

Offprint:

The Interface of Orality
and Writing

Speaking, Seeing, Writing
in the Shaping of New Genres

Edited by

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Mohr Siebeck 2010

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The Sovereignty of the Son of Man: Reading Mark 2¹

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Gospel is, as has been noticed before, a fascinatingly new event in the literary world. Variouslly related by scholars to existing Greco-Roman genres, it has also been characterized, as, in my opinion, it needs to be, as a very early instance of the rabbinic genre which comes to be known as *midrash*, namely, for the purposes of the present analysis, the building up of new narrative out of complicated partly decontextualized and recombined verses from the Bible. The addressee of the more than well earned honor that constitutes this volume, Prof. Antoinette Wire, has, over decades, worked on the deep connections of the Gospel's Jesus with Jewish traditions of the first century. What I wish to emphasize here is that while the narratives of the Gospels have a kind of simplicity that we associate with folk narrative, the midrashic generation of these stories is by no means naïve; they are the product of complicated relays and hermeneutic activities that underlie the narrative sequences, whether birth, passion, or anything that comes in between. I don't believe that we can determine whether these hermeneutic relays were oral or written in material form, but, nonetheless, I would assert their inscriptional character, for sure insofar as they depend on sophisticated and complex interpretative interventions in the reading of written Scripture; perhaps oral, but only, then, in the sense of the term as we find it in "Oral Torah." A case in point, Mark 2.

In her commentary on Mark, Adela Yarbro Collins writes:

It is preferable to speak of the "interpretation of Jesus" in Mark, rather than the "Christology" of Mark, because systematic, philosophical reflection on the nature of Christ had not yet begun in the movement carried on by the followers of Jesus. In composing his narrative, the author of Mark made use of traditions that already expressed an implicit interpretation of the person and activity of Jesus.¹

With all due respect (and much is, indeed, due), I will argue almost the precise opposite in this article, claiming that Christology – if not, of course, systematic

¹ This paper, written for this volume, is a study for my forthcoming *How The Jews Came to Believe That Jesus Was God*. I am grateful to Prof. Richard Hays for his critical input and aid and support.

² A. Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 44.

philosophical reflection – existed long before Jesus and that Jesus' person, activity, and speech represent an interpretation of Christology, and not, as Yarbro Collins and many others would have it, that Christology, or even the Gospel, is an interpretation of Jesus. While I understand well that Yarbro Collins is striving to avoid the anachronisms that result from reading fourth-century categories back into the Gospels, I am much more sanguine about seeing those very fourth-century categories *in nuce* in the Gospel. Another scholar who has articulated a version of the position that Jesus is somehow primary, before Christ, as it were, is Joel Marcus, who writes,

In Mark's Gospel, in other words, a commitment to the 'old, old story' is retained at the same time that story itself is transformed by being read in a new way. Mark has certainly learned much of what he knows about Jesus Christ from the scriptures. He would never have learned it, however, if he had not already known that Jesus Christ is the key to the scriptures.¹

Again while accepting much (most) of Marcus's interpretative insight, I gently dissent from the final point, suggesting that all of Jesus' self-interpretation and the interpretation in the Gospel comes out of a reading of the "old old story" that had developed prior to its appropriation by this Jew, Jesus of Nazareth: Christ existed before Jesus. Both Yarbro Collins and Marcus engage to some extent in a kind of *ex eventu* reading which partially, in my view, obscures the narrative of Jewish religious history. This narrative only becomes fully clear when the Gospel is understood as entirely a part of the old story and not apart from it. In contrast with both of the above scholars, in my view Jesus was entirely unnecessary for the formation of Mark's Christology, as he is the fulfillment, not the provocation of that Christology. Jesus, in the Gospel of Mark, is the precise fulfillment, I suggest, of well known and ancient pre-Jesus ideas about the Messiah as a divine human (which is not to deny a Markan contribution to the development of such ideas). This article, in its present form, is intended as an answer to the question of "how the 'Son of Man' (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) came to appear on Jesus' lips in Mark's Gospel, or for that matter in the tradition as a whole."² My simple answer is that the "Son of Man" was on Jesus' lips, because he was a first-century Palestinian Jew, and "Son of Man" was the name that these Jews used for their expected divine-human (Christological) redeemer.³

¹ J. Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 203.

² H. L. Chronis, "To Reveal and to Conceal: A Literary-Critical Perspective on 'the Son of Man' in Mark," *New Testament Studies* 51 (2005): 458.

