

THE 'I AM'S' OF JESUS

Part 13

THE SON OF MAN

Based on the book: "The Great I Am's of Jesus."

By Anthony Coniaris, Light and Life Publications

Someone was once walking along a path in the forest, admiring nature. As they were walking along they noticed a trail of ants stretching across the path. As the shadow of the person came over the trail, the ants scurried in fright towards their nests. The ants feared for their life even though the human had no intention of harming them. The person thought to their self: "I wish I were able to tell the ants that I do not want to hurt them in any way. In fact, I would wish to help them in every way possible, rather than hurt them." The person imagined learning to speak the language of the ants. To communicate with sound, touch and pheromones. But a big monstrous human speaking antish would possibly frighten the ants even more. The person imagined further... it would actually be better to become an ant and **then** explain a few things to them. To explain that, generally, most humans would usually not go out there to destroy and kill ants. That if they *do* step on them it is accidental. Oh, but the ants should be warned to make sure that they don't burrow into human homes and eat human food... especially if the ants have munched on a carcass of some sort out in the garden. The ants might even take this special ant to their queen. A treaty of friendship could be struck. If the ants kept to the outdoors then the humans would not come after them with chemicals to destroy the entire colony.



Would this special ant succeed? Or would the queen be dismissive? “What are you talking about? This is the way things are done. We eat and we stock up. What if we ran out of food in the outdoors, of course we would need to come inside and eat your food. Get rid of this fool. Who does he think he is?”

Of all the things Jesus Christ described himself as... *“I am the way, the truth and the life... I am the good shepherd... I am the light of the world... I am the bread of life... I am the Alpha and the Omega”* there was one phrase he used over forty three times... more than any other descriptor. He called himself *“ο Υιός του ανθρώπου - ο Υιός του Ανθρώπου”*. Usually translated “the Son of Man”. But in the original Greek, *anthropos* clearly denotes humankind, the entire human race, all of humanity. To help us understand this strange phrase, it is helpful to paraphrase it as... the Son of Humankind, the Representative of Humankind, the person who stands in the place of all humankind; the ultimate ideal; the second Adam; the one who ushers in a new creation; the chosen one, the anointed one, the Messiah, ο Χριστος.

We can find this phrase in the Old Testament only twice but in a strong prophetic context.

Psalms 80, verse 17:

“Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, upon the son of man whom you made strong for yourself.”

Book of Daniel, chapter 7, verse 13:

“I beheld therefore in the vision of the night, and, behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him”

It represents the oneness that divinity has with humanity. The coming together... the union through the incarnation and the communion through deification.

By using the phrase *“ο Υιός του Ανθρώπου”*, Jesus Christ does three things. He identifies himself with the human plight; he designates who he is; and, he predicts his destiny, or rather his purpose.

Number one: he identifies himself with us, he comes down to our level. But even lower. He said, *“Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”* To the lowest of the low he says, are you homeless? So am I. Are you hungry? So am I. Are you cold? So am I. Has everyone forgotten you? I have **not** forgotten you.

“The Son of Man came, not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for the many.” He wasn't some lofty, arrogant king or president or prime minister. He wasn't some rich estate owner. He didn't have servants or employees to boss around. He was hurt by hatred, stung by ingratitude. He yearned for love, His spirit rejoiced amongst friends, and was pained when they fell away. He fought and toiled, and sorrowed and enjoyed. He had to pray, to trust, and to weep. He became one of us.

Number two: he designates who he is; that is why he says *the* Son of Man. With the definite article *'the'*. He does not say, **a** son of a man, something average, someone's son... he says **the** Son of Man, something big, he encompasses all of humanity... something that has to do with God becoming human... like the story I started off with... coming down to the level of the ant so as to benefit the ant. But more than that... divinity becoming **one** with humanity so that humanity can become **one** with divinity through communion with this one and only **nexus**. This one and only link between the two. Fully God and fully human.

'The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath'

'The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins'

'The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.'

In the modern day, people would be more likely to reject the divinity of Jesus Christ. But in the old days, you also had the opposite, there were some marginal heretical groups who rejected or diminished his humanity. The Docetists believed that he was fully God and only *appeared* as a human, some sort of apparition. The Monophysites believed that the humanity of Jesus was absorbed by his divinity so

that he was more God than human... Eutyches taught that the human nature was like a drop of honey dissolved in the ocean of divine nature.

The Orthodox position is that he was fully God and fully human. Not 50-50. 100% God and 100% human. Communion yes, absorption no.

Number three: he predicts his purpose; in a direct allusion and reference to the prophecy in the Book of Daniel, Jesus says: *'Hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the glories of heaven'*; At funerals we read that: *'He has given Him authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man.'*

And when the people asked him *"Who is this Son of Man?"* He answered again in allegory *"For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become children of Light."* (John 12:34ff)

Amen

This was the last instalment in a thirteen week series on the "I AMs of Jesus". The series began with a discussion on the divinity of Christ and ended today with an insight into the humanity of Jesus.

You can catch up with the rest on Twitter @stgeorgerosebay.

*Sermon given by Fr Gerasimos Koutsouras
St George Church, Rose Bay, Australia
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