CLARIFYING MORE BAFFLING BIBLICAL PASSAGES

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

"ADAM, ENOSH, AND 'THE SON OF MAN'"

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XXV

ADAM, ENOSH, AND "THE SON OF MAN"

INTRODUCTION

In John 9:35 the manuscripts and versions differ over which title was actually used by Jesus. The Greek manuscripts 𝔓⁶⁶,⁷⁵ ℵ B D W read τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου "the son of the man," but manuscripts A K L X Δ Θ Ψ read τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ "the Son of the God." The Peshitta reads here ܒܒܪܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ "in the Son of the God," but the Old Syriac reads ܒܪܗ ܕܐܢܫܐ "in the Son of the Man." Bernard (1923: 338) opted for the reading ἀνθρώπου, arguing "if the 'the Son of God' were the original reading here, it is surprising that scribes should have altered it to 'the Son of Man,' which does not appear in any of the other confessions of faith . . . ." Likewise, Brown (1966: 375) considered the "Son of God" reading to be "clearly the substitution of a more customary and complete formula of Christian faith, probably under the influence of the use of this passage in baptismal liturgy and catechesis."

But in light of John 3:16–18, 10:34–36, and 11:4, the manuscript tradition followed by the Vulgate (*tu credis in Filium Dei*) seems preferable. Had the question by Jesus been "Do you believe in 'the Son of the Man?'" the man's reply might well have been, "Sir, what do you mean by that?" Biblical scholars have ever since been asking "What is the meaning of the arthrous ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου?"[1] Bernard (1928: cxxii–cxxxiii) presented a helpful summary of the issues involved in the interpretation of "the Son of the Man," and he concluded (cxxxiii), "It was not a recognized title of Messiah, and was not interpreted as such; rather was it always enigmatic to those who heard it applied by Jesus to Himself."

But Fitzmyer (1979, 154) concluded that the arthrous ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου must be read as a title for Jesus, although the "development of the titular usage is not immediately obvious, and the missing link still has to be found ." The remainder of this study focuses on the enigmatic Hebrew בן אדם, בן אנש, and בר אנוש and the Aramaic בר אנוש . All possible options will be reviewed, and the "missing link" will be presented.

An important clue to the different meanings of בן אדם in Biblical Hebrew comes from the statement made by the Roman centurion found in Matt 8:9 in the Shem Tob *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, which dates to the fourteenth century.[2] The verse reads,

<div dir="rtl">

ואני אדם חוטא ויש לי ממשלת

תחת ידי פירושים ופרשים ורוכבים

ואומר אני לא״ מהם לך וילך בא ויבא

ולעבדי עשו זה ויעשו .

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This was interpreted by George Howard (1995: 33) to mean

I am a sinful man and I have authority
under the Pharisees and [I have] horses and riders
and I say to one of them go and he goes,
come and he comes,
and to my servants do this and they do it.

The very idea, though, of a Roman centurion's being accountable to the Pharisees staggers the imagination. But this is the only translation available given the definitions in current lexicons of Biblical and post-Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic, where אדם must mean (1) man, (2) red, (3) blood, (4) Adam, or (5) Edom, which was also a code word for Rome (BDB 9–10; Jastrow 1903: 15–17; KBS 70–73).

Ugaritic and Arabic cognates (Gordon 1965: 352; Lane 1863: 35–36) support all of these definitions except for making Edom a code name for Rome. But only the first of these definitions, "man," fits the context of the centurion's self introduction and was consequently the basis or Howard's translation and has been the basis for all studies to date on the meaning of בן אדם (υἱοις ἀνθρώπου) "Son of Man" or בן האדם (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) "the Son of the Man."

But other definitions of אדם, attested in Arabic cognates, need to be added to the Hebrew lexicons. In addition to the Arabic ادمی (ʾadamî) "relating to Adam" = "human"[3] are the following Arabic words for which there were certainly Hebrew cognates in use in Biblical times:

- ادم (ʾidâmu) and ادمة (ʿadamat) "the chief, and provost, of his people, the aider, the manager of the affairs, " which would be the cognate of the אָדָם in Gen 1:26, "let us make ADAM . . . and let them rule."

- ادم (ʾadama) "he effected a reconciliation between them and brought them together, made them sociable, or familiar with one another, made them to agree, induced love and agreement between them," the participle of which would appear as אֹדֵם in Hebrew;

- ادمة (ʾudmat) "agreement, familiarity, sociableness, companionship, a means of access," which would be אָדְמָה in Hebrew;

- مؤدم (mûʾdam) "beloved, an object of love," which is from the root אדם and would appear as מוּאָדָם.[4]

The first of these definitions was surely to be found on the lips of the Roman centurion (ἑκατόνταρχος) when he identi-

fied himself to Jesus as an אָדָם "a provost." This interpreta-
tion is reenforced by the second word from the centurion's
lips, חוטא, which is not the very common participle חוֹטֵא
"sinner," where the ו is the vowel letter for וֹ. This חוטא is
the cognate of the Arabic حواط (ḥuwwāʾṭ) "superintendent,
manager, the one in charge." Thus, the ו of חוטא here is a
consonant; and the א of this הַוּטָא is an Aramaism in the
dialect of the centurion (for the הַחוּט one would expect in
Hebrew).[5] Consequently, a more accurate translation of וַאֲנִי
אָדָם חַוּטָא in the centurion's self introduction to Jesus would
be "for I am a provost, the one in charge."[6]

