THE SON OF MAN IN DANIEL, ENOCH AND THE GOSPELS.¹

By T. W. MANSON, D.Litt., D.D., F.B.A.
RYLANDS PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND EXEGESIS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER.

EIGHTEEN years ago, in the course of an exposition of the leading ideas of the Synoptic Gospels, I devoted some pages to a discussion of the term Son of Man.² In taking up the subject again let me say at the outset that further reflection on the available evidence and consideration of the publications of other workers in this field have convinced me that the conclusions which I reached eighteen years ago are in general correct, though capable of considerable amendment in detail. I think that the time is ripe for a reconsideration of the problem and a restatement of my solution of it. The problem is the meaning of the term Son of Man in the sayings attributed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels: is it possible to find a meaning for the term which will (a) make sense in the passages of the Synoptic Gospels in which it occurs; (b) show a reasonable connexion with the use of Son of Man in the Old Testament and other pre-Christian Jewish documents; and (c) explain the later developments of Christian thought as we find them in St. Paul and St. John?

I do not propose to spend any time on the discussion of the question whether bar 'ēnāš is a possible expression in Aramaic in the days of Jesus. We have the fact that it was used in the book of Daniel in the second century B.C., and the fact that barnāš is in use in Christian Palestinian Aramaic; and in between the two we have in the Synoptic tradition the Greek expression ὁ νεῖκος τοῦ ἄνθρωπον, which as Greek is as near meaningless as makes no matter, but which explains itself linguistically the moment we think of it as a literal rendering of an Aramaic original. In this context the presence of the

¹ An amplification of the lecture delivered in the John Rylands Library on Wednesday, the 9th of November, 1949.
² The Teaching of Jesus (1931), 311-336.
term Son of Man in the Synoptics strikes me as excellent evidence that the term could be used in the first half of the first century A.D., that it was in fact used, and that it conveyed some meaning to those who heard it used.

That brings us to the really important question: what did the phrase mean? If we start from the Hebrew equivalent, *ben 'ādām*, we can readily get the plain and literal meaning: 'a member of the human race', 'an individual human being'.

This is clearly the meaning in any number of passages in the Old Testament. It is the meaning in the book of Ezekiel, where the prophet is addressed as *ben 'ādām* eighty-seven times; and what is emphasised by this mode of address is the contrast between the prophet as a man—one might almost say a mere man—and the God whose messages he receives.

The attempt has been made—most recently and most persuasively by Dr. Curtis—to find the clue to the meaning of Son of Man in the Gospels in the use of *ben 'ādām* in Ezekiel. In his discussion of this self-designation of Jesus Dr. Curtis makes the important point that 'Jesus utters no such prohibition against its open use as He sternly directs against the divulging of His messiahship. If ‘the Son of Man’ was a not unfamiliar name for the Christ in popular expectancy, drawn from current apocalyptic, then His repeated use of it was utterly inconsistent with His attitude towards the latter title.' This argument seems to be valid against all who hold that ‘Son of Man’ = ‘Messiah’ and that Jesus concealed His messiahship, unless they are prepared to take the further step of maintaining that up to the end Jesus used the term Son of Man only in speaking to those who were already in the Messianic secret. For the positive content of the term Dr. Curtis appeals to Ezekiel rather than Enoch, because 'we have no evidence either that He knew and valued the Enoch vision or that His hearers knew and were moved by it.' In Ezekiel what is stressed is the essential humanity of the ‘Son of Man’; and in the teaching

---

1 Cf. L. Köhler, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, 133, where other examples of *ben* with collectives are given.
2 *Jesus Christ the Teacher* (1943), 127-143.
of Jesus the 'Son of Man' becomes the true representative of humanity, the Man par excellence, what Luther calls 'the Proper Man'. This Proper Man knows that his task is defined in the description of the Servant of the Lord in Deutero-Isaiah. So Jesus in combining Isaiah's Servant with Ezekiel's Son of Man produced not a Messianic title but a name perfectly adapted to his own purposes.

Attractive as this explanation is in many ways, I do not think it can be adopted. There are indeed two or three places in the words of Jesus where it is possible to see a reference to the book of Ezekiel; but only one of them (Luke xix. 10) is directly concerned with the Son of Man, and in that case the corresponding passage in Ezekiel (xxxiv. 15 f.) speaks not of the activities of the Son of Man-prophet, but of the work of God himself. Moreover we are bound, I think, by the fact that the one explicit reference by Jesus to the Old Testament in a Son of Man-saying is a reference to the Son of Man in Dan. vii. 13. We should therefore begin the study of the term Son of Man in the Gospels by a consideration of its meaning in the one Old Testament passage to which we have an explicit reference, Dan. vii.

