages, and in other cases the usage is explained on what he calls "the theory of analogical formations." A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), pp. 161ff. Cf. also his observation: "Had they always imitated that characteristic  $\text{בן}$  (or  $\text{בר}$ ) by using  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ , then it might have been maintained with some plausibility that they had seized the welcome opportunity of translating literally and, at the same time, of giving scope to the non-Hellenic tendencies of their nature in the matter of language; as they, however, did not do this, we may be permitted to say that they had no such tendency at all." *Ibid.*, p. 164. He cites a few examples to prove his point: Son of man, Isa. 56:2; Prov. 15:11-- $\alpha\upsilon\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\nu\omicron\upsilon$ ; son of the uncle, Num. 36:11-- $\alpha\upsilon\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\nu\omicron\upsilon$ ; son of the sheasses, Zech. 9:9-- $\pi\acute{\omega}\lambda\omicron\varsigma\ \nu\acute{\epsilon}\omicron\varsigma$ , etc.

ness to, classification of, relation to or participation with some person or thing, or the possession of some character or quality, and both the Old Testament and the New Testament provide copious examples of this.

Similarly, the literal sense of the Greek word  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  itself is a "male issue" and the usage of this word is too common to require illustration, but its expression with the adjunctive genitive is also not entirely free from the Greek usage, as they are found in the expressions such as son of perdition, son of the devil, son of hell, son of peace, son of consolation, etc. .... meaning a person partaking of the nature, character, image ect.<sup>5)</sup> of the devil and hell on the one hand, or peace and consolation on the other.

It follows then, that after the analogy of this idiom, son of man is another name for child of humanity, child of mortality, a human being possessed of the attributes and characteristics of common humanity.<sup>6)</sup>

Its usage may be first illustrated from Hebrew  $\text{בן אדם}$  and Aramaic  $\text{בן אדם}$ . According to Dalman,<sup>7)</sup> in Biblical Hebrew  $\text{אדם}$  (as also  $\text{אנשה}$ ) is nearly always used as a collective expression, and can therefore stand beside the collectives  $\text{אנשים}$  "quadrupeds," and  $\text{בהמות}$ , "cattle."<sup>8)</sup> In order to specify a plurality of individual men, Hebrew can only say  $\text{אנשים}$  or  $\text{אנשים}$ . And  $\text{אדם}$  or  $\text{אנשה}$  is used to denote the simple human being.<sup>9)</sup>

The singular form  $\text{אדם}$  is frequently used as a nominative of address in Ezekiel where it occurs no fewer than 90 times and is always applied to the prophet himself. Outside the usage in Ezekiel<sup>10)</sup> it is only found in poetic language where parallelism supplies a motive for its use.<sup>11)</sup> Then it becomes clear that "the generic scope of  $\text{אדם}$  has

5) E. G., vide  $\delta\ \upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \alpha\pi\omega\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$  John 17:12;  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \varsigma\iota\alpha\beta\delta\omicron\lambda\omicron\upsilon$  Acts 13:10;  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \gamma\epsilon\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta\varsigma$ , Matt. 23:15, etc. It is found even in the early Christian writings, papyrus, and such expressions as  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$  and  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \phi\omega\tau\omicron\varsigma$  may be illustrated from the inscriptions. E. G., Pas ii 2 (reign of Nero)  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \pi\acute{\omicron}\lambda\epsilon\omega\varsigma$ , Magn. 167:5 (time of Vespasian).  $\delta\upsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \pi\alpha\tau\acute{\rho}\iota\delta\omicron\varsigma$ , *Ibid.*, 156:12 (4 A. D.). Vide J. H. Moulton & G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), p. 649.

6) O. Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (Phila.: Westminster Press, 1959), p. 138.

7) Vide G. Dalman, *The Words of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), pp. 234-241.

8) E. G., Ex. 9:19; Num. 31:28, 47.