In the Shem Tob text this is followed quite logically by the
statement ויש לי ממשלת "and I have authority," after which
the centurion spelled out the nature of his authority. But the
Greek and Latin texts of Matt 8:9 differ from the Shem Tob
text—which is but one piece of evidence that the Shem Tob
text is not a simple translation of the Greek or Latin Gospel
of Matthew. The Greek and Latin texts of Matt 8:9, along
with their English translations, read as follows:

$$\text{καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν,}$$
$$\text{ἔχων ὑπ' ἐμαυτὸν στρατιώτας,}$$
$$\text{καὶ λέγω τούτῳ, Πορεύθητι, καὶ πορεύεται,}$$
$$\text{καὶ ἄλλῳ, Ἔρχου, καὶ ἔρχεται,}$$
$$\text{καὶ τῷ δούλῳ μου, Ποίησον τοῦτο, καὶ ποιεῖ.}^{7}$$

RSV

For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me;
and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes,
and to another, 'Come,' and he comes,
and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it.

VULGATE

nam et ego homo sum sub potestate habens sub me milites
et dico huic vade et vadit et alio veni et venit
et servo meo fac hoc et facit.

DOUAY RHEIMS

For I also am a man subject to authority,
having under me soldiers; and I say to this,
Go, and he goeth, and to another Come, and he cometh,
and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

The most conspicuous difference between the Greek and Latin texts when compared with the Shem Tob text is that the ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν and *sub potestate* have the centurion saying he is "under authority" rather than "I have authority." The one translation agreeing with Shem Tob in the centurion's "having authority" is the Old Syriac text which reads

ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܓܝܪ ܓܒܪܐ ܐܢܐ ܕܐܝܬ ܠܝ ܫܘܠܛܢܐ

ʾap ʾenāʾ ger gabrāʾ ʾenāʾ dʾīt liy šûlṭānāʾ

"for I am also a man having authority."

However, the Peshitta here has ܐܢܐ ܕܬܚܝܬ ܫܘܠܛܢܐ (*ʾenāʾ ditḥêt šûlṭānāʾ*), "I am under authority." In the parallel account in Luke 7:8, both the Peshitta and Old Syriac have

ܐܢܐ ܕܡܫܥܒܕܢܐ ܬܚܘܬ ܫܘܠܛܢܐ

(*ʾenāʾ damšaʿbadnāʾ* [*damšaʿbad ʾnāʾ*] *tḥût šûlṭānāʾ*)
I am made to serve, I am under authority.

Because everyone in the Roman Empire was under the authority of Caesar, there was little need for the centurion to state this in his self introduction. Therefore, the reading of the Old Syriac and the Shem Tob texts reflect the most accurate

Hebrew textual tradition. The words חוטא ויש לי ממשלת "the-one-in-charge and I have authority" are reflected no-where in the Greek and Latin text traditions. But it is most unlikely that a redactor would have created the phrase which included the rare אדם חוטא "a provost, the-one-in-charge." Thus the rare אדם "a provost" and חוט "the-one-in-charge" definitely need to be added to the Hebrew lexicons.[8]

EZEKIEL AS A בן אדם

Just as the Arabic cognate أدم (ʾidâmu) "provost" clarifies the meaning of the אדם (= אָדָם) spoken by the Roman centurion, the Arabic أدم (ʾadama) "he effected a reconcilia-tion" clarifies the אדם בן (υἱοῦ ἀνθρώπου) "son of man" which appears about one hundred ninety times in the Bible, most frequently in Ezekiel where it appears ninety-three times.[9] The בן אדם in Ezekiel may not have been the generic "Son of Man" but the title בֶּן אָדָם "Conciliator / Reconciler." The אדם in this title may have done double duty, referring

- *to Yahweh* who was seeking reconciliation with the un-repentant Israelites: "For on my holy mountain, the moun-tain height of Israel, says the Lord Yahweh (אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה), there all the house of Israel, all of them, shall serve me in the land; there I will accept them (אֶרְצֵם). . . . As a soothing aroma I will accept you (אֶרְצֶה אֶתְכֶם) when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered; and I will prove Myself holy among you in the sight of the nations" (Ezek 20:40–41); and

- *to Ezekiel* who was Yahweh's agent of reconciliation: "So you, בן אדם 'Reconcilor,' I have made a watchman for the

house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me" (Ezek 33:7).

Failure to recognize that the בן אדם in Ezekiel was not "the son of man" but the "Son of Conciliation / Conciliator" greatly distorted the balance in the book between (1) the manifold threats of death for the inhabitants of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem, and (2) the far fewer promises that Yahweh would be their Good Shepherd (Ezek 34:11–31) and give the Israelites a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek 36:26–30). Punctuated throughout the entire book of Ezekiel is Yahweh's call for reconciliation with the rebellious Israelites —announced ninety-three times, as a matter of fact, in Ezekiel's title, "Son of Conciliation / Reconciler."

THE MEANINGS OF בן אנש AND בר אנש

Just as אדם had all the different meanings noted above (man, red, blood, Adam, Edom, Rome, provost, and reconciler), so also אנש had multiple meanings. Psa 144:3 provides one clear definition:

$$\text{יְהוָה מָה־אָדָם וַתֵּדָעֵהוּ בֶּן־אֱנוֹשׁ וַתְּחַשְּׁבֵהוּ}$$

Yahweh, what is man that you acknowledge him,
or the son of man that you take thought of him?

