

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expository-times\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php)

pdfs are named: [Volume]\_[Issue]\_[1<sup>st</sup> page of article].pdf

forgetting that he received his power to construct, not to demolish.

What occupies him is not the desire to show his power, but the desire to labour for the progress of the truth amongst the Christians.

This desire for the spiritual welfare of souls proves itself :

Firstly,—By the “Examine yourselves,” etc. (ver. 5). Instead of judging others, judge yourselves. Instead of making inquiries in order to know if Christ be in me, inquire if He is in yourselves. That is what is of importance.

Secondly,—By the words of ver. 7, “I pray to God that ye do no evil,” etc., viz., I seek not for the exercise of my power, or the glorification of my person, but for your good.

Conclusion,—May I appear without power or

strength, if necessary ! but may the Christians of Corinth be strong, full of Christ and His Spirit, living for God !

Applications :

1. Apologetical,—How *strong* Paul shows himself in this accepting of weakness ! How he proves that Christ is in him !

2. Practical, — Do we possess such a disinterestedness ? As soon as we believe that we possess an advantage, we are in a hurry to show it—even at the expense of our brethren, even at the cost of their wanderings or misfortunes. Do we possess this love for the truth, which is only love for souls ? If we possessed it, we should, like the apostle, think little of ourselves, but do our best to help on our brethren. Let us pray Jesus Christ to be in us as He was in St. Paul !

---

## The Son of Man.

BY THE REV. R. H. CHARLES, M.A., OXFORD.

MR. BARTLET has done valuable service in drawing the attention of scholars in the *Expositor* of Dec. 1892 to the undoubted influence which his conception of the Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah exercised on the New Testament conception of the Son of Man. In so far as he traces this connection I am wholly with him and can heartily congratulate him on his suggestive exegesis. The rest, however, of Mr. Bartlet's paper is not so satisfactory ; in fact, it moves in the sphere of mere conjecture, and abounds in forced and fanciful exposition, for the criticism of which I have neither leisure nor space at my disposal. It is rather my duty here to meet the friendly challenge he has thrown out in the June number of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, and to examine the grounds which constitute, in his opinion, “the psychological stumbling-block” which lies in the way of my theory. These will be answered implicitly or explicitly in the course of my restatement and historical verification of this theory.

Before I enter on this task, however, I ought to notice a frequently recurring feature in his article in the *Expositor*. At the close or in the course of each stage of his exposition he emphasises the hopelessness of explaining the Messianic passages he is dealing with in keeping with the Enochic conception of the Son of Man. And herein I

perfectly agree with him. No exegete that I have ever heard of identifies the New Testament conception with that of Enoch. So far, therefore, as he directs his attack on this theory, he is fighting with a shadow, with a mere chimera of his own imagination. We have here, accordingly, a great waste of energy, and a waste of energy all the more reprehensible, as I am conscious that his paper was designed, not only to expound his own theory, but also to prove the incompetence of mine, although the form he implicitly gives of the latter is only the merest travesty—reprehensible, I repeat, as I read my paper on this subject to Mr. Bartlet at a time when he had not as yet given his own theory its definite and final shape. I regret to see that he has in some degree similarly misrepresented my theory in the short criticism in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES. I should here confess that when I published my article in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES I had not read Mr. Bartlet's article in the *Expositor*, and had no further acquaintance with his theory than such as I had gained from his own account.

I will now give some of the grounds which appear to me *to justify if not to necessitate* the adoption of the theory I advocate.

I. The Book of Enoch was well known to the writers of the New Testament, and influenced

them alike in thought and phraseology, in Messianic and eschatological doctrine. Nay more, this influence has been at times so direct and powerful that it is impossible to understand many New Testament passages without a knowledge of Enoch. For the evidence in full I must refer my readers to pp. 41-53 of my edition of Enoch.

II. As the Book of Enoch, therefore, was one of the most carefully-studied books in the library of the writers of the New Testament, the conception of the Enochic Son of Man must have been a familiar and striking one, for both the conception and the phrase *the* Son of Man is unique in Jewish literature, and here for the first time does the Son of Man appear as a definite personality.

III. But we are not dependent on indirect inferences, however strong, in drawing this conclusion. The connection of the two conceptions is a matter of historical fact. Statements in Enoch respecting the Son of Man are quoted by the Evangelists respecting the New Testament Son of Man. St. John v. 22, 27: "He hath committed all judgment unto the Son . . . because He is the Son of Man," is a quotation from Enoch lxix. 27. "The sum of judgment was committed unto Him, the Son of Man." We should observe that in Enoch the Messiah is represented for the first time as Judge of mankind. St. Matt. xix. 28: "When the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory" is a quotation from Enoch lxii. 5, "When they see that Son of Man sitting on the throne of His glory." St. Matt. xi. 19: "The Son of Man came eating and drinking," may be a reminiscence of Enoch lxii. 14, "(The righteous) will eat and lie down and rise up with the Son of Man."

Again in Enoch xlv. 3-5; xlix. 2, 4, the Son of Man is called the Elect One for the first time in literature; so also in Luke ix. 35; xxiii. 35. Again in Enoch xxxviii. 2, the Son of Man is called for the first time the Righteous One; so also in Acts vii. 52, He is so designated by St. Stephen, who a few verses later (vii. 56) speaks of Jesus as the Son of Man. Again in Enoch xlvi. 3-6, the Son of Man exists before His appearance on earth, so also in John vi. 62.