9) Vide Gen. 11:5; Deut. 32:8 (with  $\text{אדם}$ ); II Sam. 7:4 (with  $\text{אנשים}$ ); I Kings 8:39; Joel 1:12; Ps. 11:4; 12:29; 14:2; 21:11; 31:20, etc.

10) Ezekiel 2:1 is the first of many examples of this kind. Cf. Dan. 8:17 where Daniel himself was once so addressed.  $\text{אדם}$   $\text{אדם}$   $\text{אדם}$

11) Num. 23:19 (with  $\text{אדם}$ ); Isa. 51:12; 56:2 (with  $\text{אדם}$ ); Jer. 49:18, 33; 50:40; 51:43 (all with  $\text{אדם}$ ), Ps. 8:5 (with  $\text{אדם}$ ); 80:18 (with  $\text{אדם}$ ); 146:3 (with  $\text{אדם}$ ); Job 16:21 (with  $\text{אדם}$ ); 25:6 (with  $\text{אדם}$ ); 35:8 (with  $\text{אדם}$ ). Vide Dalman, *op. cit.*, p. 235. Note especially Ps. 8:5 for this passage has been regarded as an incomparable expression both of the lowliness and the loftiness of human nature. J. Stalker, "The Son of Man," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. V (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), p. 2829.

as its natural corollary the fact that אָבְנֵי אִישׁ denotes not "the son of a certain man" but the member of the genus man.<sup>12)</sup>

The usage of the Biblical Aramaic אָבְנֵי אִישׁ corresponds with that of the Biblical Hebrew אָבְנֵי אִישׁ . The simple אָבְנֵי, not אָבְנֵי אִישׁ, is the word for "man," and stands for the generic concept "mankind" and can be used to express the plural idea "men."

Hence אָבְנֵי אִישׁ "the son of man" has the equivalent meaning to the simple אָבְנֵי.<sup>13)</sup>

Daniel 7:13 is the earliest passage in Aramaic literature where the singular form אָבְנֵי אִישׁ occurs.<sup>14)</sup> There comes a person with the clouds of heaven who is described as אָבְנֵי אִישׁ "one like unto a son of man." Here he is described as resembling one of the human species, or one who had in himself the nature of a human being,<sup>15)</sup> and here the Aramaic has the unemphatic form אָבְנֵי without the articular suffix that would have implied collectiveness or emphasis.<sup>16)</sup>

A brief survey of the usage of אָבְנֵי אִישׁ and אָבְנֵי אִישׁ in the canonical writing both in Hebrew and Aramaic shows its general meaning is to denote "a man," "a human being."

Outside of the canonical writings, in Hebrew of the Mishna, which is Aramaic in disguise of Hebrew, the singular אָבְנֵי אִישׁ is uncommon, and in the Targum of Onkelos<sup>17)</sup> which generally conforms to the Hebrew text, אָבְנֵי, not אָבְנֵי אִישׁ, is always used to denote "a human being."

Dalman points out that Galilean dialects, along with the Christian Palestinian, contain אָבְנֵי אִישׁ in the sense of "a human being," "der Mensch," "quidam," and it occurs in this sense with great frequency, even though the simple אָבְנֵי remains current for "any one" in both dialects.<sup>18)</sup>

The expression  $\delta \ \sigma\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma \ \tau\omicron\upsilon \ \alpha\nu\delta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$  in the New Testament appears as the self-designation of Jesus. It is distributed through the Gospels with remarkable uniformity

