The Son of Man presents one of the most teasing and tantalizing problems in New Testament studies. It is a phrase which belongs almost exclusively to the sayings of Jesus. There can be no doubt that he did use it from time to time in order to refer to himself, even if not all Son of Man sayings are authentic. It is an unusual form of self-reference, and the way in which it is used by Jesus often suggests that it is something more. In fact some, at least, of the Son of Man sayings imply that Jesus identified himself with the visionary figure of ‘one like a son of man’ in Daniel 7:13. Consequently the phrase has exceptional importance for the problem of christology. It is one of the few items of evidence which we have for the way in which Jesus understood himself. So it is not at all surprising that it has been at the centre of scholarly debate ever since the rise of biblical criticism. The spate of books and articles on the subject shows no sign of diminishing.

For the greater part of this century the chief point at issue in the debate has been the question of the proper implications of this phrase, which is so unusual in the Greek. It has been generally accepted that it is to be regarded as a title, comparable to other titles which are applied to Jesus in the New Testament, such as Christ, Lord, Son of God and Saviour. These certainly were titles used in religious discourse in Judaism in the time of Jesus, and (apart from Christ=Messiah, of course) in the contemporary Hellenistic world. Application of them to Jesus thus constitutes a christological claim, that Jesus is to be identified with the divine, or divinely chosen, personality which in different ways they represent. If the same is true of the Son of Man, then it must be assumed that the phrase existed as a title for such a personality, either in Judaism or in the Hellenistic world, or in both. There was,
indeed, apparently good evidence for this assumption. On the Jewish side it was natural to point to Daniel 7: 13 f., and the use which is made of this passage in the Similitudes of Enoch (I Enoch xxxvii–lxxi) and in II Esdras 13. But because the Aramaic phrase bar *nāshāʾ, which lies behind the Greek, is normally the generic word for 'man' (Hebrew 'ādām), it was possible to enlarge the range of reference so as to bring in Paul's notion of Christ as the new Adam, and this was claimed to be dependent upon Jewish speculations with regard to Adam. The use of Hebrew ben ʿādām in Ezekiel and the Psalms has also constantly entered into the discussion. On the other side, the world of thought outside Judaism, it was natural to turn to the figure of Gayomart in Zoroastrian religion, the primal man in whom all the souls of men consist. Far-fetched as this connection may seem, the climate of opinion at this time, dominated by the history-of-religions school, was favourably disposed to accept it.

It will be seen that one complicating factor in this array of supporting evidence, so very briefly indicated above, is the slide from 'Son of Man' to simple 'man' or 'Adam', which nevertheless is still claimed to be equivalent to the same title in certain contexts. There has thus always been a nagging doubt whether it is legitimate to claim that a title lies behind the Greek phrase at all. As early as 1896 H. Lietzmann declared that the underlying Aramaic expression could not be a title, and suggested that the Greek phrase arose later in the Hellenistic church. A warning of another kind came from J. Y. Campbell in 1947, who did not deny the close connection between the Greek ho huios tou anthropou and the Aramaic bar *nāshāʾ, but wished to interpret the latter in the light of another Aramaic expression, ḥāḥūʾ gabrāʾ (= 'that man'), which may be used idiomatically as a way of referring to oneself. Unfortunately he was unable to prove that the two expressions mean the same thing, and his observation that classical Greek has a colloquial expression which is very similarly


used (i.e. *hode anēr*) only served to underline the awkward fact that the actual Greek phrase *ho huios tou anthrōpou* does not represent such an idea at all. Then in 1965 G. Vermes delivered a lecture at the Third International Congress of New Testament Studies in Oxford, which was printed as an appendix to the third edition of Matthew Black’s *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford, 1967).\(^1\) Here he asserted that the Aramaic *bar nāshā* cannot be proved to have existed as a title. At the same time he pointed out that it is capable of being used as an idiomatic way of referring to oneself, especially when direct self-reference is felt to be undesirable out of awe, reserve, or humility. His work has been criticized by various scholars and in particular by J. Jeremias on the grounds that (like Campbell) he does not discriminate sufficiently between *bar nāshā* and the similar idiomatic usage of *hāhū' gabrā*\(^2\). But such criticism has had the effect of strengthening his basic contention that *bar nāshā* may be used as a self-reference, which Campbell was not able to prove. The point is that *bar nāshā* is generic, and so denotes any man; in the relevant passages it can be deduced from the context that the speaker, apparently using a general or even proverbial expression, intends to refer to himself. On the other hand *hāhū' gabrā* means *this* man; it is thus inappropriate in general or proverbial sentences, and indeed refers specifically to the speaker alone.

The work of Vermes has had a profound impact upon subsequent study of the Son of Man problem. It has driven scholars to recognize that the strange Greek phrase, so frequent in the tradition of the sayings of Jesus, and so rare outside it, cannot be explained in terms of a distinct personality with which either a Jewish or a Greek audience might be familiar. New ways of accounting for the Gospel sayings have to be discovered.

Moreover, as not uncommonly happens in the history of scholarship, the work of Vermes was supplemented by another scholar almost at the same time, apparently working independently. This was R. Leivestad, who provided far fuller proof of the fact that the Son of Man is unknown as a title in the world

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\(^1\) See also G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (1973), pp. 160–91.

of the New Testament. He concluded from the evidence of the Gospel sayings themselves that Jesus used the expression as a designation of humility, in which he identified himself with humanity, so often referred to in Jewish diction as 'the sons of men'.

It is clear at once that conclusions such as these are bound to have a considerable effect upon New Testament christology. Especially at its most crucial point, that of the claims which Jesus may have made concerning himself, the foundation of christology is threatened. The sayings of Jesus preserved in the synoptic Gospels only very rarely show Jesus as making a personal claim concerning his position in relation to God. Take away the Son of Man, and there is almost nothing left. But this is precisely the effect of these studies. A fresh assessment of the whole problem is called for, and from it may emerge a new look on the Son of Man.

