

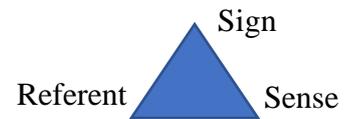
Group Activity: The Son of Man

*What is Daniel trying to tell us when he said he saw “one like a son of man”?

Things to Bear in Mind

The word, or title, is not the thing!

- Language is a meaning-making tool.
- A word, or chain of words working together, is a symbol.
- A symbol of the sign (word or thing), referent (what it literally refers to), and sense (connotations).
- The use of a sign develops over time. It can pick up new connotations along the way.



Instructions

*The following passages from the Hebrew Bible, Aramaic parts of the Bible, and 1 Enoch have the sign (son of man) underlined. Read the passage and try to discern referent (what the phrase is used to refer to or talk about) and the sense (connotations) of how it is used.

Hebrew Bible	בֶּן-אָדָם (ben-adam)
Numbers 23:19	¹⁹ "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a <u>son of man</u> , that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"
Job 25:6	⁶ How much less man, <i>that</i> maggot, And the <u>son of man</u> , <i>that</i> worm!"
Job 35:8	⁸ "Your wickedness is for a man like yourself, and your righteousness is for a <u>son of man</u> ."
Ps. 8:4	⁴ What is man that You take thought of him, and the <u>son of man</u> that You care for him?
Ps. 80:17	¹⁷ Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, upon the <u>son of man</u> whom You made strong for Yourself.
Ps. 144:3	³ O LORD, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the <u>son of man</u> , that You think of him?
Isa. 51:12	¹² "I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you are afraid of man who dies And of the <u>son of man</u> who is made like grass,
Isa. 56:2	² "How blessed is the man who does this, And the <u>son of man</u> who takes hold of it; Who keeps from profaning the sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil."
Jer. 49:18 (also 49:33; 50:40; 51:43)	¹⁸ "Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah with its neighbors," says the LORD, "no one will live there, nor will a <u>son of man</u> reside in it.
Ezek 2:1	Then He said to me, " <u>Son of man</u> , stand on your feet that I may speak with you!" <i>*Ezekiel has the most occurrences. Used by God to address Ezekiel</i>
Dan. 8:17	¹⁷ So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, " <u>Son of man</u> , understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end."
Aramaic	כְּבַר אֲנָשׁ (c-bar-enosh; like a son of man)
Dan. 7:13-14	¹³ "I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven one like a <u>Son of Man</u> was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. ¹⁴ "And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and <i>men of every</i> language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.

Mind-Melting, Soul-Corrupting, Abominable Pseudepigrapha

1 Enoch 46:1-3

There I saw one who had a Head of Days (God), and his head was white like wool. And with him was another, whose face was like the appearance of a man; and his face was full of graciousness like one of the holy angels.

And I asked the angel of peace, who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, about that son of man—who he was and whence he was and why he went with the Head of Days.

And he answered and said to me, “This is the son of man who has righteousness, and righteousness dwells with him.

(goes on to say he’ll have a lot of power and mete out justice, etc.)

Instructions

Do the same as above for the following passages out of the New Testament.

ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (ho huios tou anthropou)

Matt. 8:20

²⁰ Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

Matt. 16:13-14

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

¹⁴ And they said, "Some *say* John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

Matt. 11:16-19

¹⁶ "But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces, who call out to the other *children*, ¹⁷ and say, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.'

¹⁸ "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon!'

¹⁹ "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

Matt. 13:41-42

⁴¹ "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,

⁴² and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

John 1:51

⁵¹ And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Acts 7:55-56

⁵⁵ But being full of the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; ⁵⁶ and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

Rev. 14:14-16

¹⁴ Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud *was* one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand.

¹⁵ And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe."

¹⁶ Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

Conclusion

*Based on your observations:

1. Categorize the different referents and senses for “son of man.”

2. Discern: are there commonalities between all the usages of this term? Differences? What contextual factors might be source of these differences?

3. Why do you think the biblical writers, non-canonical writers, and Jesus chose to use this term? What are theologically important points are they trying to communicate when they make this linguistic choice?