12) Dalman, *op. cit.*, p. 235. E. G., Judges 16:7 אָבְנֵי אִישׁ means one of the genus man, a common, ordinary man.  
 13) *Loc. cit.*, Dan. 4:30 אָבְנֵי אִישׁ means he was driven out of mankind, and Dan. 5:21, 24 אָבְנֵי אִישׁ where the meaning אָבְנֵי אִישׁ is the same as אָבְנֵי.  
 14) Dalman thinks that the original of Daniel 7 was Hebrew and it has been translated from a Hebrew original which had אָבְנֵי אִישׁ. *Vide ibid.*, p. 13, 238. R. H. Charles also holds the similar opinion.  
 15) Cf. Daniel 3:25 where the fourth in the fiery furnace is described as אָבְנֵי אִישׁ "as one who resembles gods."  
 16) *Vide supra*, p. 1 note 2.  
 17) Dalman, *op. cit.*, p. 236. *Vide* also N. Schmidt, "Son of Man," *Encyclopedia Biblica* (New York: Macmillan, 1914), p. 4708. For plural, e. g., Gen 11:5; Deut. 32:8--- אָבְנֵי אִישׁ for אָבְנֵי אִישׁ.  
 18) *Ibid.*, p. 237. Dalman suggests the possibility that אָבְנֵי אִישׁ may not have been used, and not even understood, in Galilee in the first century A. D. *Vide* N. Schmidt, "Recent Study of the Term 'Son of Man,'" *Journal of Biblical Literature*, X. L. V (1926), p. 328.

of proportion when a consideration is given to the relative length and the portion of the contents of the Gospels in which any appellations at all are used. It may be also noted that it appears much more frequently in the Synoptics than the name the Son of God. The following diagram in juxtaposition may clearly illustrate this.<sup>19)</sup>

Book	Oc.	Son of Man	Oc.	Son of God
Matt.	32	8:20; 9:6; 10:23; 11:19; 12:8, 32, 40; 13:37, 41; 16:13, 27, 28; 17:9, 12, 22; 18:11; 19:28; 20:18, 28; 24:27, 30, 30, 37, 39 44; 25:13, 31; 26:2, 24, 24, 45, 64.	9	4:3,6; 8:29; 14:33; 16:16; 26:63; 27:40, 43, 54.
Mark	14	2:10, 28; 8:31, 38; 9:9 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 13:26; 14:21, 41, 62.	4	1:1; 3:11; 5:7; 15:39.
Luke	26	5:24; 6:5, 22; 7:34; 9:22, 26, 44, 56, 58; 11:30; 12:8, 10, 40; 17:22, 24, 26, 30; 18:8, 31; 19:10; 21:27, 36; 22:22, 48, 69; 24:7.	6	1:35; 4:3, 9, 41; 8:28; 22:70.
John	12	1:51; 3:13, 14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 12:23, 34 34; 13:31.	11	1:34, 49; 3:18; 5:25; 6:69; 9:35; 10:36; 11:4, 27; 19:7; 20:31.
Acts	1	7:56	2	8:37; 9:20.
Rom.	0		1	1:4
2 Cor.	0		1	1:19.
Gal.	0		1	2:20.
Eph.	0		1	4:13.
Heb.	1	2:6	4	4:14; 6:6; 7:3; 10:29.
1 John	0		8	3:8; 4:15; 5:5; 10a, 12b, 13, 13, 20a.
Rev.	2	1:13; 14:14.	0	
Total	88		49	

19) J. B. Smith, *Greek-English Concordance* (Scottsdale, Pa. : Herald Press, 1955), pp. 353-354, pp. 5107a-5107.

With the aid of the above diagram we note the following marked peculiarities:

- 1) In the Synoptic Gospels "the Son of Man" occurs as much as three times more than "the Son of God," though in the Johannine writings "the Son of God" occurs more than "the Son of Man."
- 2) Jesus styles Himself<sup>20)</sup>  $\delta \nu\iota\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$  60 different times, but counting repetitions, parallel passages, and in quotations, it is so used about 78 times in the Gospels.
- 3) The definite article is always present with the expression; it is always  $\omicron \nu\iota\omicron\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$ ,<sup>21)</sup> and He always uses it as a subject or as an object; always in the third person, and never as a predicate.<sup>22)</sup>
- 4) It is entirely absent from the New Testament Epistles.<sup>23)</sup>