Much has been written on the question in the fifteen years since Vermes' lecture. But the recent publication of the dissertation of Maurice Casey on the subject may perhaps serve to put this new look into perspective. As its full title indicates, the book is mainly concerned with the effect of the vision in Daniel 7 upon Jewish and Christian thought. The Son of Man in the Gospels is necessarily treated more briefly than the author's claim to give 'a complete solution to the Son of Man problem' (p. 3) requires. There is a sense in which the 'complete solution' really comes in


3 Maurice Casey, Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7, 1979.
as an afterthought. Having proved to his satisfaction that Daniel 7 exerted very much less influence upon primitive Christian thought than is commonly supposed, Casey decides that people will never believe this unless they can be shown that the Gospel picture of the Son of Man derives mainly from elsewhere. This is not to deny, of course, that a number of Son of Man sayings show direct dependence on Daniel 7:13. But Casey's point, in agreement with Vermes, is that this is not the starting-point for the Gospel sayings. That is to be found in the generic use of *bar *nāšā', as explained above (Casey agrees with Jeremias in rejecting evidence derived from rabbinic sayings which use hāhū' *gabrā*). He thus suggests that a 'developmental history' of the Gospel sayings can be attempted. This begins with authentic sayings, in which the Aramaic idiom can be perceived. Only after the sayings tradition has been translated into Greek is the position reached when further sayings showing the influence of Daniel 7:13 (none of them authentic) can enter the tradition. In these sayings Jesus has changed from being one among the sons of men to being the heavenly Lord at the right hand of God, whose return at the judgement is expected imminently.

Casey's work is open to criticism in a number of ways. Old Testament scholars in particular are likely to be dissatisfied with his cavalier treatment of the complex mythological background to the vision of Daniel 7. At the other end of the scale his attempts to reconstruct the Aramaic originals of those Son of Man sayings in the Gospels which he believes to be genuine are often unconvincing. I shall have more to say about these sayings below. But the book is to be welcomed, because it does give the right direction towards solving the Son of Man problem. This means that the more fundamental question of the place of the Son of Man concept in primitive christology can at last be properly assessed.

The most important result of this recent work on the Son of Man, foreshadowed by Lietzmann seventy years earlier, is that
the Aramaic *bar nāshā*, as used by Jesus, cannot have been a title which would have been familiar to his audience. Jesus used it as an oblique way of referring to himself. He spoke apparently generically, so that his words might apply to any man, but he intended the application to himself to be taken to heart. But there was no suggestion of identifying himself with a figure of apocalyptic expectation. The Aramaic phrase by itself is incapable of recalling the ‘one like a son of man’ of Daniel 7: 13. This is not obvious to us, because the phrase ‘son of man’ is most unusual in English, and we naturally bracket the various cases where it occurs together, and attempt to interpret them in relation to each other. The translation of the Aramaic into Greek has had a similar effect. Casey argues that the Greek translation, ho huios tou anthrōpou, is simply a literal translation of *bar nāshā*, and not intended to convey anything more. Just as the Septuagint always translates the Hebrew ben ʿādām by huios anthrōpou, so the same convention is used for this feature of the sayings of Jesus. This does not account for the definite articles, however, in the New Testament form of the phrase, which obscure the essentially general reference of the Aramaic idiom. Casey explains this by pointing to the difficulty of conveying the ambiguity of this idiom in Greek. For, though Jesus speaks of any man, he certainly also means himself. Hence the articles in Greek, particularizing the application, are intended to retain Jesus’ self-reference. This is done at the expense of losing the generic meaning. So the Greek form of the sayings makes Jesus refer to himself as the particular man. The link with the man-like figure of Daniel 7: 13, described as hōs huios anthrōpou in the Greek versions, then becomes inevitable.

In a previous paper I have myself put forward a similar view, except that I suggested that the Greek translation was deliberately adopted in order to identify Jesus with the Danielic Son of Man. This was to bring into the sayings tradition a definite messianic claim, which is conspicuously lacking otherwise. In

1The suggestion that the underlying Aramaic was a phrase similar to the Syriac *bēreh dšnāšā* (Moule, *cit.*) is not convincing.

favour of this view it may be urged that there is no certainty that Aramaic bar *nāshā' was always translated in this way. There are several passages in the Gospels where simple anthrōpos is used, which may represent underlying bar *nāshā'. Casey wishes to avoid the conclusion that Jesus had already been identified with the Danielic figure as early in the history of primitive Christianity as the Greek translation of the sayings tradition. This appears to me to be unnecessary, because Jesus was certainly regarded as the exalted Messiah from the day of resurrection onwards, the current Jewish interpretation of Daniel 7: 13 f. in terms of the Messiah was bound to draw this text into the range of christological expression sooner or later.

However this question is decided, it is clear that a distinction must be made between the meaning of the Son of Man sayings in Greek and the meaning which they had in their original Aramaic form, in so far as such a form existed at all. To the evangelists, writing in Greek, ho huios tou anthrōpou was a self-designation used by Jesus, and it usually carried with it messianic significance. Consequently those sayings which are probably not based on Aramaic originals are those which most obviously invite messianic interpretation. Thus, in looking afresh at the Gospel sayings, it is permissible to attempt to read them in two ways. The first is the Aramaic way, in which 'a man' or 'any man' will replace the familiar phrase 'the son of man'. The second is the evangelists' way, in which the simplest procedure is to substitute for it 'the Messiah'. For example, there are the two well-known Q sayings, in which the generic use of bar *nāshā' has long been recognized. The first (Matt. 8: 20 = Luke 9: 58), read in the Aramaic way, goes like this: 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but a man has nowhere to lay his head.' Jesus is making a severe demand to a prospective disciple, and he does so gently, by the irony of this proverbial sentence. His generic 'man' refers to himself, but includes others (his disciples) by implication. The

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2 Preserved also in Gospel of Thomas, logion 86—the only occurrence of the Son of Man in this work.
evangelists' understanding of it would end 'the Messiah has nowhere to lay his head'. As this is not true of his future glory, the irony remains, but the reference is now exclusively to Jesus himself.