In this passage the meaning is not in doubt. The seer explains that he had a night-vision in which four great beasts came up out of the sea. The first three have a certain resemblance to real animals, lion, bear, leopard; but the fourth is apparently so monstrous that there is nothing with which it can be compared. These four beasts are generally recognised to be symbolic figures representing the great powers that had dominated the Near East down to the time of the composition of the book of Daniel (c. 165 B.C.). After the first three have run their course, and while the fourth is still at work establishing new records in arrogance and brutality, the scene suddenly changes.

1 Lk. xix. 10. ἠθεν γὰρ ὁ ιων ὁ άνθρωπον ζητήσαι καὶ σῶσαι τὸ ἀπολυτός.
Ez. xxxiv. 15 f. τάδε λέγει κύριος κύριος τὸ ἀπολυτός ζητήσω κτλ.
Mk. xiv. 62. ἀφεθεὶ τὸν ιων τοῦ άνθρωπου ἐκ δεξιῶν καθήμενον τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.
Dan. vii. 13. (θ') ἔθεωρον ἐν ὁράματι τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὡς ιων ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενος ἤν.
Thrones are set up and the Ancient of Days takes his seat with all the accompaniments of supernatural power and glory. The records are opened and the judgment begins. It is the day of the Lord of which the prophets had spoken. After sentence has been passed on the great powers represented by the beasts, a new figure appears. He is described in terms similar to those used in describing the first three beasts. Of them it was said that one resembled a lion, another a bear, and the third a leopard: of the new figure it is said that he resembles a human being. This means, I take it, that we are meant to regard this figure as a symbol; and we must ask what the symbol represents. Daniel himself will furnish the answer in due course. Meanwhile we learn that this man-like figure arrives 'with the clouds of heaven'. What this expression means is clear from Enoch xiv. 8. The clouds are a means of transportation from earth to heaven.1 The Danielic Son of Man is not a member of the heavenly court: he appears before it. So Daniel's narrative goes on to tell how this Son of Man makes his way towards the Ancient of Days and is ushered into the presence. The decision of the court is in his favour and he receives 'dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed' (vii. 14). It cannot be too strongly emphasised that what Daniel portrays is not a divine, semi-divine, or angelic figure coming down from heaven, to bring deliverance, but a human figure going up to heaven to receive it. It must be equally emphasised that this figure is a symbol as the preceding monsters were. What the symbol stands for is made crystal clear in verses 18 and 27 of this same chapter, where we are told that 'the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever'; and again, 'The kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions

shall serve and obey him’. Just as the beasts stood for the pagan empires, so the Son of Man stands for Israel or for the godly Remnant within Israel. In that case Son of Man in this period is a new name for what in earlier times was called the ‘Remnant’ or the ‘Servant of Yahweh’, and later, as a result of the ministry of Jesus, appears as the Church or the ‘Body of Christ’ or the ‘Bride of Christ’ or the ‘New Israel’, to name only a few of the designations given a body of persons united by a common loyalty and obligation to God.

But while it would be widely admitted that Son of Man in Daniel is a symbol for a community, it is claimed that it very soon became a personal title appropriated to the expected Messiah, and in particular to a pre-existent heavenly Messiah. The evidence for this comes in the main from two sources. First, it is held that in the Similitudes of Enoch Son of Man is a Messianic title: I shall deal with the Enoch material in detail presently. Secondly, some Rabbinic passages are adduced in which Dan. vii. 13 is taken as a Messianic prophecy. But the earliest of these is attributed to R. Alexandrai (c. 270), and so belongs to a period when the Messianic hope had ceased to be a matter of daily practical politics, and had become much more of a topic for academic theological speculation. There seems to be no evidence that in Rabbinical circles Son of Man was used as a name for the Messiah. The only possible case of this kind is in a statement attributed to R. Abbahu (c. 300), which is obviously a piece of anti-Christian polemic. A third piece of evidence for Jewish Messianic interpretation of Dan. vii. is Justin’s Dialogue with Trypho, § 32. In § 31 Justin has quoted Dan. vii. 9-28 at length as a proof that the Old Testament foretells the Second Coming of Christ. When the quotation is ended, Trypho says: ‘Sir, these scripture texts and others of the same sort compel us to await someone great and glorious, who “as Son of Man” receives “an eternal kingdom” from “the Ancient of Days”; but this so-called Christ of yours is in fact so far dishonoured and discredited as to have fallen under