The usage of Jesus  $\delta \nu\iota\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$  with the two Greek articles is quite distinct from "a son of man," i. e., a man or a human being. The fact that the human nature of Jesus is expressed in this title is beyond question, but it lifts Him out from all men as being one who has this human nature in a way in which no other man has it---who while He is true man, indeed, is more than man, who accepts the designation  $\delta \nu\iota\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon \tau\omicron\upsilon \zeta\omega\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$ .<sup>24)</sup>

- 20) Schmidt makes mention of a rather interesting "new" Son of Man passage created by Bruno Violet from Mark 11:14:  $\mu\eta\kappa\epsilon\tau\iota \epsilon\iota\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \alpha\iota\omega\nu\alpha \epsilon\kappa \tau\omicron\upsilon \mu\eta\delta\epsilon\iota\varsigma \kappa\alpha\rho\pi\omicron\nu \phi\alpha\gamma\alpha$ . Evidently this passage suggests an instance when Jesus cursed the tree. Violet, however, suggests that the Syriac rendering in Pes need not mean: no man shall eat... but may mean: no man will eat... and further that in Galilean Aramaic  $\text{בר נשא}$  may have been used,  $\text{בר}$  having later dropped out. Taking  $\text{בר נשא}$  to be Jesus' designation, he then construes this passage to be a prediction of Jesus concerning Himself, as He is soon to face His death and will never again enjoy the fruits of *Biblical Literature*, XLV (1926), p.337. Ingenious through this rendering may be, it appears to be a *Biblical Literature*, XLV (1926), p.337. Ingenious though this rendering may be, it appears to be a far-fetched, somewhat strained conjecture.
- 21) B. Weiss points out that the peculiarity of this expression is not the article before the genitive which could describe man according to his genus but that before the nominative; it expresses not a son of man among others but a definite Son of Man whose uniqueness requires no explanation for His hearers. *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, Vol. I (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1882), p. 75.
- 22) John 5:27 is an exception where both articles are omitted: ...  $\delta\tau\iota \nu\iota\acute{o}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$ . In Lenski's opinion it is predicated here, "because Jesus speaks this word only with reference to His mother." *The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press, 1959), p. 395. Cf. also Abbott, *op. cit.*, p. 76, note 4. The passages in Rev. 1:13 and 14:14 are also without the articles, but they are obviously modeled on Daniel. Heb. 2:6 is a quotation from the Psalm 8:4.
- 23) Cf. it is also absent from post-apostolic literature, such as *Didache*, *The Epistles of Clement*, *Polycarp and the Shepherd of Hermas*.
- 24) *Vide* Matt 16:13-17. The great confession at Caesarea Philippi has been the source of conjecture for His Messianic claim. Some scholars, upon the hypothesis that the Messianic consciousness of Jesus is a development of His experience of ethico-religious sonship, have attempted to

In view of the fact that Jesus' mother-tongue was Aramaic,<sup>25)</sup> it may be regarded as extremely probable, if not absolutely certain, that the Greek expression  $\delta \nu\iota\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$  in the Gospels is nothing but a slavish rendering of an original Aramaic,  $\text{ܕܢܝܘܫܐ}$  or  $\text{ܕܢܝܘܫܐ}$  and that the idiomatic translation of  $\text{ܕܢܝܘܫܐ}$  would be not  $\delta \nu\iota\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$  but simply  $\delta \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ .<sup>26)</sup>

If so, a question arises whether Jesus did actually designate Himself by this expression  $\delta \nu\iota\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$  in the titular sense demanded by the Gospels, or He could have done so in the dialect He presumably used, namely, Aramaic.

Hans Lietzmann, followed by J. Wellhausen et al. dedicated his first work to this question in 1896. He startled the theological world by his speculative assertion that Jesus never applied the title to Himself and he reached a negative conclusion that  $\omicron \nu\iota\omicron\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\upsilon$  was not a current Messianic title in Judaism.<sup>27)</sup> His argument was based on the philological ground that in Aramaic, the mother-tongue of Jesus and commonly

explain the instance as to reflect His consciousness of the cryptic nature of His Messiahship.