The אָדָם and בֶּן־אֱנוֹשׁ are synonymous, meaning "man" (i.e., gender inclusive human beings). The Arabic cognate of אנוש is أنس (ʾanisa) "to be friendly, to be social" (Lane 1863: 113). Hebrew lexicons list several other meanings:

- אָנַשׁ "to be weak, to be sick," with أنيث (ʾanîṯa) being its Arabic cognate,

- אָנַשׁ "to be soft, to be delicate," with أنث (ʾanuṯ) being its Arabic cognate.

- אָנוּשׁ "to be strong, severe, overwhelming."[10]

These meanings are of no help in clarifying the *title* "Son of Man," whether it be the Hebrew בַּר־אֱנוֹשׁ and בֶּן־אֱנוֹשׁ or the Aramaic בַּר־אֱנָשׁ.

Hebrew בֶּן־אֱנוֹשׁ and Aramaic בַּר־אֱנָשׁ (unlike בֶּן־אָדָם) could have triggered a number derogatory word-plays, analogous to that of Simon Bar-Kokba, "Son of a Star," who was known to his enemies as Simon Bar-Kozeba, "Son of a Lie."[11] Given the occasional interchange of שׁ/שׂ/ס, the אנש could equal אֱנָס "a violent man" (Jastrow 1903: 86), and בר אנש could mean "son of violence, a felon." Also, given the occasional interchange of the א and the ע, the בר אנש could be a variant of בַּר־עֱנֶשׁ, meaning "convict" (derived from עֱנֶשׁ "punishment, fine, mulct") (Jastrow 1903: 1055).[12] And given the interchange of א and ע the אנש could be the cognate of the Arabic عانس (ʿânis) "a man who is far advanced in age and has not married" or "a virgin woman" (Lane 1874: 2173). Thus, בן אנש (as a by-form בן ענש) could mean a "mature bachelor" or "the son of a virgin."

Moreover, the בר of בר אנש need not be the Aramaic for "son" but the Hebrew/Aramaic בר "pure" (BDB 141; Jastrow 1903: 189), with some if not all of the overtones of its Arabic cognate بر (barr). Lane (1863: 176) cited بر (barr) as meaning

pious [towards his father or parents, and towards God; obedient to God, serving God, or rendering religious service to God; and kind, or good and affectionate and

gentle in behaviour, towards his kindred; and good in his dealings with strangers]; good, just, righteous, virtuous, or honest, true, or veracious . . . abounding in filial piety . . . dutifulness or obedience . . . benevolent, goodness, beneficence.

Thus, בר אנש need not be the Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew בן אדם, but a Hebrew phrase in its own right expressing a superlative by means of the *nomen rectum* אנש being modified by the *nomen regens* בר. Ordinarily the attributive adjective follows the noun, but there are good examples of the modifying adjective being in the construct state and the noun being in the absolute state (GKC 132ᶜ). Consequently, the Hebrew בר אנש "the most pure man / the man of purity" or "the Perfect Person"[13] would have been a homograph of the Aramaic בר אנש "the son of man," but not a homophone. Like the unvocalized בן אדם, the unvocalized בן אנש and the בר אנש could be very ambiguous.

I ENOCH 46 AND 48

The "Son of Man" texts in I Enoch 46 and 48 also point to a tradition in which both בר אנש and בן אדם may have been in the original parable. Verses 46:1–3 point to a בר אנש "*son of man*" who can be recognized as "*the Perfect Person*" as interpreted above,

And I saw there One who had a head of days, and his head was white like wool and with him was another being whose countenance had the appearance of a man And I asked the angel who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, concerning that *Son of Man*, who he was and whence he was . . . and he answered and said unto

me: This is the *Son of Man* who hath righteousness, with whom dwelleth righteousness.[14]

The focus on the righteous continues in 48:1, 4, and 7, "And in that place I saw the fountain of righteousness . . . He shall be a staff to the righteous, for he hath preserved the lot of the righteous." In 53:6 "the *Son of Man*" is named "the Righteous and Elect One."

But the power exercised by "*the Son of Man*" reflects that of the בן אדם as interpreted above, "*the Son of Authority*" who is in full control—like the centurion who told Jesus he was the provost (אדם) in full control (חוט). Enoch 46:4–6 reads,

This *Son of Man* [or *Son of Authority/One in Authority*] whom you have seen is the one who would remove the kings and the mighty ones from their comfortable seats and the strong ones from their thrones. He shall loosen the reigns of the strong and crush the teeth of the sinners He shall depose the kings from their thrones and kingdoms. The faces of the strong will be slapped and be filled with shame and gloom. Their dwelling places and their beds will be worms.[15]

NEW TESTAMENT USAGE

Johnson (1962: 418), along with many other commentators, rightly recognized that the Greek ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in the New Testament "is a Semitic phrase that would be familiar to Jewish hearers, however ambiguous it was, but no Hellenistic Christian would be likely to insert it into the tradition." The two key words to note are "Semitic" and "ambiguous." The

ambiguity of the Old Testament בן אדם is minimal[16] com-
pared to the ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in the New Testament.
Johnson noted also that

> The double question, whether Jesus described himself as
> Son of Man and what he meant by it, is of great
> importance. . . . The most powerful affirmative argument
> is that in the gospels the term is always found in words
> attributed to Jesus himself. One gains the impression that
> *he used it without explanation and left it to his hearers to*
> *decide what meaning should be attached to it.* (italics
> added).