The second Q saying is Matthew 11: 19=Luke 7: 34, which must be quoted with the preceding verse: 'John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon"; a man has come eating and drinking, and they say, "Behold, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!" ' In this case a better way of representing the Aramaic idiom might be, 'someone else has come eating and drinking ...', i.e. any person who does similar evangelistic work to John the Baptist, but carefully avoids John's rigorous asceticism which has been attributed to demon-possession by his opponents. Here the irony of Jesus is aimed at telling his hearers that both John and he himself could rightly claim divine inspiration for their teaching, and the challenge of it cannot be evaded by resorting to such criticisms. As before, the Aramaic idiom is lost when it is put into Greek, but this has no effect on the meaning of the saying, except that it makes it refer to Jesus exclusively.

These two sayings can be taken as the model for those which can claim to be authentic. Here we have the bar *nāshā' idiom used correctly and effectively. The value of these sayings for christology lies in the iron which is characteristic of this way of speaking. For the implied self-reference on Jesus' part certainly has christological consequences in the second case at least. Jesus may not openly claim to be the Messiah, but he refuses to allow any denial of his commission from God.

This small beginning can be enlarged with three further sayings from the Q tradition. The first of these is Matthew 2: 32=Luke 12: 10: 'Whoever says a word against a man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.' This saying is important for two reasons. In the first place, it is a clear case where the underlying Aramaic had the generic bar *nāshā', and the

1Greek: the Son of Man. The saying is reproduced in Thomas 44, but here the Son of Man is simply 'the Son', and there are further secondary alterations.
apparently titular translation of it is quite obviously a mistake. Secondly, there is an independent version of the saying preserved in Mark 3: 28 f. which does not include the Son of Man at all: ‘All sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin.’ The Q form, however, can claim originality on account of its rhythm and balance. Moreover, a self-reference on Jesus’ part is not excluded, because it belongs to the context of abuse directed against him personally. As a man, he does not object to this abuse; but the denial that the Holy Spirit is at work in him is an offence against God himself, and that is quite a different matter. So here again there is an irony which carries with it a hint of a christological claim.

Next we can consider Luke 11: 30, where Jesus says: ‘As Jonah became a sign to the men of Nineveh, so will a man be to this generation.’ Matthew’s version of the saying is generally recognized to be overlaid with further interpretative elements, which cannot be considered within the scope of this paper. But Luke’s version makes excellent sense in the context of the Pharisees’ demand that Jesus should provide a sign, whether that be a sign of the divine truth of his proclamation of the kingdom or a sign of his personal qualifications to be a spokesman for God. Just as the prophet Jonah was a sign to the inhabitants of Nineveh, so there is a man who is a sign to the present generation. Jesus’ own preaching should be accepted as sufficient, without requiring a further sign. Thus we do not here have an almost proverbial saying, as in the last case, but an allusion to ‘someone else’, who can only be identified with Jesus himself. This is similar to the saying about John the Baptist.

Finally there is the Q saying of Matthew 10: 32 f. = Luke 12: 8 f., which has an independent version in Mark 8: 38. The relations

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2 Luke 11: 32. The future ‘will be’ in verse 30 can be accepted as a logical future (cf. verse 29), but the evangelist no doubt thought of the future glory of the messianic Son of Man. For the interpretation of the saying given here, cf. T. W. Manson, The Sayings of Jesus (1949), p. 90.
between the forms of this saying are complex. As I have dealt
with them elsewhere, I will confine myself to Luke’s form, which
can be considered fairly close to the original: ‘Everyone who
acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also ack-
nowledge before the angels of God; but he who denies me
before men will be denied before the angels of God.’ As usual,
we must read ‘a man will also acknowledge . . .’. The suggestion
that Jesus here means someone different from himself is a false
track. But he speaks of ‘someone’, not specifying who it is,
because the point of what he is saying requires it. It is an ironical
way of saying that the way in which people respond to him now
will be decisive at the coming judgment, because, of course,
his message comes from God. He will be there at the judgement
too, and will testify to their response.

Although it is not possible to go further into this very interest-
ing and important saying, one further thing must be said. It
provides a kind of halfway house between the generic use of the
Son of Man, which is the authentic feature of Jesus’ style, and the
apocalyptic use of the Son of Man in the sayings in which Jesus
is undeniably identified with the Danielic figure. From this point
of view, the identification can be seen to be a natural develop-
ment, which was really inevitable in view of the confession of
him as the risen and exalted Lord.

III

The other instances of the Son of Man in Q all belong to con-
texts in which the identification with the Danielic figure is taken
for granted. Before coming back to these, we may turn our
attention to the use of the Son of Man in connection with the
passion of Jesus, which is a special feature of Mark. Apart from
Mark 2: 10 (the authority to forgive sins), which is to be accepted
as a good example of the generic use which has just been de-
scribed, and Mark 2: 28 (the lord of the sabbath), which seems to be

1Cf. p. 442, n. 2.
2This view is specially associated with Bultmann, cf. R. Bultmann, Theology
a pre-Marcan addition to its context, and three sayings relating to the parousia (Mark 8: 38; 13: 26; 14: 62), all the rest of the Son of Man sayings in Mark occur in contexts relating to the death of Christ. This applies not only to the three predictions (Mark 8: 31; 9: 31; 10: 33 f.) and to editorial passages based on them (Mark 9: 9, 12), but also to the unique saying of Mark 10: 45 and to the references to the betrayal of Jesus in Mark 14: 21, 21, 41. In all these cases the generic use of bar ‘nāshā’ is possible, except for the obviously secondary Mark 9: 9. Jesus says that ‘a man suffers’ or ‘a man is betrayed’, and there is no need to read more into his use of the phrase. On the other hand Jesus’ presentiment of his approaching death is not something to dismiss from the point of view of the foundations of christology. From Mark’s point of view it is profoundly significant. The repeated references to the passion from Caesarea Philippi onwards have kerygmatic importance. Jesus is the Messiah, but only as the Messiah who must suffer and be killed before he rises and is glorified. In its insistence on this point the Gospel of Mark is strikingly similar to the Fourth Gospel. It is no accident that John also builds upon the Son of Man sayings in connection with the passion (John 3: 14; 8: 28; 12: 23, 34; 13: 31).