IV. But the Enochic conception of the Son of Man, however closely bound up with that of the New Testament conception of the Son of Man, is by no mean synonymous with it, and could only enter as a factor into the latter by undergoing an

entire transformation. The ground of this transformation lay in our Lord's own personality. The Old Testament conception of the Servant of Jehovah helps us to understand the lines on which such transformation was carried out. In this transformation, the Enochic conception of the Son of Man, as a superhuman and pre-existent Being, as an assessor on God's throne, a possessor of universal dominion, and judge of mankind, is reconciled to and takes over unto itself its apparent antithesis, the conception of the Servant of Jehovah. This inward synthesis of these two ideas of the past, in a personality transcending them both, renders of easy interpretation the startling contrasts that present themselves in the New Testament in connection with this designation. Thus, while retaining its supernatural attributes in its New Testament usage, this title was fundamentally transformed, and instead of sensuous outwardness we have inward spirituality, instead of material splendour we have the unobtrusive absence of all pomp and circumstance, instead of the gorgeous self display of superhuman powers we have a divine *κένωσις*, an absolute self-effacement. Supernatural greatness was revealed in universal service.

We have here implicitly answered Mr. Bartlet's first objection that, if this title had been a current Messianic designation, and been continually used by our Lord of Himself, there could have been no attestation to a spiritual faith in the disciples in their confession of Him as the Messiah at Cæsarea Philippi. The answer of the disciples to Jesus' question, "Whom do you say that I am?" is tantamount to saying that they still believe Jesus to be the Messiah, though therein their belief must run counter to Apocalyptic teaching, their national prejudices, and the accredited doctrines of the day. In other words, *their conception of the Messiah is now transformed in some degree*, and is no longer synonymous with that of the multitudes who had forsaken Jesus rather than forego their material expectations.

V. This transformed conception of the Son of Man seems to explain not only—(a) individual passages of apparently irreconcilable import, but also (b) Jesus' method of self-revelation.

a. Bearing in mind the two ideals subsumed under the New Testament title Son of Man, we have no difficulty in understanding how on the one hand the Son of Man had not where to lay His head (Matt. viii. 20), and yet had had His

real abode in heaven, whither He was soon to return (John vi. 62); how He was to be despised and rejected of the elders and chief priests, and to be put to death (Luke ix. 22) and yet hereafter to sit on the throne of glory (Matt. xix. 28) as the Judge of man (John v. 22, 27). Such verses, too, as John xii. 23, 24: "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone: but if it die, it beareth much fruit," receive their best interpretation from this transformed conception of the Son of Man—the glorification of the Son of Man comes not through self-display on a superhuman scale but only through self-effacement even unto death. The people, however, to whom these words are addressed cannot receive a Messiah who submits to death. "The Christ," they hold, "abideth for ever," and so, in mingled bewilderment and contempt, they ask, "Who is *this* Son of Man?"

It would not be difficult to multiply instances, but the above are sufficient to establish my contention.

b. Jesus' method of self-revelation.—Jesus' use of such a Messianic title as the Son of Man, throughout His entire ministry, necessarily, of course, implies that *from the very outset He had claimed to be the Messiah*, but—and we cannot emphasise this point too strongly—not the Messiah according to any existing Apocalyptic or Pharisaic school.

This is, indeed, a point which Mr. Bartlet appears to contest, and herein he makes common cause with the negative critics, for it is on this ground above all that they reject the Johannine Gospel. Mr. Bartlet, in common with these critics, holds that that at Cæsarea Philippi Jesus had for the first time proclaimed Himself as the Messiah, and this view undoubtedly receives some countenance from St. Mark, as this Evangelist appears to imply that a new truth regarding Jesus' person was for the first time communicated to the disciples at Cæsarea Philippi—and that a truth which they were forbidden to disclose to the people at large (Mark viii. 27-30). But such a conclusion would at all events fail to harmonise with the rest of his Gospel; for it is frequently implied therein that Jesus was

regarded as the Messiah from the first. In i. 7 ff. the Baptist points to One who shall come after Him as the Messiah; in i. 8, 20, the promptitude with which the disciples attach themselves to Jesus is explicable only on the theory that they regard Him as the Messiah promised by John; in i. 24, 34; iii. 11, the demoniacs address Him as such; in x. 47, 48, the blind man at Jericho implores His aid as the Messiah; in viii. 11, the demand of the Pharisees for a proof of His being the Messiah would be incomprehensible if He had never laid claim to that dignity. All these incidents are testimonies to a really existing, if not prevalent, belief that Jesus was regarded or at all events claimed to be the Messiah. If we turn to St. Matthew this conclusion is irresistible. How otherwise are we to explain, when Jesus pointed the bewildered Baptist to His acts of healing as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy and warned him against being offended (Matt. xi. 3-6); or when He described John as one more than a prophet, because the era of prophecy had closed and that of fulfilment had begun in him, the forerunner of the Messiah (xi. 9-13); or when He declared that He alone knew and could reveal the Father (xi. 26, 27); or when He proclaimed Himself as greater than the temple (xii. 6), and Lord of the Sabbath day (xii. 8), and that in Him the Kingdom of God had come to men (xii. 28), and that His disciples now beheld Him whom the prophets and righteous men of old had longed in vain to see (xiii. 16, 17). *The real question at issue between Jesus and the people turned on the conflicting character of their Messianic conceptions.* Jesus' conception and fulfilment of the rôle of the Messiah was to the sensuous vision of the people full of inconsistencies, or hopelessly incomprehensible. Accordingly, as He persistently held to His own high ideal and refused to lend Himself to their gross temporal expectations, they denied Him to be the Messiah, and forsook Him, and in the general defection even His disciples were shaken, so that in pained surprise He appealed to them, saying, "Will ye also go away?" Thus the right interpretation of the title "Son of Man" serves to confirm the Johannine account that our Lord laid claim to the Messiahship from the beginning of His ministry.