1 See, for the evidence and the conclusions drawn from it, Billerbeck, Komm., i. 485 ff., 956-959.
2 Sanh 98a, cited Billerbeck, i. 486. 3 Billerbeck, i. 959.
the final curse in the Law of God, for he was crucified'. I do not think that we can infer anything from this passage concerning the Jewish interpretation of Dan. vii. current in Justin's day. Justin himself has brought forward the passage and offered a Christian interpretation of it claiming (a) that it prophesies the coming of the Messiah in power and glory, and (b) that it refers to Christ. Trypho replies that he finds (a) proved, but not (b). I doubt whether his words should be taken to mean, 'We Jews already hold (a); but we must reject (b)'. In any case Justin here is only evidence for the second century A.D. For the interpretation of Dan. vii. a hundred years earlier we are driven back on the Book of Enoch and the New Testament. I turn now to Enoch.

The Book of Enoch, in the form in which it has come down to us, is a confused and bewildering mass of material. A great deal of pioneer work has been done on the text and the constituent elements have been more or less successfully isolated. Among the most important for our purposes is the section known as the Similitudes or Parables (chaps. xxxvii-lxxi), for in these chapters the Son of Man plays a large part. A good deal of what I have to say will be concerned with a recent and careful study, Der Menschensohn im Äthiopischen Henochbuch by Erik Sjöberg (Lund, 1946); and I should like to acknowledge how much I am indebted to this learned and thorough work, even though I am frequently compelled to take a different line of interpretation.

Before going into details it may be well to recapitulate briefly the basic facts which constitute the core of the problem. As we have seen, in the seventh chapter of Daniel the Son of Man is a symbolic figure representing 'the people of the saints of the Most High'.¹ In Dan. viii. 17 Daniel himself is addressed, and in the book of Ezekiel that prophet is addressed

¹ For this collective significance of Son of Man we have a good parallel in Ps. lxxx. 16, 18, on which see M. Black in Exp. Times, lx. (1948), 11: 'The nation is personified as God's "right-hand man", "the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself" (or "securedst for thyself"), i.e. that branch of the human family appropriated by God for His Divine purpose in history. The "Son of Man" has become a collective symbol for Israel.' The Targum on these verses is instructive.
eighty-seven times, as 'Son of Man'. Again in Dan. x. 16
the seer is in contact with a being 'like the appearance of a son
of man': the context makes it clear that this being is angelic.
In *Enoch* 'the Son of Man' is the name of a being who can also
be described as 'the Elect One', 'the Righteous One', 'the
Anointed One', who, moreover, stands in a special relation to a
body of people who can also be called 'the Righteous' or 'the
Elect'. In the Gospels we have a considerable number of
sayings of Jesus which are susceptible of an individual or a
corporate interpretation. In all these cases the first task is to
determine as accurately as possible the sense of the term in the
places where it appears and by reference to the context. Where
'Son of Man' refers to an individual we must try to identify
him; where it refers to a group we must try to define the group.

So far as I can see there are no short cuts. We cannot say
that there is any variation of language to show a difference of
meaning. The symbolic figure of Dan. vii. who represents the
people of the saints of the Most High is described as שֶׁנִּיָּן
Daniel himself is addressed as סֵלָא רַמְיהַ in viii. 17. In x. 16 his
angelic visitor is described as דָּגַיִי תֵּא. In
vii. 13 ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, ο' and θ'; in viii. 17 υἱὲ ἀνθρώπου, ο'
and θ'; in x. 16 ὡς ὁμοίωσις υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, θ' (strangely
enough ὡς ὁμοίωσις χειρὸς ἀνθρώπου in ο') are all rendered in
the Ethiopic version by wolda eguala ema heyau. All that can
be said in a general way is something like this:

ἀνθρώπως is rendered by Eth. be'esi when a particular man is
meant;
by sab'e when it is a man (indef.) or
man (in general).

ἀνθρώποι is rendered by sab'e or eguala ema heyau.

'Sons of men' is rendered by eg. em. ḫ or daqiqa eg. em. ḫ
or weluda sab'e.

ἀνηρ is normally rendered by be'esi and ἀνδρες by sab'e or
'adawu.

Sab'e and eguala ema heyau can be used as collective nouns
for man in general. One way of indicating a single member of
this group is to say *walda sab’e* or *walda eguala ema ḥeyau*. A number of such individuals is *weluda sab’e*; but I have not seen a plural *weluda eguala ema ḥeyau*.