However, it is precisely this christological importance of the theme that casts doubt upon the Marcan sayings. As has been generally recognized, the three passion predictions, all of which include mention of the resurrection after three days, have close connections with Mark’s own form of the passion narrative which follows, anticipating precise details of it. It is inevitable that their authenticity should be called in question. Thus, although this class of sayings is acceptable from the point of view of the new look on the Son of Man, we cannot simply turn them back into Aramaic, and claim that we have got the ipsissima verba. Casey’s

1 Or an addition by Mark himself, taking up the messianic implications of 2: 10. Both kai elegen autois (2: 27) and hōste (2: 28) are characteristic of Mark’s editing. Most commentators hold that v. 28 is a Christian comment on v. 27, which was originally an isolated saying and has many rabbinic parallels.

2 Mark 9: 9–13 is best regarded as an editorial composition by Mark himself, relating the traditions just used to his theology, cf. Mark 8: 14–21 (so Dibelius, Bultmann, R. H. Lightfoot, Nineham). Verses 9 and 12 are clearly dependent on the first prediction, 8: 31.
attempt to reconstruct a form which might lie behind all three predictions does not succeed in overcoming the difficulties of the task. He removes the references to the passion narratives, but retains the resurrection as an expression of vindication: 'A man will die, but he will rise again at three days' (p. 232). This is a general statement, applying to any man who sees his work threatened by death. He will not lose his reward, because he will be vindicated in the resurrection. A fortiori the same applies to Jesus.

Seen in this way, Casey's reconstruction appears to provide a splendid example of the idiom with bar 'nāshā'. But it is difficult to accept for two reasons. Firstly, the proposed 'will die' (y*mūth) does not correspond with any of the passion predictions, which have several verbs, including 'to be killed' (apoktanthēnai), but not the usual Greek word for 'die' (apotēnēskein). Something nearer to the actual text is required. Secondly, the reference to the resurrection as vindication may be considered possible, but in a universally applicable statement it would have to refer to the general resurrection, so that the period of three days still requires explanation. The suspicion that this feature is dependent upon the primitive confession of faith, as reflected in I Corinthians 15: 4, is difficult to remove.

This last observation points the way to what I believe is the best solution to the problem of the passion predictions. They not only include precise details which belong to Mark's own passion narrative, but also depend upon the early confessions of faith, which have their own very interesting tradition-history. This cannot be by-passed in the attempt to reach back to the ways in which Jesus himself spoke of his death.

The Greek verb apotēnēskein, which is not used in any of the Son of Man sayings, occurs in the important confessional statement of I Corinthians 15: 3: 'Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures.' Paul uses the same verb with reference to Jesus fairly frequently, but otherwise it is not much used in references to the passion in the New Testament.1

The first passion prediction, Mark 8: 31 (and 9: 12 in dependence on it), has 'the Son of Man will suffer many things' (polla pathein).

1 Cf. John 11: 51; 12: 33; 18: 32; 19: 7; Rom. 5: 6 ff.; 6: 10; 8: 34; 14: 9, 15; I Cor. 8: 11; II Cor, 5: 15; Gal. 2: 21; I Thess. 4: 14; 5: 10; I Pet. 3: 18.
This links up with the use of *paschein* to denote the death of Jesus, which is a special feature of Luke—Acts, Hebrews and 1 Peter. But as it is co-ordinated with verbs denoting rejection (Mark 8: 31: *apodokimasthēnai*; varied to *exoudenethē* in 9: 12), the whole phrase is best explained as a reminiscence of the passion prophecy, Isaiah 53: 3: 'He was despised and rejected by men', etc., which is of course the scripture chiefly alluded to in the confession of 1 Corinthians 15: 3. An original Son of Man saying expressed in this form is perfectly possible in theory, but, as will be seen, our next possibility has much more to commend it.

Nearly all the other passion sayings have the verb *paradothenai*, 'to be delivered up', and it makes no difference whether this refers to handing over Jesus by the chief priests to Pilate, or betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot. This verb occurs in Mark 9: 31; 10: 33; 14: 21, 41, and is supported by Paul in Romans 4: 25; 8: 32; 1 Corinthians 11: 23; Galatians 2: 20; cf. also Ephesians 5: 2, 25. Moreover the active form 'to give' (*dounai*) one's life in Mark 10: 45 is to be counted with these, because the corresponding Aramaic verb *mēsar* combines all these meanings—to hand over, to betray, to give one's life. This verb also brings us back to the passion prophecy of Isaiah 53, where the Septuagint uses *paradidonai* three times (twice passive) and the Targum uses *mēsar* also three times, though not quite at the same points. Although the Targum has been worked over to remove the implication that the Messiah suffers, it is not difficult to perceive its earlier form by omitting interpretative additions. When Paul says in Romans 4: 25 that Jesus 'was delivered up for our transgressions' (*baredothi! dia ta paraptēmta hēmōn*), his words exactly correspond with words applied to the destruction of the temple in the Targum of Isaiah 53: 5 ('ithmēsar ba'awāyāthanā'), where the Hebrew has 'he was bruised (*mēdukā*)' for our iniquities', referring to the Suffering Servant.