Once the Greek ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is translated back
into Hebrew and Aramaic—and written without vowels—at
least fifteen meanings become possible (as noted above, seven
for אדם and eight for אנש). Even if Jesus and the disciples
knew perfectly well what was meant when they spoke in
Hebrew and Aramaic, ambiguity was unavoidable once the
Hebrew and Aramaic sayings were written using consonants
only. Nickelsburg (1990) questioned, "How was the Aramaic
term *bar ᵓĕnaša᷾* used in 1st century Palestine?" But the *bar*
ᵓĕnaša᷾ in his question should have been written without
vowels, for his vowels reflect but one of many interpretations.
The real questions is, "What did אדם and אנש mean in 1st
century Palestine?" The *ᵓĕnaša᷾* "man" is just one of eight
possible meanings, as noted above.

The five most likely meanings of בן אדם, בן אנש, and
בר אנש which became the anarthrous ὁ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου "the
son of man" and the arthrous ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου "the son
of the man" can be summarized as follows:

- the son of man = a human being, a mortal

(*ben* + *ʾādām,* or *ben* + *ʾĕnōš*, or Aram. *bar* + *ʾĕnāš*);

- the man of purity = the purest person
  (Heb. *bār* 'pure' + *ʾĕnōš* 'man').

- the son of the reconciler = conciliator (*ben* + *ʾōdēm*);

- the son of authority = one in authority (*ben* + *ʾēdām*);

- the Son of "the-One-In-Charge," i.e., THE SON OF THE
  SOVEREIGN (*ben* + *hā ʾēdām*).

Early on Jesus was recognized as υἱὸς θεοῦ "the Son of God" (בן אלוה) and as ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ "the Son of the God" (בן האלים). The designation of Jesus as ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, "my Beloved Son,"[17] appears six times in the Gospels. Three of these are in the Synoptic accounts of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist when the voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matt 3:17, Mark 1:11, and Luke 3:22); and three of them are in the Synoptic accounts of the transfiguration when the voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved son" (Matt 17:5, Mark 9:7, and Luke 9:35). These quotations are indirect affirmations that Jesus was recognized by some as "the Son of God."

The title "Son of God" appears in the Gospels twenty-eight times, and its meaning is unambiguous. It was affirmed by[18]

- Gabriel when he told Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you . . . therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

- John the Baptist, who at Jesus' baptism stated, "I have seen and borne witness that this is the Son of God" (John 1:34).

- Nathaniel, when he came to Jesus, declared, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel" (John 1:49).

- the disciples in the boat after Jesus walked on the water, who "worshiped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God'" (Matt 14:33).

- Martha who confessed, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God" (John 11:227).

- the Satan who twice challenged Jesus saying, "If you are the Son of God . . . ." (Matt 4:3, 6; Luke 4:3, 9).

- the unclean spirits after they were cast out of the sick "fell down before him and cried out, 'You are the Son of God'" (Mark 3:11), or "What have you to do with us, O Son of God?" (Matt 8:29); and Luke adds (4:41) "they knew that he was the Christ."

- the Gaderene demoniac who asked, "What have you to do with me, Jesus Son of the Most High God?" (Luke 8:28).

- the centurion and guards at the cross who stated, "Truly this was a / the Son of God" (Matt 27:54; Mark 15:39).

- John who wrote, "these [signs] are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31).

- Jesus himself when he reported to Mary and Martha, "This illness [of Lazarus] is not unto death; it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by means of it" (John 11:4).

- Jesus himself in his answer to Nicodemus, "For God so loved the world . . . God sent the Son into the world . . . He who does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God" (John 3:16–18).

- Jesus when he defended himself against blasphemy for having said, "I am the Son of God" (John 10:34–36).[19]

- Jesus when he asked the blind man to whom he gave sight, "Do you believe in the Son of God? " and then answered the man's

question, "Who is he, sir?" by saying, "You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you." (John 9:35).

Therefore, it is unlikely that בר אנש—meaning either the lofty but sub-divine "Perfect Person" or the mundane "son of man"— was ever interchangeable with the title "the Son of God." The title בן אדם "the one-in-charge" or "the conciliator," would have properly defined Jesus mission, but not his person. Only the last of the five titles listed above does justice to his person. He was בֶּן הָאָדָם "the Son of the Sovereign," with the הָאָדָם "the Sovereign" being Yahweh. בֶּן־הָאָדָם was the equivalent of בֶּן־הָאֵל "the Son of God." This is what lies behind the arthrous ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. The title בֶּן אָדָם (without the definite article on the אָדָם) means "One-in-Authority" (as בֶּן־חַיִל means "mighty man") and refers to Jesus who said, Ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth." This בֶּן אָדָם is the title behind the anarthrous ὁ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου "the Son of Man."

Support for this interpretation that הָאָדָם "the Sovereign" is an epithet for Yahweh, and the בֶּן אָדָם is a title for Jesus finds support from three sources. First is the use of the epithet הַצּוּר "the Rock" for Yahweh in Deut 32:4, which was translated as θεός "God" in the LXX. The epithet צוּר "Rock," without the ה, appears again in Deut 32:18, where it is again translated as θεόν "God." The epithet comes a third time in Deut 32:31. כְּצוּרֵנוּ צוּרָם "like our Rock, their Rock." This became in Greek ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν οἱ θεοὶ αὐτῶν "like our God, their god." The same epithet found in Hab 1:12 is also

noteworthy:

$$יָהוֶה אֱלֹהַי קְדֹשִׁי . . . וְצוּר . . .$$

Yahweh, my God, my Holy One . . . and, O Rock, . . .

$$κύριε ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἅγιός . . . καὶ ἔπλασέν με$$

O Lord, God, my Holy One . . . you formed me.