³ In contrast to Paul who, in my view, occupies another corner of the Jewish traditional world in which different terminology was used, I will elaborate this point further, *Deo volente*, in another essay. To adumbrate a point that must be developed elsewhere, a fundamental error made by Lindars, for example, is to assume that Paul, the Sayings Source, and Revelation can be used as evidence one for the other, such that the absence of the "Son of Man" in one is

The key to Christology is a partial reconsideration of the way that Daniel 7:13–14 works in the Gospel and of Son of Man with respect to other messianic titles, particularly Son of God.⁴ I wish to emphasize that the hypothesis entertained here is not a radical revision of Marcus's account but rather, perhaps, a fine-tuning of it or even a taking of it to its ultimate conclusion, a conclusion that Marcus himself backs off from in the end. While there are many other Hebrew-biblical sources that make up the warp and woof of Markan Christology, as Marcus has so elegantly shown in his book, my argument will be that Daniel 7 is the keystone and crucial, dominating figure in the development of Christology.

1. *A Read Herring: "The Son of Man" as Periphrasis for "I"*

In order, however, to proceed into my own inquiry into the evidence of Mark for the "Son of Man" in early Judaism, I must first show why I do not accept the conclusion of Geza Vermes, who argued that it is just a circumlocution for "I."⁵ In a series of articles, culminating in an important essay published as "Appendix E" to the third edition of Matthew Black's *Aramaic Approach*,⁶ Vermes attempted to revive a theory that had been advanced and abandoned a century ago to the effect that "The Son of Man" is merely an ordinary Aramaic locution by which someone refers to themselves in the third person, hence "I." I think it can be taken as granted that given Vermes's exhaustive investigation, his study should be considered definitive,⁷ and, if it fails, we can consider that suggestion as rejectable.⁸ Although an entire array of scholars have already dispured Vermes's conclusion, none have, I think, shown that the interpretations of rabbinic literature adduced by him, do not stand, and that there is, therefore, no evidence whatsoever for the argument that in Aramaic, "son of man" can mean "I" (that it means a human being is, of course, not in doubt at all).⁹ I thus accordingly

prohibitive for the term being non-titular in the others: B. Lindars, *Jesus, Son of Man: A Fresh Examination of the Son of Man Sayings in the Gospels in the Light of Recent Research* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984, c1983), 15.

⁵ This latter point will be pursued in a separate paper.

⁶ G. Vermes, "Appendix E: The Use of Bar Nash/Bar Nasha in Jewish Aramaic," *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (ed. M. Black; 3rd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, Clarendon, 1967), 310–28; P. Haupt, "The Son of Man = Hic Homo = Ego," *JBL* 40 (1921).

⁷ P. Owen and D. Shepherd, "Speaking up for Qumran, Dalman and the Son of Man: Was *Bar Enshia* a Common Term for 'Man' in the Time of Jesus?" *JSNNT* 81 (2001): 84.

⁸ And it has been rejected by a host of scholars, from Fitzmyer through Jeremias to Colpe, for all of which references see A. Yarbro Collins, "The Influence of Daniel on the New Testament" in *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (ed. J. J. Collins; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 94, n. 30.

⁹ It should be noted that Norman Perrin, *A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 70, makes major use of this untenable argument to make

essentially agree with Hans Lietzmann as cited by Vermes to the effect that "His main findings are that the term is a common one, and that it is used as a kind of indefinite pronoun (פִּי אֵינִי = *jemand*; פִּי אֵינִי אֵינִי = *niemand*; פִּי אֵינִי = *Leute*). It is, he writes, 'die farbloseste und unbestimmteste Bezeichnung des menschlichen Individuums' (p. 38). He then goes on to postulate what seems to him to be the only logical corollary: as a designation פִּי אֵינִי is by nature inapplicable to any particular man, let alone to Jesus, the greatest of all men (p. 40)."¹¹ Lietzmann put the question brilliantly; his answer, on the other hand, that the Son of Man must be a Hellenistic *terminus technicus* is a non-sequitur, for even if semantically and syntactically "Son of Man" in Aramaic means indeed just a person and nothing else, pragmatically (by which I mean in the case of a particular set of syntagms), the "Son of Man" as a *citation of Daniel* could certainly have come to mean the Christ already in Hebrew/Aramaic. An example, just to make this clear, would be the following: "Rav" simply means "Rabbi," but for the majority of Orthodox Jews in the U. S., "the Rav" means one and only one Rabbi, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik OBM. Let us, then, have a look at Vermes's evidence.