Now it seems to me that the connection with Isaiah 53 is not a decisive issue. Jesus may have expressed himself in words inspired by this prophecy, or it may be that the first Christians perceived a connection between Jesus' words and the prophecy and built their confession upon it. The main point is that we have

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two forms of Son of Man saying, in which the verb *mēsar* seems to have been used, one passive and the other active. Both of them are reflected in the use of *mēsar*, as found in the Targum of Isaiah 53.

We have already considered the passive form, which occurs both in the sense of handing over (9: 31; cf. 10: 33, *paradōsousin auton*) and in the sense of betrayal (10: 33 *paradothēsetai*; 14: 21, 41). This double, indeed overlapping, usage goes beyond the implications of the confession of faith, which does not include the theme of the betrayal. The idea that ‘a man will be delivered up’ is thus sufficiently widespread to suggest a debt to an authentic saying of Jesus along these lines. If I refuse to attempt to reconstruct the completion of the sentence, it is because the ramifications brought about by the confession of faith, allusions to various verses of Isaiah 53, and the development of the Judas legend, not to mention Mark’s wish to anticipate his own narrative of the passion, render it impossible to settle for one original form. But by the same token the real possibility that Jesus was remembered to have said something solemn and impressive along these lines is surely strengthened by the fecundity of the tradition. And the unvarying application of this formula to his presentiment of betrayal and death gives a sufficient guide to his meaning. I may just remark that the sense is eased if we may be allowed to postulate deliberate allusion to the passion prophecy on the part of Jesus. For to say ‘a man will be delivered up’ (*ithmēsar bar *nāshā*) in words that recall this scripture is to suggest that its fulfilment in some sense may now be expected. Jesus leaves it to the disciples to ponder the obvious implication that its fulfilment will be in himself.

Before we turn to the active form, we may take a brief glimpse at another Son of Man saying, which is closely connected with this in form and meaning, but does not actually make use of the verb *paradidonai*. This is in the Judas material, Mark 14: 21a, where Jesus says, ‘The Son of Man goes (*hupagei*) as it is written of him.’ This is accepted by Casey as having an authentic basis, and indeed makes good sense in the generic form: ‘A man goes according to his destiny,’ i.e. the predetermined plan of God cannot be evaded. The ironical use of ‘go’ to signify death is
reflected elsewhere in the Gospel traditions, and this strengthens the claim to authenticity, cf. Luke 13: 33 (poreuesthai) and John 7: 33, 35, 35; 8: 14, 14, 21, 21, 22; 13: 3, 33, 36, 36, etc. (using both hupagein and poreuesthai). This saying thus supports the contention that the passive form of the passion prediction carried with it the idea of fulfilment of scripture.

Finally, the active form occurs once only in Mark in the famous words of 10: 45: 'For the Son of Man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.' Comparison with the independent, but parallel, tradition of Luke 22: 24–7, which ends 'But I am among you as one who serves', suggests that Mark has conflated the ending of the source with an originally separate saying, 'The Son of Man will give his life as a ransom for many.' It is very frequently asserted that this saying is modelled on Isaiah 53: 10, where the text is far from certain, but may be translated very literally, 'If you make his life a trespass offering.' The final words 'for many' are then taken to be derived from verse 12.1 This is disputed by Barrett and others on the grounds that Greek lutron (ransom) does not correspond with Hebrew 'āšām (trespass-offering), and so the connection with Isaiah 53 is denied.2 However this word must not be allowed to bear the whole weight of the argument. It can, indeed, be left out of the sentence without affecting the basic sense: 'a man will give his life for many.' Let us explore this form on the assumption that lutron is a later embellishment of the saying. At once we find a much better connection with Isaiah 53 on the one hand, and a range of connections with other New Testament passages on the other. Thus the Targum of Isaiah 53: 12 reads: 'Because he delivered his soul unto death (ḥālāph dimsar ūmōthā' naph-shēh) . . . and he shall make intercession for many transgressions (kal hōbēn saggi'īn). In the New Testament we may compare Galatians 2: 20: 'The Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me', and the similar expressions in Ephesians 5: 2, 25. In these three places the verb used is paradidonai, instead of the simple

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didonai as in Mark. Here again the saying has been taken up in the Fourth Gospel, but this time using tithenai. The Good Shepherd ‘lays down his life for the sheep’ (John 10: 11), and the same expression is used in John 10: 15, 17; 13: 37, 38; 15: 13; I John 3: 16, 16. All three verbs go back to Aramaic msar. Thus Mark 10: 45 is not unique, apart from the very natural interpretative addition of lutron (cf. Rom. 3: 24);1 and of course Mark’s ‘for many’ has a parallel in his version of the eucharistic words (Mark 14: 24, cf. I Cor. 11: 24, ‘for you’).

The result of this investigation is that it seems that at least three authentic Son of Man sayings can be detected in connection with the passion: ‘A man will be delivered up . . .’, ‘a man goes according to his destiny (as it is written of him)’, and ‘a man gives his life for many’. Actually, this last one need not be a forecast of death as such, for the Aramaic msar naphshā’ can mean to risk one’s life (cf. Paul’s commendation of Prisca and Aquila in Rom. 16: 4). Moreover the phrase is too common to necessitate connection with Isaiah 53: 12, so that once again the question whether Jesus was deliberately referring to it can be left open. The important thing is that the new look on the Son of Man draws attention to the serious, and indeed sacrificial, way in which Jesus looked upon the risk to his life which fidelity to his vocation entailed.

IV

Before we pass on to consider very much more briefly the remainder of the Son of Man sayings, it is desirable to pause for a moment to note the way in which the small selection of Son of Man sayings which we have considered admiringly displays both the quality of the authentic teaching of Jesus and the beginnings of the process of post-resurrection faith. Jesus’ use of the generic bar nāšā’ with reference to himself presents a very splendid example of his characteristic irony. It is a feature which is sufficiently well attested to be regarded as a special mark of his style. We have seen it employed in connection with

1Jeremias, op. cit., claims that the form in Mark with lutron has been preserved independently in I Tim. 2: 6, where the author ‘has given Mark’s Semitic wording a more pronounced Greek flavour in every word’: ho dous heauton antilutron huper pantōn.
his defence of the divine origin of his message against his opponents, in connection with his personal claim to be God's spokesman, and in connection with his presentiment of death. In the last case we found three types of Son of Man saying, which indicated how far the danger to his life occupied his thoughts. One of them, at least, included the idea of offering his life as a sacrifice for the sake of his mission to God's people.