Thus Wrede holds that Jesus calls Himself "the Son of Man" to conceal His Messianic character.

*Vide* G. Vos, *The Self-Disclosure of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), p. 92-93, 230-231.

Furthermore, Matthew's reading of Jesus' question (Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?)

is found to be different in its parallel passages in Mark and Luke (Who do men say that I am?).

Vos explains the difference as follows: "... Matthew has employed the appositional phrase for no other purpose than to add greater distinctness. Plainly the question in Mark and Luke also, interpreted from our Lord's point of view, allows of no other understanding than this: Who do men

say that I, who knows *myself* to be the Messiah, am?" *Ibid.*, p. 250.

- 25) T. W. Manson says that "the mother-tongue of our Lord and the Apostles was not Greek but Galilean Aramaic.... "and further" I say 'mother-tongue' rather than 'language' in order not to prejudice the question whether any of our Lord's words were uttered in some other dialect than Aramaic." *The Teaching of Jesus* (Cambridge: University Press, 1951), p. 10. A possibility may be suggested here also that Jesus may have spoken Greek and even Latin, in view of the dialogue between Jesus and Pontius Pilate at the scene of trial. Was there an interpreter? Or did they all speak Greek without exception? *Vide* J. McNaugher's suggestion that "though Jesus, as a rule spoke in Aramaic, it is extremely probable that, on occasion, He spoke in Greek. In that event the Greek expression  $\delta \nu\iota\acute{o}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$  may actually have been heard verbatim from His lips again." "The Son of Man," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, LXXXVII (1931), p. 93-94. Cf. also Lamsa's rather interesting study in his *New Testament Origin* (Chicago: Ziff-Davis Pub. Co., 1947), esp. pp. 22-23, 34, 38. He maintains that language of daily intercourse in Palestine was Aramaic, the *lingua franca* of the whole region, but the literary language was Hebrew spoken among educated men; thus Jesus and His Apostles spoke Aramaic, and probably Jesus knew no Greek; even Paul did not write in Greek but in Aramaic.

- 26) T. W. Manson, *op. cit.*, p. 212; also *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles* (Phila.: Westminster Press, 1962), p. 123; Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 138; V. Taylor, *The Names of Jesus* (London: Macmillan, 1953), p. 25. Cf. also the classical meaning of  $\delta \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$  which is frequently dependent on its context for its meaning, and thus may denote man in general, a mankind, in such expressions as "man is tailless," "the upper and lower parts of the man," "the veins in the man," etc. where man means not a particular person previously mentioned, but a mankind. *Vide* Abbott, *op. cit.*, p. 32 where he refers to Bonitz's *Index Aristotelicus* ( $\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ , pp. 58-59).

- 27) H. Lietzmann, *The Beginnings of the Christian Church* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 56.

employed then in Palestine, the title did not exist; and on linguistic grounds the title could not have existed, because in Aramaic "the son of man" becomes  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  which was merely a synonym for "a man" or "the man" in a general, generic sense. Therefore, Jesus could not have used it with any distinctly personal signification and  $\delta \text{ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου}$  was a technical term of Hellenistic theology which might possibly have been formed in Jewish circles, and early Greek communities borrowed the formula to designate Jesus.<sup>28)</sup>

Listzmann's thesis, however, met severe opposition,<sup>29)</sup> and perhaps most ably from the linguistic standpoint by Dalman. Dalman refuted it on the assumption that Targum Onkelos represents early Palestinian Aramaic,<sup>30)</sup> that the Aramaic expression suggested by  $\delta \text{ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου}$   $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  which is the only genuine Aramaic term for  $\delta \text{ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου}$  did not properly belong to the common language of the Palestinian Jews, but was characteristic rather of the elevated diction of poetry and prophecy.<sup>31)</sup> He was inclined to regard  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  as a comparatively late development under the influence of the Syriac and thought that a person in the first century A. D. using so strange an expression as  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  then would not have been understood as speaking of "man." Thus by its singularity it was adopted to be a title, and that the Greek translation is not untrue to the Aramaic original.<sup>32)</sup>