There is one further linguistic point. It has been noted that in Ethiopic *Enoch* *walda eg. em. h.* is accompanied by the demonstrative pronoun. It is now, I think, widely agreed that this pronoun in the Ethiopic probably represents the Greek definite article. But there are two further points: (a) while the Similitudes of Enoch have ‘that Son of Man’ they do not have ‘that Elect One’; (b) in the Ethiopic Gospels we regularly find Son of Man without the demonstrative. That is to say, the translator of the Similitudes (assuming that he translated from Greek) used the demonstrative in the case of *ὁ νῦς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* and not in the case of *ὁ ἐκλεκτός*; he, therefore, did not mechanically render the article by the demonstrative; and we can only conjecture his reason for using it in these cases. The explanation may be that the demonstrative is used to indicate the translator’s opinion that the term Son of Man is being used in a special sense. After all, *walda eguala ema ḥeyau* means simply ‘the man’. The prefixing of the demonstrative may be meant to produce the effect that we should obtain by putting ‘the man’ in inverted commas and writing man with a capital M. Expressions like ‘Elect One’ or ‘Lord of Spirits’ carry their meaning in themselves; but ‘the man’ will hardly convey any special meaning unless some hint is given that such a meaning is intended. The demonstrative may be a way of giving that hint.¹

Son of Man, then, is an ordinary term which in certain contexts carries a special meaning. In Eth. *Enoch* it is the designation of a figure who makes his first appearance in chap. xlvi.

¹ In the Ethiopic Gospels the demonstrative is not used with Son of Man because there the special meaning of the term is already firmly established and can be taken for granted.
THE SON OF MAN

And I asked the angel, who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, concerning that Son of Man, who he was, and whence he was, and why he went with the Head of Days.

And he answered and said unto me:
This is the Son of Man who hath righteousness.
With whom dwelleth righteousness, 1
And who revealeth all the treasures of that which is hidden,
Because the Lord of Spirits hath chosen him,
And whose lot is pre-eminent before the Lord of Spirits.
And this Son of Man whom thou hast seen
Shall remove the kings and the mighty from their seats
And the strong from their thrones
And shall loosen the reins of the strong
And break the teeth of the sinners.

The description is most interesting. The seer is at pains to indicate that the figure is a human-looking figure. Looking at it you would say it was a man. It has also an expression of countenance which can fairly be called angelic. A human figure with the look of an angel: not a man or an angel. Evidently it is a symbolic figure: the question is, what does it symbolise? The seer asks his angel guide for the information. The answer given is not crystal clear. We must do the best we can with the statements that are made.

(1) 'This is the Son of Man who possesses righteousness; with whom righteousness dwells.' I am inclined to think that the true parallel to this is Eccles. xxiv. 7-12, where wisdom is the speaker:—

'With all these [i.e. every people and nation] I sought a resting place
And said: In whose inheritance shall I lodge?
Then the Creator of all things gave me commandment
And he that created me fixed my dwelling place;
And he said: Let thy dwelling-place be in Jacob
And in Israel take up thine inheritance. . . .
And I took root among an honoured people,
In the portion of the Lord (and) of his inheritance.'

When it is remembered that in Ecclesiasticus wisdom is identified with the Torah and that the Torah is the righteousness of God, the relevance of this text becomes clear.

1 Cf. Dan. ix. 7, 'O Lord righteousness belongeth unto thee'; Is. i. 21, 'How is the faithful city become an harlot! she that was full of judgment! righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers.'
(2) 'He will reveal (or reveals) all the treasures of that which is hidden.' With this we may compare Prov. ii. 4 'If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures', on which R. Phinehas, c. A.D. 300, said: 'If you seek after the words of the Law as for hid treasures, God will not withhold from you your reward.'

What the Son of Man possesses and reveals is the hidden treasure of God's wisdom and righteousness embodied in the Law.

(3) This Son of Man is further described as having been chosen by the Lord of Spirits; and it is said that his lot is pre-eminent, or has prevailed, before the Lord of Spirits. This choice in heaven has certain consequences on earth in the putting down of tyrants and oppressors.

Sjöberg's conclusion after looking at these data that 'what is here envisaged is not in fact a man—at least not in the ordinary sense of the word': and in that we must surely agree with him. But he goes on: 'It is rather a heavenly being, der ganz besondere himmlische Mensch.' At this point I think it is time to call a halt, and to say that 'heavenly man' is a question-begging term. (I leave on one side the question whether it is a term with any meaning at all in the framework of Hebrew and Jewish theology. I doubt it.) These bits of description of heavenly appointment to an earthly destiny no more justify us in thinking of 'a heavenly man' than the terms of Jeremiah's inaugural vision justify us in thinking of 'a heavenly Jeremiah'.