Here the Greek translator read the MT וְצוּר as the verb "to form, fashion," and Jastrow (1903: 1270) noted that "in the *Agadah* צוּר "Rock" was used for *the Lord* and for *the Creator*, as though צוּר was derived from יָצַר "to fashion, to create." In the Psalms צוּר "Rock" was translated by θεός "God" in 18:31 (LXX 17:32 = II Sam 2:32), 62:3, 63:7 and 91:5. Thus comes the equation: *Rock = God = Yahweh*. The name, noun, and epithet were interchangeable.[20] By analogy a similar equation can be postulated: הָאָדָם "*The Sovereign*" = *God = Yahweh*.[21]

The second source supporting the interpretation that הָאָדָם is an epithet for Yahweh comes from parallels in Arabic usage of epithets for Allah. Among the epithets for Allah in Arabic are:

- الرحيم (ʾalraḥîmu) "the Merciful" (= רַחוּם);
- الرحمن (ʾalraḥmanu) "the Compassionate" (= רַחֲמָנִי);
- الاحد (ʾalâḥadu) "the One" (= הָאֶחָד), with the definite article;
- أحد (ʾaḥadᵘⁿ) "(the) One" (= אֶחָד), without the definite article);
- واحد (waʾḥidᵘⁿ) "(the) One" (= יָחִיד a by-form of אֶחָד), without the definite article).

Lane (1863: 27) noted that "الإحد [ʾalâḥadu], as an epithet, is applied to God alone and signifies *The One*; *the Sole*; *He who as ever been one and alone . . . .*" and he called attention to the *Qurʾan* Sura 112:1, قل هو الله أحد (*qul huwa ʾlalahu ʿaḥadᵘⁿ*), "*Say, He is God, One* God," and noted that here the indefinite "*One*" equals the definite "*The One*" and it can be a substitute for the name *Allah*. The Hebrew הָאָדָם "*The Sovereign*" parallels the Arabic and Hebrew הָאֶחַד "*The One*."

The third source supporting the interpretation that הָאָדָם is an epithet for Yahweh is a variant in the Shem Tob Text of Matt 19:17, where the phrase כי האל לבדו הוא טוב "for God alone is good" appears in Greek as εἷς ἐστιν ὁ ἀγαθός "one is the good." This *indefinite* εἷς "one" means "The-One-and-Only-God" This interpretation of the εἷς is supported by the εἷς ὁ θεός "one the God" in Mark 10:18 and Luke 18:19, where the ὁ θεός "the God" is the appositional modifier of the *indefinite* εἷς (= האחד). The האחד in the *Vorlage* became in the Shem Tob text a doublet, wherein the האחד became both האל "the God" and לבדו "alone." There is no way to relate the εἷς "one" in Matthew and the ὁ θεός "God" in Mark and Luke until the Hebrew האחד "the One = God" comes into focus.

As a matter of fact, in Matt 16:27 the ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώ-που appears in the Shem Tob Text as בן האל "the son of the God." and the τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in Matt 16:28 also appears as בן האלוה "the Son of the God."

CONCLUSIONS

In speech the vowels precluded most ambiguities. The ʾādām "man," the ʾōdēm "reconcilor," and the ʾēdām "provost" were as distinctly different as the English 'a dam,' 'a dame,' and 'a dome.' The Aramaic *bar* + ʾĕnāš has to mean "son of man" and the Hebrew *bar* + ʾĕnōš has to mean "the most pure person." The ā vowel of ʾĕnāš and the ō vowel of ʾĕnōš make all the difference. The Hebrew ʾĕnōš "man" requires the *bar* to be read as the Hebrew word for "pure," whereas the Aramaic ʾĕnāš "man" requires the *bar* to be read as the Aramaic word for "son." When these words were spelled without vowels, ambiguity was inevitable.

With all of the right vowels restored and with the lexical options (summarized above, pp. 360–369) in focus, it should be just as easy to recognize הָאָדָם "the Sovereign" as a title for Yahweh as it is to recognize הַצּוּר "the Rock" and הָאֶחָד "the One." Reverence for the holy name, whereby every reading of יְהוָה became אֲדֹנָי, was no doubt a contributing factor for using epithets—and even they may have been reverentially changed, as אלהים became אלקים and as "God" became "G-d."[22] Reverence for the name may well have been extended to הָאָדָם itself so that the בֶּן הָאָדָם "the Son of the Sovereign" was intentionally mispronounced as בֶּן הָאָדָם "the Son of the Man" which, in turn, produced the baffling ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. The disciples and those in the early church certainly knew that "*the Son of the Man*" meant "*the Son of the Sovereign*," which was but another way of saying "*the Son of God*." It was so well understood it required no commentary.

Reading "the Man of Purity" for the "Son of Man" in I Enoch clarifies there the ambiguity of the υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου. The disciples' answer to the question of Jesus in Matt 16: 13, "Who do men say that the Son of Man to be?" is the clue for interpreting the ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in the question as the Hebrew בַּר אֱנֹשׁ "the Most Pure Man" (the superlative of הָאֱנוֹשׁ הַבַּר). Their answer, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets," makes perfect sense with this meaning.[23]

More ambiguity can be removed when it is recognized that ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου could translate not only the Aramaic בַּר אֱנָשָׁא "the Son of the Man" and the Hebrew בַּר אֱנֹשׁ "the Purist Person" but also the Hebrew בֶּן אָדָם "Son of Man" and the Hebrew בֶּן אדם "Son of the Reconciler," i.e., "the Concilator," which was probably the title given to Ezekiel (contra the MT vocalization and the υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου in the Septuagint). It may have been the inspiration for Paul's affirmation in II Cor 5:19, θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself."

