

## **Special Note on "Son of Man" and Daniel 7:13-14**

Since these verses have given rise to a great deal of discussion, particularly in books and articles dealing with New Testament subjects, it seemed wise to postpone their fuller treatment to this special note. We shall first consider the meaning of the term "Son of Man" as used in the Gospels. We will then discuss three questions about the interpretation of Daniel 7:13-14, and will conclude with a brief survey of the ideas presented by critical New Testament scholars in recent years.

### **Why Jesus Called Himself "the Son of Man"**

It is quite generally thought that the term "Son of Man," which occurs over 80 times in the Gospels, always in words spoken by Jesus, takes its start from Daniel 7:13-14. This was my own opinion before I began to investigate the matter more carefully. Now, however, I am quite convinced that out of the more than one hundred occurrences of the term in the Old Testament, the one in Daniel 7:13, though eventually becoming of great importance, is not the starting point for the title used in the New Testament.

The statement is often made that "Son of Man" is an alternative title for the Messiah. This common approach is completely disproved by Matthew 16:13-20 where Jesus asks His disciples: "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" Among the various answers given there is no mention of "Messiah." When Peter said: "You are the Christ" (Greek for