The point which must now concern us is that we discovered a complex interaction between this last group of passion sayings and the beginnings of the formulation of Christian faith. The interpretation of the death of Jesus in the light of the resurrection carried over the hints which Jesus had himself given in these sayings. In observing this process we have gained a glimpse into the way in which 'the proclaimer became the proclaimed'\(^1\) in the earliest days of Christianity. This earliest proclamation of the death of Jesus as a sacrifice and his resurrection on the third day is preserved in I Corinthians 15: 3 f. At this stage there was no attention to the self-designation Son of Man as such. It was the sacrificial interpretation of his death that mattered.\(^2\)

The next stage belongs to the 'developmental history' (Casey), which takes us to the work of the individual evangelists. The process of putting the sayings tradition into Greek, for the benefit of the converts from the Hellenistic Jewish community in Jerusalem, produced the Greek expression ho huios tou anthropou. From this point onwards Son of Man sayings appear in the tradition which cannot be turned back into Aramaic in such a way as to preserve the essential feature of the generic usage of bar 'náshā'. Here the expression is being used as a title. Seeing that the examples of this usage actually include quotations of Daniel 7: 13, it is altogether probable that it is derived from this text. As the crucified and risen Messiah, Jesus is in any case thought of as the exalted Lord in heaven, ready for the inauguration of the everlasting Kingdom. The vivid expectation of the church can be seen in the pre-Pauline description of the eucharist (I Corinthians 11: 26): 'For as often as you eat this bread and

\(^1\)R. Bultmann, op. cit. p. 33.
drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till he come. It is only to be expected that at some point in this very creative period of Christian thought this idea should be expressed in terms of Daniel 7: 13. There is a parallel, but entirely independent, procedure in Jewish messianic thought in II Esdras 13: 32.

Our argument requires, however, that all the Son of Man sayings which refer to the future coming, or parousia, of Jesus should be regarded as inauthentic, though they can be accepted as perfectly natural and legitimate extensions of the Easter proclamation. The way for this development had been prepared by the eschatological notion of the coming of the Lord, which referred properly to God himself (e.g. Zechariah 14: 5), but was applied to the exalted Jesus, and also by the implications of the 'halfway house' saying mentioned above, in which Jesus referred to the witness of his words at the future judgment (p. 446). What we have here is not so much the creation of sayings as adaptations. The process can be seen in the Q material at Matthew 24: 43 f. = Luke 12: 39 f., which ends with these words: 'For the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect.' This corresponds with an independent version of the same material preserved in Mark 13: 35: 'You do not know when the master of the house will come.' In Mark the words are a parable originally referring to the coming of God. In Q they have been adapted to refer directly to the parousia of Jesus. Similarly there is a short collection of sayings in Q which speaks of the day, or days, of the Son of man (Luke 17: 22, 24, 26, 30). This idea has been compared to the rabbinic concept of the 'days of the Messiah' by commentators, but should rather be taken as an adaptation of the Old Testament idea of the 'day of the Lord', which is applied to Jesus in I Thessalonians 5: 2; I Corinthians 1: 8; 5: 5; II Corinthians 1: 14, etc.

The same tendency can be observed in Mark 8: 38. This is the Marcan version of our 'half-way house' saying, and it is particularly interesting that it has been expanded with details which

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\(^1\)Cf. the marana tha invocation, I Cor. 16: 22; Didache 10: 6. It has been supposed by some scholars that this invocation is based on Daniel 7: 13, but this is denied by Casey (p. 162, on I Cor. 11: 26).
even Casey allows to be a literary allusion to Daniel 7: 13: ‘For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.’ It is thus not surprising that the only two other Son of Man sayings in Mark which we have not so far considered are both direct quotations of Daniel 7: 13. In the Little Apocalypse the climax comes in Mark 13: 26: ‘And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.’ In the trial of Jesus before the high priest there is a corresponding climax, when Jesus replies (Mark 14: 62): ‘I am; and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’ In this case the quotation is conflated with another very important text of the primitive church’s christology, Psalm 110: 1.

In drawing attention to these texts, I have emphasized the word climax. A full study of Mark’s theology would show their very great significance for Mark’s christology. But the same was true of the passion predictions, where we observed Mark’s tendency to repeat his material. Mark does not compose Son of Man sayings indiscriminately, but tries to keep within the limits set by his sources. He repeats the passion predictions editorially, as we observed above. In these two parousia sayings he simply provides the scripture (i.e. Daniel 7: 13) which from his point of view belongs to the Son of Man title.

What about Matthew, Luke and John? Do they make any further contribution to the sayings which can be considered authentic? What are the guiding principles in their employment of the Son of Man title?

Matthew is the most tidy and highly organized of the four evangelists. This applies not only to his arrangement of material, but also to his theological ideas. For him there is no messianic secret. Jesus’ identity as the Son of David is clear from the start.¹ The Son of Man is a title which refers to him in his position at the parousia. Matthew is fully conscious of the connection with Daniel 7: 13. This does not lead him to alter the sayings which he

has taken over from Mark and Q in most cases.¹ But whenever he adds a reference to the Son of Man it is in connection with the Parousia. This is absolutely clear in the material which is peculiar to Matthew, i.e. the interpretation of the parable of the tares (13: 37, 41), and the introduction to the parable of the great assize (25: 31).