In Enoch xlviii we have a similar set of statements. First (vv. 2 f.) we are told:

'At that hour that Son of Man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits,' and his name before the Head of Days, Yea, before the sun and the signs were created, Before the stars of the heaven were made, His name was named before the Lord of Spirits.'

In this Charles (ad loc.) found evidence for 'the pre-existence of the Son of Man'. Sjöberg (p. 53) recognises in this passage the reappearance of the Heavenly Man already mentioned in chap. xlii, and (p. 92) he regards this being as pre-existent. In this

\[1 \text{Sjöberg, op. cit., 50.}\]
view he is further fortified by v. 6 which tells us that the Son of Man

'has been chosen and hidden before him (the Lord of Spirits)
before the creation of the world and for evermore.'

[Here let me say that I think it would not be a bad thing
if the words 'pre-exist', 'pre-existent', and 'pre-existence'
could be quietly dropped. A pre-existent Son of Man is one
who exists before. Before what? The terms do not tell us.
Nor do they tell us anything about the mode of the existence.
Altogether they are thoroughly vague and ambiguous, and I
cannot help thinking that we should get on better without them.]

But our immediate task is to discover what is meant by the
naming of the name of the Son of Man before the Lord of
Spirits. I can think of only two possibilities:

(1) The Son of Man may be called into existence in this
way. The nearest analogy would be the Primal Man in the
Manichean myth. Here, as Burkitt says: 'The Father of
Greatness neither espouses the Mother of Life nor begets the
Primal Man, but calls ( protestors)—and they exist'.¹ Those who
are interested in tracing connexions between the Son of Man and
the 'Primal Man' may also note the similarity between the
name walda egualu ema heyau and the name of the mother of
the Primal Man in Theodore b. Khôni's account, نسيبت 'the mother of life' or 'mother of the living'. But it has to
be borne in mind that the Manichean cosmogony is based upon
ideas about the nature of the material would and of the
processes that go on in it which are as far as possible from Old
Testament and Jewish convictions. If there is anything at all
in these parallels, they may well be regarded as evidence that the
Similitudes have at some stage in their history come under
Manichean influence.

But (2) we can find parallels a little nearer home. We have
the proclamation of Sumerian kings by the god: "Bur Sin
whose name was spoken in Nippur by Enlil the Lord of the

¹ The Religion of the Manichees, 23 f. Cf. F. Cumont, La Cosmogonie
Manichéenne d'après Théodore bar Khôni, 14; H. J. Polotsky, art. Manichäismus
in Pauly-Wissowa, RE Supplementbd. VI, Col. 251.
and we have similarly Babylonian kings chosen and named by the god of the land. 'Anu and Enlil, the supreme gods, chose Marduk to be exalted over all the gods of the Earth, and at the same time pronounced the name of Babylon as a decree that it should be the head of all cities. Therewith they called the name of Hammurabi "so that I might cause justice to appear in the land and might destroy naughty and wicked men, so that the strong should not afflict the weak".'  

In the Old Testament we have Is. xliii. 1, 'But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine '; Is. xlv. 3 f., addressed to Cyrus, 'I am the Lord, which call thee by thy name, even the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel my chosen, I have called thee by thy name; I have summoned thee, though thou hast not known me '. The naming of the name of a group or an individual can mean simply the designation of that group or individual to some high destiny. And this seems to me to be the most likely meaning in this passage in Enoch. We are told in v. 3 that this tremendous decision was taken before the creation of the world; and in the remaining verses of the chapter the consequences of the decision are described. As in chap. xlii, they are to take place in the world as part and parcel of the history of mankind. The Son of Man is to be 'the staff of the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall' (v. 4). Under him they are to have a complete triumph over 'the kings of the earth and the strong who possess the land because of the works of their hands' (v. 8); and the elect, holy, and righteous ones will be left in undisputed possession; and 'there shall be rest on the earth' (v. 10). In this passage (as in the Psalms of Solomon) the expected hero of this story of the triumph of the righteous is called the Anointed One (Messiah) (v. 10). What the whole section gives is the story of pre-mundane decisions in heaven which are destined to have their fulfilment on earth.

2 C. J. Gadd, Ideas of Divine Rule in the Ancient East, 43.
3 The idea was still live in N.T. times. Cf. Phil. ii. 9 ff.
In this chapter we have two terms employed regarding the Son of Man; and it is necessary to consider them briefly. In v. 6 we are told that the Son of Man

'has been chosen and hidden before him (the Lord of Spirits) before the creation of the world and for evermore'.

