

supernatural entity to His Disciples, is important, as it will later have to be confessed that He is not just some or any member of the Heavenly host who has been sent down to Planet Earth, endowed with special powers.

Mark 9:30-32; Matthew 17:22-23; Luke 9:43-45 **“The Son of Man Will be Killed by Sinners”**

“From there they went out and *began* to go through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know *about it*. For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, ‘The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later.’ But they did not understand *this* statement, and they were afraid to ask Him” (Mark 9:30-32).

“And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Yeshua said to them, ‘The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day.’ And they were deeply grieved” (Matthew 17:22-23).

“And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. But while everyone was marveling at all that He was doing, He said to His disciples, ‘Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.’ But they did not understand this statement, and it was concealed from them so that they would not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this statement” (Luke 9:43-45).

What does this narrational data tell us about the nature of the Messiah? Yeshua is recorded as telling things to His Disciples that they could not handle and fully process (Mark 9:32; Matthew 17:23b; Luke 9:45). He specifically told His Disciples some bleak news about the future they were to anticipate: “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again” (Mark 9:31, NRSV); “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised” (Matthew 17:22-23a, NRSV); “Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands” (Luke 9:44, NRSV). Given the reaction of the Disciples—one of distress and bewilderment about what to do—they obviously paid more attention to their Teacher telling them that He would be betrayed and executed, than resurrected three days later.

As readers of the Gospels two millennia later, we admittedly benefit from knowing what happens, as Yeshua is delivered over to the Romans to be unjustly executed—but then raises from the dead. What cannot go overlooked in the records of Mark 9:30-32; Matthew 17:22-23; Luke 9:43-45 here, is how Yeshua refers to Himself via the title “Son of Man.” When the title “Son of Man” is correctly acknowledged as having a Tanach background, of the figure brought before the Ancient of Days, granted a Kingdom with no end and who the entire Creation must venerate—the gravity of Yeshua being betrayed, humiliated, sacrificed for human sins, and then resurrected, should be better appreciated. As Daniel 7:9-14 (discussed previously) says of the Son of Man,

“I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took *His* seat; His vesture *was* like white snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne *was* ablaze with flames, its wheels *were* a burning fire. A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him; thousands upon thousands were attending Him, and myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; the court sat, and the books were opened. Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their

The Nature of Yeshua in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts

dominion was taken away, but an extension of life was granted to them for an appointed period of time. I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven one like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and *men of every 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.”

Later, in the *Carmen Christi* hymn of Philippians 2:5-11, it will be said of Yeshua, that “though he was in the form of God, [he] did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:6-8, NRSV). Yeshua, having equality with the Father, did not come to Planet Earth to dominate people and abuse them and enslave them—as gods or goddesses of Ancient Near Eastern and classical Greco-Roman mythology would have (discussed further). Yeshua instead emptied Himself of His exalted glory, and as He testified here, the “Son of Man” would be delivered over and betrayed by mortals, to be painfully murdered. The Son of Man coming to Earth was so that permanent atonement could be offered for human sins. This necessarily highlights the significance of salvation, as proponents of a high Christology believe that only God can save people from their sins, not a created being.

Mark 10:17-18; Matthew 19:16-17; Luke 18:18-19

“No One is Good Except God Alone”

“As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, ‘Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ And Yeshua said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone’” (Mark 10:17-18).

“And someone came to Him and said, ‘Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?’ And He said to him, ‘Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is *only One* who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments’” (Matthew 19:16-17).

“A ruler questioned Him, saying, ‘Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ And Yeshua said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone’” (Luke 18:18-19).

The interchange which takes place, between Yeshua the Messiah and the rich young ruler, is one which has challenged many people seeking God throughout the centuries. The requirement of the Messiah is that in order for rich people to be on the path toward the Kingdom of God, they cannot just keep the commandments of the Torah, which are intended to facilitate the proper way to walk and conduct oneself, but that the rich must give their possessions to the poor (Mark 9:19-23; Matthew 20:18-24; Luke 18:20-25). It is easy to deduce that financial wealth and great assets can be a significant deterrent for those intending to walk on a path of faith—as rich people can place their confidence in their various holdings, and not totally in the Divine. When the presumed security of wealth can be removed, then rich people can be freed to completely rely upon God to move in their lives.

As the rich young ruler approaches Yeshua, and asks Him what He is to do in order to receive eternal life, Yeshua responds in a perplexing manner, and with a statement which proponents, of a low Christology of Yeshua being a created supernatural entity, believe is reflective of such a position. The rich young ruler asks, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (Mark 10:17, TLV; also Luke 18:20). Yeshua responds, “Why are you calling