28) Vide Lietzmann's *Der Menschensohn* (Leipzig: Akademische Verlagsbuchhandlung von J. C. B. Mohr, 1896). Note especially his erroneous conclusive assertion that "Jesus hat sich selbst nie den Titel 'Menschensohn' beigelegt, weil derselbe im Aramäischen nicht existiert und aus sprachlichen Gründen nicht existieren kann" p. 85

29) E. G., M. E. Evans, who with a tone of discouragement that Lietzmann's view suggests more questions than it answers, points out that "he has not satisfactorily answered two pertinent questions: 1) What led the coinage of the Greek title? and 2) In the face of the evidence that pushes the Gospels back to the middle of the Second Century how does it happen that they contain the title 78 times counting the repetitions?" Vide his "The Title 'the Son of Man'," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, LVII (1900), p. 680-681.

30) Cf. Schmidt, *Encyclopedia Biblica*, p. 4708 and also Bowman's objection in *Expository Time*, LIX (1947-48), p. 286, referring to Kahl, *The Cairo Geniza*, pp. 229 ff., that Onkelos is neither Palestinian nor early, but represents an artificial Babylonian dialect. That could be used for "any one" or "a man" in early Palestinian Aramaic is shown clearly in the early Geniza fragments of the Palestinian Targum. for in Gen. 4:14  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  is used for "any one," while in Gen. 9:5-6  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  (three times) and  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  (twice) alike translate  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  "man." Vide Mowinckel, *op. cit.*, pp. 346-347.

31) Dalman, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

32) Dalman points out that "when the composite expression  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  'son of man' had to be definite, the determinative could attach only to  $\text{אֱנוֹשׁ}$  as to  $\text{בְּרִי}$  in the Hebrew  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$ . Thus arises  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  which must not be rendered simply by 'the human being' ('der Mensch' --- as by de Lagarde, Wellhausen, Lietzmann), but only by 'the son of man,' if the essential character of the expression is not to be entirely obliterated. If again 'the son of the man' had to be expressed in Aramaic, it would have been necessary to say,  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  (literally, 'his son, that of the man')." *Ibid.*, pp. 239, 240. Cf. Fiebig, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

Though this argument carries considerable weight, Fiebig has pointed out that Dalman's thesis that  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  was not a common usage in the general sense of "man" in Galilean Aramaic is untenable. He has shown that not only does Rabbi Hoscha ja (c. 200 A. D.) use  $\text{רַבָּא בְּרִי נִשְׂא}$  for "a great man" (Shekalin 5:6) but also Rabbi Schimeon B. Jochai, (c. 130-160) and  $\text{בְּרִי נִשְׂא}$  for "man" "der Mensch" (Berach 1:5), and it is extremely difficult to believe that an expression found even in the early Biblical Aramaic dialects should not have been widely used in Galilee as an equivalent of  $\text{אֱנוֹשׁ}$  or  $\text{אִנְשָׁא}$  in the singular; and it is quite incredible that so natural an idiomatic expression of the individual human being should not have been understood as "man," but taken to be an esoteric expression.<sup>34)</sup>

Under the review of this philological argument, in summary, we may dismiss Lietzmann's thesis as an incredible paradox and an unwarranted deduction from the evidence. His argument proves to be an ingenious hypothesis grounded on an imperfect knowledge of the Aramaic spoken in various regions of Syria at the time of Jesus.

Furthermore, it runs counter to the direct and inferential evidence available, and it seems rather preposterous to maintain that the first generation of Christians should have been totally wrong in their belief that Jesus had constantly referred to Himself by  $\delta \text{ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου}$  while all the time this supposed title was a coinage of fancy.