In order to make his case, Vermes must demonstrate the alleged use of פִּי אֵינִי as a circumlocution meaning "I." Although he gives several examples, in every one of these, rather than seeing a circumlocution for "I," we can see quite a different idiom. I shall first discuss an example that Vermes seems to consider particularly strong.¹² In the first:

Jacob of Kefar Nibburaya gave a ruling in Tyre that fish should be ritually slaughtered. Hearing this, R. Haggai sent him this order: Come and be scourged! He replied, should פִּי אֵינִי be scourged who proclaims the word of Scripture? (*Gen. Rabba* vii 2)¹³

Vermes wishes to claim that, "theoretically, of course, *bar nashi* may be rendered here as 'one', but the context hardly suggests that at this particular juncture Jacob intends to voice a general principle. Hurt by his opponent's harsh words, he clearly seems to be referring to himself and the indirect idiom is no doubt due to the implied humiliation."¹⁴ Vermes here simply confuses the semantics and the pragmatics of the sentence. Of course, pragmatically the speaker is referring to himself, but semantically he is using a general expression. An example from English will make this clear. In the famous and brilliant lyric from *Gyps and Dolls*, Adelaide sings plaintively: "In other words, just by waiting around for that

his case that all Christological use of "The Son of Man" must be post-Easter, an argument that is, in this respect, repeated by Lindars, *Jesus, Son of Man*.

¹¹ Vermes, "The Use," 311.

¹² Vermes, "The Use," 321-2.

¹³ *Genesis Rabba* (eds. J. Theodor and H. Albeck; Jerusalem: Wahmann, 1965), 51. Vermes's translation.

¹⁴ Vermes, "The Use."

little band of gold [...] a person, could develop a cold!" Of course, pragmatically she is referring to herself; it is her own situation of which she complains, but semantically "a person" in English is an indefinite pronominal form and not a circumlocution for "I."¹⁵ The same is true for this example and, *mutatis mutandis*, all the other ones that Vermes cites. But another should be cited, because, at least, of the *mutatis mutandis*:

When R. Hiyya bar Adda died, son of the sister of Bar Kappara, R. Levi received his valuables. This was because his teacher used to say, The disciple of פִּי אֵינִי is as dear to him as his son. (*Yer Ber.* 5b)

There is not the slightest justification to see a circumlocution for "I" here either. Rabbi Hiyya has expressed a general principle that the disciple of a person is as dear to him as his son and the conclusion was drawn on the pragmatic level (in several senses) that he intended his disciple to be his heir.

Another example cited by Vermes turns out to be a counter-example:

Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohai said: "If I had been standing on Mt. Sinai at the hour that the Torah was given to Israel, I would have demanded of the Merciful One that that human being would have been created with two mouths; one to be busy with Torah and one to do with it all of his daily needs." Then he changed his mind and said: "If even with only one, the world cannot subsist because of all of the delations, if there were two all the more so!" [Palestinian Talmud *Shabbat* chapter 1, halakhah b, page 3b]

Now it is obvious here, *pace* Vermes, that the Rabbi is not referring to himself as "that man" here, for then he would be, as well, accusing himself of being an informer, which he hardly was and hardly would do.¹⁶ There can be no doubt that here, as well, we must understand "פִּי אֵינִי" here as "One," German "*Man*" and nothing else. There remains not even one example in which the term Son of Man is a periphrastic usage for "I."

In all of Vermes's examples, then, general principles are stated which are *applied* in the context of the narrative to an individual, usually the speaker.¹⁷ Vermes's argument fails totally because he does not even once observe the

¹⁵ Vermes's citation of the answer "You [...]" as confirmation of his thesis hardly needs refuting. Nathan Detroit, of course, would comfort Adelaide by saying: "Ah baby, you'll be married soon." That still doesn't make "a person" = "I" semantically.

¹⁶ This consideration also thoroughly discredits Lindars's reading according to which *bar nasha* here means "anyone [...]" who was as deeply conscious of the divine generosity as Simeon himself." Lindars, *Jesus, Son of Man*, 22. Even more sharply than with respect to the interpretation of Vermes, one would ask: Is this the class of people one would suspect of being informers to the Romans and even more so had they two mouths? I think the conclusion is inescapable that here (with or without *hader*=this), the meaning is the human being in general.

