

In the NT we find how Jesus interpreted the term son of man. He uses it a great deal and it is very obvious he is referring to this passage when he does so. Because there is no other passage in the OT from which he could have derived that usage. You have this expression "son of man" used twice in the book of Daniel. The other case is in 8:17 where God sent the angel Gabriel to explain the vision to Daniel.

Gabriel came to him (v.17) and said unto me understand O son of man, for at the end of the time shall be the vision. Reading this in ch. 8 you might suggest in v. 13 of ch. 7 that "son of man" is Daniel, because he is called "Son of man," in ch. 8. But if you look at the book of Ezekiel that at least 50 times the Lord addresses Ezekiel as "son of man." There is a common usage in Biblical usage of using "son of" to mean one of a category, one of a class. So "son of man" is commonly used of an individual man. We have no reason to think that this term meant anything more than just someone who looked like a man, if it were not for the way people were led by the Holy Spirit and this verse and the evidence we get from the NT as to how Jesus interpreted it, and as to the interpretation which is contemporary of the phrase "the son of man."

Without that we could easily suggest the interpretation as some present scholars do. A professor in the University of Pennsylvania a few years ago wrote a commentary on Daniel which is perhaps the most scholarly commentary on Daniel written in this century. That is to say, he has examined a tremendous amount of evidence. He has looked at the translations in many different ancient languages. It is a very scholarly commentary, written from the liberal viewpoint that Daniel was a book written during the Maccabean period. So many of his conclusions we utterly disagree with. But he had a great mind and a tremendous amount of valuable history and valuable evidence to look to and compare when we make careful examination of various parts of Daniel.

He said, One like a son of man came in the clouds of heaven and received great authority. He says, Look on into v. 22z 18 and you read, The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom. You look at v. 22, and you read, Till the Ancient of days came and judgment was given to the saints of the most high. You read in v. 27 that judgment shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. So Prof. Montgomery says, One like a man is a figure for Israel. It is a figure for the saints, a figure for those who the writer of Daniel thought would come to possess all authority! That would be a possible interpretation of the phrase if we did not have evidence outside as to what the son of man is.

"He came with the clouds of heaven.?" What does that mean? Does that mean that he literally sat on the clouds? Does that mean as he came -- of course what Daniel saw was clouds around the man in his vision, no doubt. But as to what it symbolizes-- does it symbolize as many commentaries say: Glory and power is what is represented by clouds. Or mobility. All sorts of possible