On this Sjöberg (p. 90) says that here, 'as is generally recognised, the idea of pre-existence is really present. The Son of Man is not only chosen before the creation of the world . . . but he is also hidden before God from that time on'. Similarly in lxii. 7 it is said that,

from the beginning the Son of Man was hidden
and the Most High preserved him in the presence of his might
And revealed him to the elect.

And again in xxxix. 6 f.

And in that place my eyes saw the elect one of righteousness and faithfulness,
And righteousness shall be in his days
And the righteous and elect ones shall be without number before him for ever
And I saw their (v.l. his 1) dwelling-place under the wings of the Lord of Spirits.
And all the righteous and elect ones shall shine before him like the light of fire
And their mouth shall be full of praise
And their lips shall extol the name of the Lord of Spirits
And righteousness before him shall not fail
And uprightness before him shall not fail.

These passages are widely held to imply the 'heavenly pre-existence' of the Son of Man. It may be remarked in passing that if the translation given by Beer and Flemming is right, xxxix. 6 f. would provide equally good evidence for the pre-existence of all the righteous and elect.

But will the texts in fact support a doctrine of pre-existence (whatever that may mean)? I think the answer is that they

1 his gm : their qtuβ. On the principle laid down by Charles (Introd., p. xxy) the reading 'their' would have a fair chance of being right. The α MSS. are divided and the casting vote of β is in favour of qtu. Charles has made his choice of 'his' seem more reasonable by transferring this line bodily into the context which speaks of the Elect One of righteousness and faithfulness, between II. 1 and 2 of the passage. Dillmann read 'their'. Beer, Flemming, and Sjöberg follow Charles in reading 'his' but not in the transposition of the lines.
clearly support a doctrine of pre-mundane election both of the Son of Man and of all the righteous and elect ones. (What the relation of the Son of Man and the righteous and elect ones is I shall discuss presently.) But pre-mundane election does not necessarily involve pre-mundane existence except as a project in the mind of God. The Hebrew and Jewish mind had no qualms about believing in the pre-mundane election of Israel. Ber. R. 1. 2b (Theodor, p. 6) * Six things preceded the creation of the world: some were actually created and some it was planned to create. The Torah and the Throne of Glory were created. . . . It was planned to create the Patriarchs, Israel (proof text Ps. lxxiv. 2, “Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old”), the Temple, and the name of the Messiah.” The pre-mundane election of Israel is implied and presupposed in St. Paul’s argument in Rom. ix-xi. For the pre-mundane election of the Patriarchs we can refer to Tanch. (B) § 19 (17b), and for that of the Messiah or the name of the Messiah to the passages collected by Billerbeck (Komm., ii. 333 ff.). It is a natural development from the idea of the pre-mundane election of Israel, when the New Testament speaks of the pre-mundane election of the Church. This is quite explicit in Eph. i. 3 f., I Pet. i. 1 f., and is probably implied in I Cor. i. 27-29 and James ii. 5. What is quite clear is that the distinction was made between things that were actually brought into existence before creation and those whose future existence was decided upon before creation. The name—and in this connexion ‘name’ probably means ‘person’—of the Messiah belongs to the latter class.

Sjöberg and others lay greater stress on the ‘hiding’ of the Son of Man before God as evidence of pre-existence; but I do not think that the use of this term elsewhere gives much support to the contention. In the Old Testament various words are used to express the idea (יהויה, Is. xlix. 2; נאם, Ps. xxvii. 5; Jb. xiv. 13; יאמנ, Ps. cxxliii. 9; נאם, Ps. xvii. 8; xxvii. 5; xlix. 2; נאם, Is. xvi. 2; Ps. xxvii. 5; Jb. xxi. 13; יאמנ, Ps. cxxliii. 9; נאם, Ps. xvii. 8; xxvii. 5; xlix. 2; נאם, Is. xvi. 2; Ps. xxvii. 5; Jb. xxi. 13; יאמנ, Ps. cxxliii. 9; נאם, Ps. xvii. 8; xxvii. 5; xlix. 2; נאם, Is. xvi. 2; Ps. xxvii. 5; Jb. xxi. 13; יאמנ, Ps. cxxliii. 9; נאם, Ps. xvii. 8; xxvii. 5; xlix. 2; נאם, Is. xvi. 2; Ps. xxvii. 5; Jb. xxi. 13; יאמנ, Ps. cxxliii. 9; נאם, Ps. xvii. 8; xxvii. 5; xlix. 2; נאם, Is. xvi. 2; Ps. xxvii. 5; Jb. xxi. 13; יאמנ, Ps. cxxliii. 9; נאם, Ps. xvii. 8; xxvii. 5; xlix. 2; נאם, Is. xvi. 2; Ps. xxvii. 5; Jb. x
xxx. 20; lxiv. 2; and ἡ καταχώρισις, Ps. xxxii. 7; cxix. 114). In all these cases the reference is to divine guidance and protection amid the dangers and trials of this mortal life. Similarly, the references to dwelling under the wings of the Lord of Spirits do not imply 'pre-existence'. To bring a person under the wings of the Shekinah is a regular way of describing conversion to Judaism and the large number of rabbinical passages collected in Levy, *NHWB*, ii. 357 ff. provides sufficient evidence that this phrase means divine care and protection here and now.