In Matt. 16:27, Jesus stated, "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done." In this saying the ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, "the Son of the Man," could be the בן אדם where the אדם was אָדָם "the-one-in-charge." The title "Son of Authority" may well underlie the texts were the "Son of Man" functioned as the judicial authority. Nickelsburg (1990) noted:

> Perhaps the most remarkable fact about the NT son of
> man traditions is their consistent ascription of judicial

functions to the exalted Jesus. In spite of the frequent use of Danielic language and imagery, these texts, with the exception of Revelation, do not emphasize the Danielic motif of "kingship," much less an eternal reign. Constitutive and central is Jesus' role as judge (or, occasionally, witness), an element introduced into the tradition from non-Danielic, albeit royally oriented sources. This judicial element, more than any other, identifies the NT texts as derivative from the conflated Jewish traditions.

However, it was not just a matter of "conflated Jewish traditions," it was a matter of deflated lexical data—with some Hebrew and Aramaic lexemes having been lost in the post-Biblical period. Thanks to Arabic cognates, the recovery of אדם "the-one-in-charge/the Sovereign" and אדם "the Reconcilor" provides a reasonable explanation of the enigmatic ἀνθρώπου "man" in the title used by and about Jesus. Every occurrence of ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου can be interpreted as "*the Son of the Sovereign*." It was just another way of safely saying "*the Son of God*"—without possibly profaning the name or the epithet simply by saying it properly.

The name Yahweh occurs over six thousand times in the Hebrew Scriptures but not once in the New Testament. But, in the epithet ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου "the Son of the Man," *the holy name appears in reverent disguise.* Behind the Greek is the Hebrew בֶּן הָאָדָם "the Son of the Man," and behind this is the epithet בֶּן הָאָדָם "the Son of the Sovereign"—and "the Sovereign" is none other than Yahweh, God the Father.

ADDENDUM
THE אדום AND ἀνθρώπου IN
AMOS 9:11–12 AND ACTS 15:16–17

Amos 9:11 and an abbreviated quotation of it in Acts 15:16 read much the same. But Amos 9:12 and Acts 15:17 have very different meanings, the latter being almost identical with the Septuagint reading of Amos 9:12. These texts read as follows:

AMOS 9:11

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אָקִים אֶת־סֻכַּת דָּוִיד הַנֹּפֶלֶת
וְגָדַרְתִּי אֶת־פִּרְצֵיהֶן וַהֲרִסֹתָיו אָקִים
וּבְנִיתִיהָ כִּימֵי עוֹלָם:

In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen
and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins,
and rebuild it as in the days of old.

SEPTUAGINT OF 9:11

ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἀναστήσω
τὴν σκηνὴν Δαυιδ τὴν πεπτωκυῖαν
καὶ ἀνοικοδομήσω τὰ πεπτωκότα αὐτῆς
καὶ τὰ κατεσκαμμένα αὐτῆς ἀναστήσω
καὶ ἀνοικοδομήσω αὐτὴν καθὼς αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ
αἰῶνος.

In that day I will raise up
the tabernacle of David that is fallen,
and will rebuild the ruins of it,
and will set up the parts that have been broken,
and will build it up as in the ancient days.

ACTS 15:16

Μετὰ ταῦτα ἀναστρέψω
καὶ ἀνοικοδομήσω τὴν σκηνὴν Δαυὶδ
τὴν πεπτωκυῖαν
καὶ τὰ κατεσκαμμένα αὐτῆς ἀνοικοδομήσω
καὶ ἀνορθώσω αὐτήν.

After this I will return,
and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen;
I will rebuild its ruins, and I will strengthen it..

AMOS 9:12

לְמַעַן יִירְשׁוּ אֶת־שְׁאֵרִית אֱדוֹם
וְכָל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר־נִקְרָא שְׁמִי
עֲלֵיהֶם נְאֻם־יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה זֹּאת:

"On order that they may possess the remnant of Edom
and all the nations who are called by my name,"
says the LORD who does this.

SEPTUAGINT OF 9:12

ὅπως ἐκζητήσωσιν οἱ κατάλοιποι τῶν ἀνθρώπων
καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται
τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐπ' αὐτούς
λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ ποιῶν ταῦτα.

that the remnant of men, and all the gentiles
upon whom my name is called,
may earnestly seek,
saith the Lord who does all these things.

ACTS 15: 17

ὅπως ἂν ἐκζητήσωσιν οἱ κατάλοιποι
τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὸν κύριον

καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐφ᾽ οὓς ἐπικέκληται
τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐπ᾽ αὐτούς,
λέγει κύριος ποιῶν ταῦτα.

that the rest of men may seek the Lord,
and all the Gentiles who are called by my name.

According to Hatch and Redpath (1954: 430–431) ἐκζητέω "to seek" was used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew דָּרַשׁ "to seek" over seventy times, but only here in Amos 9:12 does it appear as a questionable translation of יָרַשׁ "to possess." Therefore, it is most likely that in the Masoretic tradition the ד of דרשׁ was misread as a י. Consequently, the verb became יִירְשׁוּ "they may possess" when it was originally יִדְרְשׁוּ "they may seek."