Where, however, there are parallels with Mark or Luke some interesting facts emerge. (a) By inserting ‘from now on’ into the answer of Jesus to the high priest (Matt. 26: 64=Mark 14: 62) Matthew is able to suggest a distinction between the heavenly session, which immediately follows the crucifixion, and the parousia which is still awaited.² (b) He uses existing Son of Man sayings editorially for the sake of clarification in two places. At 26: 2 he inserts a cross-reference to the passion predictions in connection with the plot of the chief priests to put Jesus to death. In 24: 30a, where he is reproducing Mark’s Little Apocalypse, he introduces a reference to ‘the sign of the Son of Man’ just before his embellished version of the quotation from Daniel 7: 13. The best explanation of this mysterious phrase is the very simple one, that he wishes to announce to the reader that the coming of the Son of Man which he is just about to describe is the answer to the question asked by the disciples in verse 3, ‘What is the sign of your coming (parousia)?’³

¹Matthew really thinks of the Son of Man as an exclusive self-reference on the part of Jesus, comparable to Aramaic hâhû‘ gabrâ‘. This is indicated by 16: 13, where Matthew substitutes the expression for the first person. The context shows that the disciples are not expected to deduce the identity of Jesus from this title alone. Thus Matthew does not regard the Son of Man as a technical term.

²This interpretation is supported by Matt. 23: 39; 26: 29. In both these passages Matthew has added ap’arti to the source, as in 26: 64. For the last two aparti (= certainly) was suggested by A. Fridrichsen, but this is impossible for the first passage, which must be taken as the best evidence for Matthew’s intentions.

³In spite of T. F. Glasson’s ‘brilliant observation’ (Jeremias) that the ‘sign’ (semeion=a standard or banner) and the trumpet (verse 31) belong together in prophecy to denote the rallying of the tribes or nations (e.g. Isa. 18: 3; Jer. 51: 27), they are not actually brought together in Matthew’s composition. It seems better, therefore, to regard tou huiou tou anthrōpou as appositive genitive (BDF §167), i.e. the sign consisting in the Son of Man in heaven, anticipating opsontai, etc., later in the verse.
(c) But the most telling of Matthew’s alterations in parallel passages are at 16: 28 and 19: 28. The first of these is parallel to Mark 9: 1: ‘There are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.’ In Matthew 16: 28 this is changed to: ‘There are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.’ The important point is that Matthew’s tidy mind does not like the idea of the coming of the kingdom in this context. Coming is an action appropriate to the Son of Man, not to the kingdom. It is not clear how he thought that some still living would see this, but our glimpse at the answer to the high priest suggests that he would apply it to the resurrection, as the pledge and foretaste of the parousia. We find a comparable feature in the other passage, which comes from Q. Here Luke 22: 29 f. reads: ‘As my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint for you that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’ Matthew 19: 28 inserts this saying into a quite different context which Matthew has taken from Mark: ‘Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’ Matthew’s ‘Son of Man shall sit on his glorious throne’ betrays its secondary character, because the words are identical with the opening of the great assize, Matthew 25: 31. Once more, the kingdom for Matthew is a static concept, and so he reduces the notion that it is something that can be appointed to Jesus.

This finally gives the clue for a new and simple solution to the problem of the most famous Son of Man saying in Matthew, 10: 23b: ‘Truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel, before the Son of Man comes.’ There is no parallel to this saying in the other gospels, and Matthew has

1Thy kingdom come’, (Matt. 6: 10) in the Lord’s Prayer can stand, because it means ‘come to pass’, and so does not involve the quasi-personification of Mark 9: 1. On the background to this saying, see B. D. Chilton, God in Strength: Jesus’ Announcement of the Kingdom, PhD dissertation, Cambridge University, 1976, who has shown on the basis of the Targum to Isa. 40: 9 f. that ‘kingdom’ in this context is a surrogate for God in person. This explains Matthew’s alteration.
inserted it into his version of the mission charge to the apostles from some other source.¹ The idea that the time is too short to complete the task does not fit Matthew’s idea of the parousia as still to come in the future. Hence it is widely accepted as an authentic saying. But it is a Danielic, parousia saying, and Casey rejects it for this reason. But our study of Matthew’s alterations, especially in the last two cases, leads to another conclusion. The saying can be accepted as genuine, but in a form more like Mark 9:1. It had in its original form a phrase such as ‘before the kingdom of God comes’.² Matthew has altered this in characteristic manner, presumably intending the reference once more to be to the resurrection as anticipation of the parousia.

Matthew has provided no further contributions to the stock of authentic Son of Man sayings. But he has shown very consistently the tendency to make the Danielic reference the key to interpretation. This agrees with his clearly articulated christology of Jesus as the heavenly Lord, whose parousia is faithfully awaited by his disciples.

Luke presents an entirely different picture. He does not have a consistent position, but he has a marvellous feel for style. It is frequently asserted that Luke does not create Son of Man sayings, but this is demonstrably untrue.³ In 24:7 he throws in a reference to the passion predictions which is not in his source. Moreover, in the Q sequence on ‘the days of the Son of Man’, the introductory verse (17:22), which has no counterpart in Matthew, is best explained as Luke’s editorial work. I would also add 12:8, the ‘half-way house’ saying, because the Q form reproduced by Matthew has the first person, and the Son of Man belongs to the Marcan form, from which Luke has probably taken it.⁴

Apart from these references there are five Son of Man sayings which are peculiar to Luke. In three of them the Son of Man