I would emphasise again that what is set out in these passages is, it seems to me, the record of pre-mundane decisions whose consequences in the created world of men and things can then be "prophesied" in the best apocalyptic fashion. The prophecies are as usual past history described in the future tense until we come to the writer's own time: beyond that they are wishful thinking.

It is noteworthy that when it comes to describing the mode of the 'pre-existence' of the Son of Man, all that Sjöberg can say is this: 'Der präexistente Menschensohn ist inaktiv' (p. 96, italics his). He is *most* inactive, not to say inert. He does not even speak. He takes no part in the revelations made to Enoch who has to rely for all his information on the angelic interpreter who acts as his guide. The mystery of the Son of Man is a mystery about him. In fact, he could more properly be described as unborn than as pre-existent. Later he appears on the stage of history and becomes active.

In describing this activity there is a tendency to stress the word 'eschatology'. The Son of Man appears on the plane of history only to inaugurate the great eschatological catastrophe, in which he delivers the righteous and judges sinners. Properly speaking there is no judgment of the righteous: their merits are acknowledged and await only the appropriate reward of complete happiness in a transformed world. The righteous are united with the Son of Man in a classless society, in which all are members of the aristocracy. In this scheme the righteous and the sinners are already what they are. The Son of Man comes not to seek and to save the lost but to vindicate and reward the

---

1 Cf. A. Oepke in *ThWb*, iii. 969.
good and to condemn and punish the evil. All the persons concerned already belong to one class or the other; and the proceedings are political rather than judicial. (Rather like the triumphs of "democracy" of the Moscow pattern.) Those who need forgiveness cannot have it: they are marked down for liquidation. The others are due to receive rewards: they need no forgiveness other than a winking at their occasional slips in view of their general good character expressed in loyalty to Israel and Israel's God.

There seems to be something lacking here. The story is all beginning and end; and the middle seems to have dropped out. At the beginning we have a 'pre-existent' Son of Man, who for all practical purposes might as well be non-existent. At the end we have a very active Son of Man. In between we have hints of the oppression of the righteous and elect ones by the wicked. But I cannot help thinking that one object of the apocalyptic writers was to justify God's ways to man by making a sensible story of the whole course of history.

That brings us back to the problem of the relation of the Son of Man to the community which he vindicates at the end of the story, when they all live happily ever after. The problem is made more acute by the two chapters lxx. f., in which we have an account of the relations between Enoch himself and the Son of Man.

In Chapter lxx. it is said of Enoch:

'And it came to pass after this that his name (i.e. Enoch himself) during his lifetime was raised aloft to that Son of Man and to the Lord of Spirits from amongst those who dwell on the earth. And he was raised aloft on the chariots of the spirit (or wind) and his name (i.e. he) vanished from among them.'

This is clearly a reference to Enoch's translation as recorded in Gen. v. 24. Then Enoch carries on the story in the first person:

'And from that day I was no longer numbered amongst them; and he set me between the two winds, between the north and the west, where the angels took the cords to measure for me the place for the elect and righteous. And there I saw the first fathers and the righteous who from the beginning dwell in that place.'

There follows a long poetical passage in which Enoch joins in the praises of the inhabitants of heaven. Then he tells us:
THE SON OF MAN

'And these blessings which went forth out of my mouth were well pleasing before that Head of Days and that Head of Days came with Michael and Gabriel, Raphael and Phanuel, thousands and ten thousands of angels without number. And he came to me and greeted me with his voice and said to me: "Thou art the Son of Man (wadla be'esi) who art born for righteousness and righteousness abides over thee, and the righteousness of the Head of Days forsakes thee not". And he said to me: "He proclaims peace to thee in the name of the world to come, for peace has gone out from here since the creation of the world, and so shall it be unto thee for ever and ever and ever. And all shall walk in thy ways for righteousness never forsakes thee. With thee shall be their dwelling-places and with thee their lot, and they shall never be separated from thee for ever." And so there shall be length of days with that Son of Man, and there shall be peace for the righteous and an upright way for the righteous in the name of the Lord of Spirits for ever and ever.'