A second misreading in the MT was the reading of אדם in 9:12 as אֱדוֹם "Edom." The Septuagint translators read it as אָדָם "man," which was followed by Luke in Acts 15: 17. But there is a third option for interpreting the אדם in Amos 9:12. As discussed above (pp. 360–364) אדם can be read as the cognate of the Arabic ادم (ʾadama) "he effected a reconciliation between them . . . induced love and agreement between them . . . that peace, or reconciliation, and friendship should continue " (Lane 1863: 35–36). Thus, אדם (or אדום, with full spelling) could be read as the sequential infinitive construct אֱדֹם/אֲדֹם "to reconcile." By inverting the אֶת־שְׁאֵרִית אֱדוֹם to read as אֱדוֹם אֶת־שְׁאֵרִית, the purpose for Yahweh's rebuilding the fallen booth and breaches of David was "in order that they seek *to reconcile the remnant* and all the gentiles upon whom my name is called." The imperial and ethnocentric statement in the MT in Amos 9:12 may well

come from a triad of scribal errors: (1) misreading a ד as a י, adding the ו to אדם and thereby changing the infinitive "to reconcile" into the name Edom, and inverting three words once the name Edom was mistakenly created.

NOTES

1. Davies and Allison (1991: 43–53, Excursus VI, The Son of Man) provide a helpful summary of the debate over the last half of the twentieth century about the meaning of "the mysterious synoptic title 'the Son of Man'" in the Gospels. They concluded

> In view of all we have said, we are inclined to think that Jesus used the son of man idiom on more than one occasion in a novel or quasi-titular manner with the intent of directing his hearers to Dan 7, and that he saw in Daniel's eschatological figure a prophecy of his own person and fate.

Davies and Allison referred to the *one* occurrence of the כְּבַר אֱנָשׁ, "like the son of a man" (in Dan 7:13) forty-six times; but the בֶּן אָדָם, which appears *ninety-three* times in Ezekiel, is mentioned only *three* times (in just two sentences in the whole excursus).

2. The twelfth book in the polemical treatise published between 1380–1400 by Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut, entitled אבן בוחן (*eben bôḥan > Eben Bohan*) meaning "The Touchstone," contains the entire Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew. A critical edition of this Gospel has been published

by George Howard (1987, 1995). In the preface to the Second Edition, Howard stated,

> The main thrust of this second edition is to demonstrate that the Hebrew Matthew contained in Shem-Tob's *Evan* (sic) *Bohan* predates the fourteenth century. In my judgment, Shem-Tob the polemist did not prepare this text by translating it from the Latin Vulgate, the Byzantine Greek, or any other known edition of the Gospel of Matthew. He received it from previous generations of Jewish scribes and tradents."

3. The usual word for "human" in Arabic is بشر (*bašar*); and ابو البشر (*ʾabû ʾalbasar*) means "Adam, the father of mankind" (Lane 1863: 208).

4. See Lane 1863: 35–37 and Castell 1669: 41–42, where the following definitions are included: "*pacem fecit, amore junxit, redintegravit amorem, concordia & consensum conciliavit, firmavit, . . . dux & antistes est*."

5. Compare Hebrew חוט "thread, cord line" and its Arabic cognate حوط (*ḥawṭ*) "a twisted string" and خيط (*ḥayṭ*) "string, "thread" (Lane 1865: 671, 831; BDB 296). The Arabic حيط (*ḥayyiṭ*) "a man who guards, protects, defends" is also noteworthy.

6. Note also the by-form חטי cited by Jastrow (1903: 448–449) meaning "to live in luxury as a nobleman, to be imperious, to lord it." For the cognate حواط (*ḥuwwāʾṭ*), Hava (1915: 150) included "tax collector" in his definitions. Had the centurion confessed that he was a "sinner," one would

expect the tradition to have had some recollection of how Jesus responded to that confession.

7. According to Luke 7:2–10, Jesus and the centurion never actually met each other, the communication between the two of them being carried out by a deputation of Jewish elders. Luke 7:8ᵃ, which reads, καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν τασσόμενος "for I also am a man being placed under authority," differs from Matt 8:9 only by the addition of τασσόμενος "being placed."

8. The phrase ופרשים ורוכבים פירושים in Shem Tob's Matthew requires a comment. Howard translated this as "the Pharisees and [I have] horses and riders." But "Pharisees" and "horses" just do not go together like "Pharisees and Sadducees." The פירושים reflects the confusion in distinguishing between the ו and the י, so that the פירושים should be corrected to פורישים, the latter being the Hebrew cognate of Arabic فارس (fâriš) "(mounted) horseman." The three Hebrew nouns correspond to the Latin *celeres*, *equestris*, *currus* and to the English "cavalry, charioteers, and chariots."

9. It appears 192 times in KJV; 190 times in NKJ; 189 times in RSV; 183 times in NAB, and 182 times in NIV. It appears 28 times in Matthew, 13 times in Mark, 25 times in Luke, 12 times in John, twice in Rev 1:13 and 14:14, and just once in Acts 7:56, Hebrews 2:6, and Sirach 17:30. In the Hebrew scriptures בן אדם "son of man" comes nine times as the parallel synonym of אדם "man" (Num 23:19; Job 25:6; 35:8; Psalm 8:4; 80:17; Isa 51:12; 56:2; and Jer 50:40). In Jer 51:43 and Psa 146:3 בן אדם appears without the synonymous אדם

"man," and Psa 144:3 has בֶּן־אֱנוֹשׁ.

10. Given the interchange of the א and the ע (as with גְּמָא and גְּמַע, both meaning "to suck"), אֱנוֹשׁ could be a by-form and cognate of Arabic عنس (ʿans) "rock, hard, firm" (Lane 1874: 2173).