¹⁷ See examples cited Vermes, "The Use," 323-7. For similar conclusions reached by slightly different methods, see M. Casey, "Method in Our Madness, and Madness in Their Methods: Some Approaches to the Son of Man Problem in Recent Scholarship," *JSNNT* 42 (1991): 18.

difference between semantic (lexical) meaning and pragmatic meaning or between sense and reference. There is, therefore, no evidence, whatsoever for "son of man" being used in Aramaic texts as a circumlocution for "I," as Lietzmann realized.¹⁸

I conclude, therefore, that Vermes has adduced no convincing evidence that "Son of Man" was ever used as a circumlocution for "I" even in the Palestinian Aramaic of Late Antiquity; still less has he witnesses for the Aramaic of the first century. Vermes's argument thus fails to convince on lexical philological grounds, in spite of its superficial attractiveness for the interpretation of some verses within the Gospels. Given that Vermes's alleged idiomatic usage of "son of man" as periphrasis for "I" proves to be a ghost, another explanation of this genuinely weird usage must be sought. Lietzmann (and a host of others) have sought the explanation in the positing of a "Heavenly Man" or *Anthropos* myth underlying Christianity. Rejecting (as have, I think, most interpreters by now) such far-fetched and far-flung explanations, to my mind, the only plausible one that remains is that of the great Jewish theologian and scholar of the last century, Leo Baeck, who wrote: "Whenever in later works 'that Son of Man,' this Son of Man, or 'the Son of Man' is mentioned, it is the quotation from Daniel that is speaking."¹⁹ In other words, I fully accept (as I think we must) Vermes's hypothesis of an Aramaic origin (in the oral traditions that lie behind the Gospels) for the phrase, "The Son of Man," but deny his interpretation of that Aramaic

¹⁸ For another review of Vermes's evidence, arriving, however, at different conclusions, see Lindars, *Jesus, Son of Man*, 19–24. Lindars accepts only one example as fully relevant and builds his entire case on that, the example being *Shevi'it* 38d: [Rabbi Shimon] sat at the mouth of the cave [where he was hiding from the Romans] and he saw a hunter catching birds. He spread his net. He heard a voice from heaven [חַי הַקָּדוֹשׁ] say *dimius* [Dimisio], and it was freed. He said [to himself], "a bird does not perish without Heaven, so much more so a human being!" Lindars chooses to translate this as "How much less a man in my position," without any warrant other than the alleged article on *bar nasha*. Given, however, the philological state of the Palestinian Talmud, as well as the centuries later date in any case, to build an entire interpretation of the Son of Man on this one highly doubtful example, seems almost to constitute scholarly legendmaking. There is no reason to imagine that Rabbi Shimon means a man in his position as opposed to any human whatsoever. Once again, a simple generic is being used and applied by the speaker pragmatically to himself. A bird doesn't perish except by the will of Heaven, still less a human being; [so why am I hiding here? What is most important to recognize is that if this idiom is operative, for instance, at Matthew 8:20: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but *bar nasha* has nowhere to lay his head." It could only mean that foxes have holes and birds have nests but humans have nowhere to lay their heads, which is palpably false (Lindars, *Jesus, Son of Man*, 30), so despite the apparent similarity of this one single exemplum from late-ancient Palestinian Aramaic, we must resist the temptation to treat them as the same linguistic form, *pace* Lindars, *Jesus, Son of Man*, 29–31. Lindars's own solution to this problem involves pure philological fantasy, nothing more or less. In another, longer version of this argument, I will provide further argument against Lindars's position. Insofar as it depends on Vermes's flawed conclusions, it is, in any case, untenable.

¹⁹ L. Baeck, *Judaism and Christianity: Essays* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1958), 28–9.

phrase. In what follows in this necessarily brief paper, I shall try to show how the hypothesis of literary allusion to Daniel in this phrase enables stronger readings of a pair of Markan loci.

2. *The Dominion* (ἐξουσία [ου]σιν) of Jesus: Mark 2

In the rest of this paper, I will look at two closely related verses in Mark chapter 2 that, to my mind, evidence that Jesus (the character) understood it as a title for the human one to whom power had been delegated by God, derived from The One Like a Son of Man of Daniel 7 and parallel to the Son of Man of Enoch.

In Mark 2:5–10 we read the following:

5 And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk'?" 10 But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — he said to the paralytic [...].