Fiebig has shown that  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  philologically considered really means "man." But even if  $\text{בְּרִי אֱנוֹשׁ}$  meant normally "der Mensch," and neither "der Menschenkind" nor "der Menschensohn," it might still be a title as in the case of  $\eta \text{ ἡμέρα}$  in certain connections to denote one particular day.<sup>36)</sup> So even with his argument "der Mensch" should become a distinctive and very lofty title.

Thus it becomes clear that there is no valid linguistic ground to deny either that the expression "the son of man" was a definitely Messianic title in certain circles,<sup>37)</sup> or that Jesus could have used it of Himself. But in the evidence of the Gospels it appe-

33) Fiebig, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-36.

34) Vide Schmidt, *Encyclopedia Biblica*, p. 4708.

35) Vide Fiebig, *op. cit.*, p. 56 et al.

36) Heb. 10:25---  $\text{καὶ τοσοῦτω μᾶλλον ὅσω βλέπετε ἐλλίξουσιν τὴν ἡμέραν}$  where  $\text{τὴν ἡμέραν}$  is translated as: ... dass sich *der Tag* nacht in German; ... naarmate *gij den dag* ziet naderen in Dutch; but as: ... et cela d'autant plus que vous voyez *approcher le grand jour* in French: and *keuh Nal* (that day) in Korean.

37) Vide C. F. Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), p. 274. Cf. Mowinckel, *op. cit.*, p. 347. Among those who consider the Son of Man as a Messianic title before the time of Jesus, at least in certain circles, are W. Manson, E. Sjöberg, R. Bultmann, O. Cullmann, et al. That it was not a Messianic title in pre-Christian Judaism is held by P. Parker, H. H. Rowley, R. H. Fuller et al.

ars that the "son of man" was understood with full Messianic import by the hearers of Jesus. In John 12:34, for instance, we observe that the hearers themselves, without the slightest trace of curiosity or mysteriousness about the "son of man" show how familiar they are with the import of the phrase: they themselves make the substitution of "the Christ" for "the son of man"<sup>38)</sup>

In the light of the foregoing, it becomes palpable that the evidence of the philological argument does little to prove that the son of man means simply an ordinary man, and nothing more, nothing less in the usage of Jesus. Thus the problem involves not merely philological one but rather concerns the conceptual significance of the title  $\delta \ \upsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma \ \tau\omicron\upsilon \ \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\pi\omicron\upsilon$ , for we find no support from the Gospel to adopt the interpretation of the Son of Man as simply a man.<sup>39)</sup> Not only the records of the Gospels but also impressive arrays of linguistic evidence all clearly gravitate towards the special meaning attached to the son of man title beyond generic connotation in the expression as employed by Jesus Himself.

38) *Vide Vos, op. cit.*, pp. 250, 252.

39) *Vos, op. cit.*, p. 227.

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## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COLOSSIANS AND PHILEMON

Jong Chil Park\*

### ◇ CONTENTS ◇

- A. Time and Place
- B. Correspondence of Contents
- C. Identification of Onesimus' owner
- D. Ancient Evidences
- E. Conclusion

This subject will be considered according to the following aspects: time and place, correspondence of contents, identification of Onesimus' owner, and ancient evidences.

#### A. Time and Place.

Whoever gives attention to Paul's companions in his missionary work, will receive some insight for an understanding of his Epistles. Paul, even though he was an authoritative apostle, shared his apostolic dignity with his many co-workers in writing Scriptures, in upbuilding churches as well as in aiding the poor. They shared their fellowship even to prison and death. So they were not ashamed to call each other fellow-workers, fellow-soldiers, and fellow-prisons, etc.

This kind of togetherness of Paul's companions also supplies good information to determine their characters, circumstances, and relationship in Colossians and Philemon.

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