11. Simon Bar-Kokba lead the third revolt against Rome during the reign of Hadrian after the *Aelia Capitolina* was built by Hadrian in 131 in Jerusalem and occupied by a Roman colony. (*Aelia* was derived from the emperor's family name, and *Capitolina* from that of *Jupiter Capitolinus*, to whom a temple was built on the site of the Jewish temple.) Bar Kokhba's revolt lasted for three years (132–135), but he was defeated by General Julius Severus.

12. This type of word-play may have contributed to the tale in *Sabbath* 104[b], which was thought by many, including zealous Christian censors, to have identified Mary Magdalene with Mary, the mother of Jesus, because it speaks not only of an adulteress but identifies her as the mother of a man who for his violence had been crucified.

13. In English the superlative "the most pious man" or "the most righteous man" may have overtones of a person's being self-righteous. Thus, the superlative "the Most Pure Person" may best translate the title בר אנש "the Most Pure Man" (which could be misinterpreted as *machismo*) or "the Man of Righteousness / Purity" (which ignores the superlatve).

14. Translation by Charles (1913: 216). For an extended discussion on the original language of I Enoch and the various

translation of the term "son of Man," see Charles' *Introduction*, pages 174–177.

15. The translation is by Isaac (1983: 34). For a brief note by Isaac on the date of the Similitudes (37–71) being between 105–64 B.C., and the original language of I Enoch being partially in Aramaic and partially in Hebrew, see his *Introduction* on pages 6–7.

16. The Aramaic כְּבַר אֱנָשׁ "like the son of a man" in Dan 7:13 is a personification for the "kingdom of the saints of the Most High" (7:17, 21–22), which is the counter part to the zoomorphic representations of the nations in Dan 7:2–8. According to Dan 8:15–17, Daniel saw "one having the appearance of a man" (כְּמַרְאֵה־גָבֶר) who had the "the voice of a man" (קוֹל־אָדָם). His name was Gabriel (= גֶּבֶר "warrior/ man" + אֵל "God)," and he called Daniel in Hebrew בֶּן־אָדָם "the son of a man.

17. See Aland (1968: 246) for Luke 9:35 which has ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἐκλελεγμένος, "my Chosen Son" as a textual variant in a number of manuscripts.

18. Not included in this list are the title "Son of God" found in (a) the title of Mark 1:1, (b) the questions and charges of blasphemy made by the chief priests and scribes (Matt 26:63; Luke 22:66–70; and John19:7), and (c) the taunts of those reviling Jesus (Matt 27:40, 43; Luke 22:70).

19. Psalm 82 is a short poetic parable which depicts the demise of henotheism and the rise of absolute monotheism.

The gods (sun, moon, and stars, etc) allotted by Yahweh "to all the peoples under the whole heaven" (Deut 4:19) failed to adjudicate justly in their respective realms and were, consequently, sentence to death, as though they were mere mortals. Psalm 82 ends with this plea for monotheism: "Arise, O God, judge the earth, for to thee belong all the nations." Brown (1966: 409) made no reference to this plain meaning of the psalm, but was correct "in recognizing that Jesus was arguing according to the rabbinic rules of hermeneutics which were often different from modern attitudes." In the rabbinic tradition followed by Jesus the "sons of the Most High" were deemed to be earthly judges for whom "god" was an honorific title. Brown (1966: 410) noted "if there appears to be sophistry in John x 34–36, we are not certain that either the speaker or the audience would have had that impression."

20. Compare the אָבִיר "the Strong," an old name of God found in Gen 49:24; Psalm 132:2,5; Isa 1:24, 49:26, 60:16. The לְאֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב in Psa 132:2 and 5 became in the Septuagint τῷ θεῷ Ιακωβ "to the God of Jacob."

21. Note the beloved hymn of Agustus Toplady entitled *Rock of Ages*, written in1776. Similar to the way Toplady made the "Rock of Ages" apply to Jesus rather than to Yahweh, scholars have tried to make the τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (= האדם) refer to Jesus. But in reality the האדם (≠ ἀνθρώπου) in the title בן האדם "Son of the Sovereign" referred to Yahweh.

22. It is analogous to Jastrow's citation (1903: 73) on אֱלֹקִים, which is nothing but a cross reference to אֱלוֹהַּ , where it is

simply noted that אלקים and אלקא were "adopted in order to avoid uttering the divine name." It goes without explanation; but questions loom as to why the ה became a ק. Was the ק randomly selected or was אלקים an indirect reference to the Shekinah since אלק (the cognate of Arabic الق [ʾalaqa]) means "to shine, glow, glean" and the plural אלקים could mean "lightnings," like those mentioned in Rev 4:5?

23. The parallel texts suggest that three questions were asked, the *second* one being, Τίνα με λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι; "who do men say that I am?" (Mark 8:227) or Τίνα με λέγουσιν οἱ ὄχλοι εἶναι; "who do crowds say that I am?" (Luke 9:18); and the *third* being, Ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι; "but who do you say that I am" (Matt 16:15; Mark 8:28; Luke 9:20). The Shem Tob Hebrew Matthew at 16:13–15 omits the first question all together. The Peshiṭta and Old Syriac of Matt 16:13 conflated the first and second questions, "What do men say concerning me, that I am a son of man?" But the answer in Matt 16:14, which mentions John the Baptist, Elijah and Jeremiah, is not a logical answer to this question. (The Peshiṭta and Old Syriac of Mark 8:27–29 and Luke 9:18–20 also omit the first question.) Mark 8:28 and Luke 9:19 are perfectly good answers to the question in Matt 16:13, but not to the question in Mark 8:27 or Luke 9:18.