"But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." This verse is the crux. Once we have excluded the possibility of "the Son of Man" being simply another way of saying "I," then I think it must be conceded that it is a title here.²⁰ The Son of Man has authority (obviously delegated by God) to do God's work of the forgiving of sins on earth. From where could such a claim be derived if not from Daniel 7:14, in which we read that the One Like a Son of Man has been given, "authority, glory, kingship;" indeed an "authority that is eternal that will not pass away"? The term that we conventionally translate as "authority" in its New Testament contexts, ἐξουσία, is, of course, exactly the same term which translates Aramaic ܐܘܪܝܫܐ in the Septuagint, so what Jesus is claiming for the Son of Man is exactly that which has been granted to the (One Like a) Son of Man in Daniel. Given the meaning of the Aramaic *loridge* in Daniel, "authority" strikes me as a rather weak rendering; "sovereignty" would be much better. Sovereignty would surely explain why the Son of Man has the power to remit sins on earth. According to this tradition, then, there may be no question: this Jesus claims to be the Son of Man to whom

²⁰ Indeed, even were it possible (which it is not) to entertain Vermes's suggestion on philological grounds, it would be excluded here. If Jesus is not identifying himself by a known title, then his claim to be the one (the only one) who has authority to remit sins would be unrelenting personal arrogance and indeed blasphemy. For this point, see M. Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark: A Study of the Background of the Term "Son of Man" and Its Use in St. Mark's Gospel* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967), 84.

divine authority on earth "under the heavens" (Daniel 7:27) has been delegated.²¹ In contrast to most interpreters, I would argue, moreover, that this One to whom authority has been delegated, as a divine figure, is a redeemer king, as the Daniel passage clearly states, and thus ripe for identification with the Davidic Messiah, if not always clearly so identified.²² I thus here directly disagree with Yarbrow Collins's assumption that the title "Son of Man" conceals as much as it reveals or that we cannot understand that the audience of Mark already understood the epithet.²³ I find much more compelling in this instance the statement of Joel Marcus:

This conclusion [that the "Son of Man" in the Similitudes is pre-Christian] is supported by the way in which Jesus, in the Gospels, generally treats the Son of Man as a known quantity, never bothering to explain the term, and the way in which certain of this figure's characteristics, such as his identity with the Messiah or his prerogative of judging, are taken for granted. With apologies to Voltaire, we may say that if the Enochic Son of Man had not existed, it would have been necessary to invent him to explain the Son of Man sayings in the Gospels.²⁴

I would only shift the terms of the last phrase to indicate that what this means is that the usage of the Son of Man in the Gospels joins with the evidence of such usage from the Similitudes to lead us to consider this term used in this way (and more importantly the concept of a second divinity implied by it) as the common coin — which I emphasize does not mean universal or uncontested — of Judaism already before Jesus.

This interpretation of Mark 2:10 as being a close reading of Daniel 7:14 enables us to understand the other puzzling Son of Man statement in Mark 2, namely:

23 One sabbath he was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. 24 And the Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" 25 And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: 26 how he entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and at the

²¹ cf. Hooker, *Son of Man in Mark*, 90–1 who seems to take this (in partial contradiction to her own position earlier) to be significant of a prerogative of "man" in general.

²² See too, "In claiming this divine prerogative Jesus classes himself as the Son of Man into the category of the divine, and his superhuman act of healing is the sign for this claim." So already in 1927 O. Procksch suggested that here 'the Son of Man' stands for the Son of God." S. Kim, "The 'Son of Man' as the Son of God" (WUNT 30; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), 2.

²³ Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 186. See too Hooker, *Son of Man in Mark*, 91 who also writes that Jesus' hearers, "knew nothing of any authority to forgive sins given to the Son of man (whatever they might understand Jesus to mean by that term)." Hooker completely disregards the Danielic context in her own interpretation which takes "Son of Man" here to be an allusion to Adam.

²⁴ J. Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 530. See too Kim, "The 'Son of Man'," 90.

bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" 27 And he said to them, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. 28 so the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath." ὁρε κυρίου εἶπεν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ τοῦ σαββάτου

I think that the problems of this sequence of verses are best unraveled if we take seriously its context following the preceding Son of Man verse that I have just treated. If Jesus (the "Markan" Jesus, or the Jesus of these passages) proclaims himself as the Son of Man who has ἐξουσίαν by virtue of Daniel 7:14, then it is entirely plausible that he would claim sovereignty over the Sabbath as well.