¹Perhaps the same source as 10:5b, restricting the mission to the Jewish townships (B. H. Streeter, The Primitive Church (1929), p. 35).
²This invites comparison with the instruction in verse 7 to preach, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand’, i.e. near to come to pass. For Matthew’s alteration here, cf. p. 457, n. 1.
⁴This is fully argued in the paper mentioned in p. 442, n. 2.
functions simply as a stylistic substitute for the first person. It permits neither the generic usage, which is the hallmark of authenticity, nor the titular usage, which belongs to the parousia sayings. These three are 6: 22 (persecution ‘on account of the Son of Man’; Matthew: ‘on my account’);\(^1\) 19: 10 (‘The Son of man came to seek and to save the lost’); and 22: 48 (‘Judas, would you betray the Son of man with a kiss?’). The last of these is clearly dependent on the authentic saying with paradidonai which we found in the Judas legend. Of these three sayings, only the middle one (19: 10), may perhaps claim authenticity, but this impression is weakened in the light of the two which yet remain to be mentioned, 18: 8 (‘when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?’) and 21: 36 (‘Watch ... that you may have strength ... to stand before the Son of Man’). Both are obviously parousia sayings, and the question is whether Luke created them, or had them in his source. The suspicion that they are editorial arises from their relation to their contexts. In each case they round off a sequence dealing with the future Son of Man, but do not belong to the sources used (17: 20–18: 8 and 21: 5–36). This invites comparison with 19: 10, which is an editorial comment added to the story of Zacchaeus (19: 2–9). All three illustrate Luke’s capacity to sum up the teaching of Jesus in a way that appeals to the emotions of the reader.

Thus Luke, like Matthew, does not preserve genuine Son of Man sayings apart from those which were available in Mark and Q. I have suggested that his fresh contributions do not attest the line of development, which we saw so clearly in the case of Matthew, but are Luke’s own composition. They illustrate his flair for seizing Jesus’ style and the essentials of his message. From this point of view they retain their value in spite of their secondary status.

Having said this about Luke, I am aware that it raises acutely the problem of the one and only place where the Son of Man occurs outside the Gospels, Acts 7: 56, which must be read with

\(^1\) Luke’s procedure here is similar to his alteration in 12: 8, though there he had the authority of the Marcan form of the saying for the Son of Man. In this case Matt. 5: 11 is good evidence that the Son of Man did not stand in the Q form, although there is no Markan parallel.
the preceding verse: ‘But he (i.e. Stephen), full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”’ It is notoriously difficult to distinguish between sources and redaction in Acts. But it is widely recognized that Luke has used the trial of Jesus as a model in writing up his account of the case of Stephen. Stephen’s Son of Man saying is so similar to Jesus’ answer to the high priest (Luke 22: 69 = Mark 14: 62) that it is tempting to suppose that it is actually modelled on it. Once more we have to reckon with Luke’s feel for style. In verse 55 Luke puts the point in his own words: the heaven (singular) is open to Stephen’s gaze, and Jesus is standing at the right hand of God, presumably as his advocate, as in Luke 12: 8. In verse 56 he makes slight changes of a semitizing and archaizing kind, suitable to speech to a Jewish audience: the heavens (plural) are opened and the Son of Man is standing. Luke can also say the same thing in a totally non-Semitic manner when he has a pagan Greek audience in view (Paul at Athens, Acts 17: 31): ‘He has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man (en andri) whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead.’ There has been great debate whether andri here is to be taken as a reference to the Son of Man. Haenchen, for instance, denies it on the grounds that the Son of Man would be meaningless to a pagan audience. Precisely. That is why Luke did not use the phrase here, by contrast with 7: 56. The new look on the Son of Man cuts nicely through the debate, because it removes the idea that the Son of Man was a technical term altogether.

Finally, the Fourth Gospel shows the most advanced development of the Son of Man tradition. Here the thirteen occurrences of the phrase are clearly dependent on the passion predictions, and on the identification with Daniel 7: 13 which belongs to the later development. Not one of them can be traced back to an authentic saying which we do not already possess in the traditions preserved by Mark and Q. John has made creative use of this stylistic feature of the sayings tradition for the purposes of his own presentation of Christ for faith. As Moloney has shown in
his very full study of the subject, John uses the title to show how the earthly Jesus anticipates now functions which belong to his future glory. He does not use it when he is actually referring to the future. This makes John's employment of the phrase entirely different from that of the other evangelists. It belongs to his highly individual approach to christology. It is a brilliant and original exploitation of the tradition, and it marks the end of the line of development from Jesus to the Gospels.

The new look on the Son of Man is based on linguistic observations, which have overthrown many cherished assumptions. Very few of us who have dared to write on this contentious topic can hope to escape the necessity of revising our views. At first sight this linguistic approach seems to be sheer carnage. One after another the Son of Man sayings are dismissed as inauthentic. We are left with the merest handful, five in Q and four in Mark (accepting 2: 10 as original, and three forms lying behind the passion predictions and related sayings).

On the other hand, it would be a grievous mistake to disregard what has been gained. Those few sayings which pass the test for authenticity have great importance both for research into the historical Jesus and for the hermeneutical quest. For they give some small openings into the impenetrable area of how Jesus thought about himself and about his message and his relation to God. Moreover the intricate relationship between the development of Son of Man sayings and the primitive attempts at confessional formulation helps to bridge the gap between the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith. This fact also has a bearing on the perennial question of the element of Gemeindetheologie in the sayings tradition. Our attempt at a developmental history does not support the idea that Son of Man sayings were invented indiscriminately by Christian prophets. It suggests rather that they grew by adaptation and accretion in the process of transmission of the sayings tradition at a time when rapid theological development was taking place under the pressure of the explosive force of the Christ-event itself. Only later, at the stage when the four evangelists actually wrote their Gospels, have literary and stylistic considerations led to some proliferation of Son of Man sayings.

Man sayings for the evangelists' purposes. Mark multiplied the passion sayings. Matthew increased the references to the parousia which had already developed in the oral stage. Luke seized the Son of Man as a style-feature, and used it to enhance the verisimilitude of his portrait of Jesus. John made up his own sayings on the basis of the tradition as part and parcel of his total recasting of the gospel, in which nothing was left unchanged.

There is an elusive quality about Jesus, which I believe is not merely a matter of intractable historical problems, but is part of his authentic personality and is one facet of his genius. His ironical references to a man, to anyone, to someone else, when he means himself remains as teasing and tantalizing as the Son of Man problem itself.