Paying attention to the Danielic allusion implicit in every citation of the Son of Man, in accordance with my hypothesis, here, it can be seen that the Markan Jesus is making precisely the same kind of claim on the basis of the authority delegated to the Son of Man in Daniel as he does in 2:10. This enables me to propose a solution to another crux: One objection could be that the Sabbath is not "under the heavens" but in heaven and thus not susceptible to the transfer of authority from the Ancient of Days to the "One Like a Son of Man." I wish to suggest that this objection is entirely answered by the statement that the Sabbath was made for the human being; consequently the Son of Man, having been given dominion in the human realm, is the Lord of the Sabbath. It is actually a necessary part of the argument that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath, for if the Sabbath is (as one might very well claim on the basis of Genesis 1) in heaven, then the claim that the Son of Man who only has sovereignty on earth can abrogate its provisions would be very weak. Given the absence of verse 27 in both synoptic parallels, moreover, it might very well be a secondary addition in the Markan tradition, precisely to answer such an objection, while Matthew and Luke carry forward an earlier Markan tradition in which the Son of Man is declared Lord of the Sabbath without the Sabbath for Man logion. I think that this explanation of the connection between verses 27 and 28 answers many interpretative conundrums that arise when 27 is read as a weak sort-of-humanistic statement.²⁵ We can now understand precisely what the entailment implied by ὁρε is. It is precisely because the Sabbath was created for the human and is therefore part of the human world that the Son of Man has sovereignty over it; it is not in heaven. In my view, this passage can only be understood if this manner, for, otherwise it leads us into interpretations, hardly plausible, that would would have Jesus claiming that any human being can abrogate the Sabbath at will or that he can abrogate the Sabbath because of his human nature and not because of his commission as ruler of the sublunar world. What may have been a traditional Jewish saying to justify breaking the Sabbath to preserve life is, in the Markan Jesus' hands, the justification for a messianic abrogation of the Sabbath. The

²⁵ Cf. R. H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004, c1993), 1:144.

comparison to David is, of course, very pointed and does suggest that the Redeemer of Daniel 7:13–14 is indeed understood as the messianic King, son of David, for just as David had ἐξουσίαν to violate the apparent provisions of the Law when he and his disciples were in need, so too, the new David, the Son of Man with respect to his disciples.²⁶

Far from being anomalous in the Son of Man tradition, therefore, I would conclude that these two verses strongly confirm the direct connection with Daniel 7:13 and represent a Jesus who knows that he is the Son of Man and precisely what this entails, as well.²⁷ Although other aspects of the messianic role of the Son of Man are not emphasized in this pericope (at least partly since they are not relevant to the context), there is nothing in them that suggests any contradiction of the overall picture of the Son of Man as Messiah. Indeed, the intimate connection between the claim of sovereignty and Daniel 7:13–14 certainly and strongly suggests that the term Son of Man is indeed a well-understood messianic title for the author and audience of Mark. I find it increasingly difficult to even understand claims such as Morina Hooker's that "there is scanty evidence to support the idea that it was a recognized messianic 'title.'"²⁸ I begin to wonder what would count as evidence.²⁹ In these verses, so early in the Gospel, we find Jesus, indeed, being proclaimed (by himself) as the Son of Man. These verses have exactly the same plausibility as authentic words of Jesus as any others in the Gospel. Or to put it into terms that I find more comfortable, they are certainly plausibly read as growing from pre-Jesus speculation on the roles and powers of the Son of Man. That Son of Man is not a heavenly *Anthropos* nor a title for the human Redeemer but a name for a second divine person whose role will be to be incarnated in a human being (however precisely that was imagined in the first century) and redeem Israel and the world.

²⁶ This obviates the need for any corporate interpretation of the Son of Man. Cf. Hooker, *Son of Man in Mark*, 99. Cf. Kim, "The 'Son of Man,'" 4.

²⁷ Cf. the scholarly tradition cited (disapprovingly) by Morina Hooker that considers these verses as late additions simply owing to the fact that they do not conform to preconceived notions about what the Son of Man means; Hooker, *Son of Man in Mark*, 81–3.

²⁸ Hooker, *Son of Man in Mark*, 112.

²⁹ Indeed, startlingly enough, on the very next page, Hooker writes: "It is, indeed, only as Messiah — i. e. as one who is leader and representative of his nation — that the one like a Son of man in Daniel can be interpreted as an individual. Thus, when Enoch, retaining the Danahic context, regards the Son of man as an individual, he concludes that he is none other than the Elect and Anointed One. Later references in the gospel suggest that Jesus, too, had [Daniel 7] in mind, and that the Son of man, if he is an individual, must therefore also be Messiah. Mark's portrait of the disciples, therefore, is entirely credible, for though they would never have replied "You are the Son of man" in response to Jesus' question, they could nevertheless, believing him to be Messiah, accept the term as his own self-designation without undue surprise." Hooker, *Son of Man in Mark*, 113. I shall be coming back to discuss this passage in the longer version of this paper.