What does all this mean? Sjöberg, after a careful survey of previous work, draws these conclusions. He says (p. 168): 'Two possibilities are open. Either the earthly Enoch is an incarnation of the Son of Man, and at his final translation is greeted as Son of Man because that is what he already was during his earthly life, or Enoch is first made Son of Man at his translation, and before that was only a man like other men. In the former case we have to do with the idea of incarnation, in the latter only with the idea of exaltation.' Of the two possibilities Sjöberg definitely chooses the latter (p. 171). 'What is here (i.e. in chaps. lxx. f.) portrayed, is not the return of an incarnate heavenly being to his original state, but the exaltation and transformation of a man into a heavenly being.' Again (p. 185 f.): 'Enoch lxxi is to be understood in terms of the idea of exaltation, not of incarnation. . . . The relation between Enoch and the Son of Man is thus to be understood in terms of the idea of exaltation. At the end of his life Enoch is translated to heaven and identified with the pre-existent Son of Man.'

But here we come to the great difficulty, a difficulty of which Sjöberg is acutely aware: how is it possible at all to identify the exalted Enoch with the pre-existent Son of Man? (p. 187). It is not as if the two met and somehow fused into one. As Sjöberg points out the Son of Man does not appear at first. Enoch is met by God and hailed by him as Son of Man. Sjöberg

1 Here we abandon Charles, who has rewritten the rest of the passage in accordance with his view of what Enoch ought to have said.
goes on to say: 'When this (the greeting) happens, the designation Son of Man is charged with the content which it has in the preceding account in the Similitudes. What is meant by it is the pre-existent heavenly Son of Man. As this (Son of Man) is the exalted Enoch hailed and takes his place in the heavenly world. We can form no concrete picture of how this is possible' (p. 187). So the essential problem is stated and declared insoluble.

I venture to think that the problem is insoluble precisely because Sjöberg insists on retaining the conception of the Son of Man as a pre-existent heavenly being, a being something lower than God and something higher than the angels. I also think that the remedy is to recognise that the pre-mundane Son of Man in Enoch is, if I may so describe it, an idea in the mind of God. Now, what are the elements that go to make up the total conception indicated by the term Son of Man? They are: divine election, divine protection and guidance, the possession of divinely given righteousness, and eventually divine vindication and everlasting happiness. There may be others that I have overlooked; but these are the main ones. If we now ask how the conception thus made up is to be actualised, the obvious answer is in the field of history by human beings as individuals or as a group. And when we turn back to the Similitudes we do find some remarkable parallelism between 'the Elect one' and 'the Elect ones'. They have certain common qualities and they share a common destiny. May it not be that we are here confronted by the 'oscillation' between the individual and the corporate?

I should like to suggest that there is in the Enoch picture a double oscillation, so to speak, for which there are parallels elsewhere. The group idea finds expression in the concept of the elect and righteous ones, i.e. the Israel within Israel, the Remnant. The individual idea finds expression in two personalities: at the beginning of the course of events in Enoch, who is regarded as the first human individual to embody the Son of Man idea, the nucleus of the group of the elect and righteous ones; at the end it finds expression again in the figure of the Messiah who is to carry out the final vindication of the
saints. But whether it be in Enoch, who is as it were the first-born of many brethren, or in the Messiah, or in the corporate body of the elect and righteous, it is the same idea that is embodied, an idea that formed part of the divine purpose before the creation of the world.

At this point I should like to introduce one or two bits of evidence which seem to me to illustrate the idea of oscillation between a group and its founder-member or first nucleus. The first is from *Ber. R.* 44, 27a (Theodor, p. 426) discussing the text Is. xli. 8 f.: ‘But thou Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. . . . I have chosen thee and not cast thee away.’ On the last clause the comment is: ‘“I have chosen thee”—in Abraham; “and I have not cast thee away”—in Abraham’. You might almost say that Israel is the body of Abraham. Again, in Ps. lxxxix. 4 (LXX) we have

\[ \text{diathēmen diathēken tois ēkletonis mou} \]
\[ \text{ámsa Davíd tōú doulw mou} \]

and R. Kittel in his commentary on this verse (p. 296) remarked that ‘der Erwählte ist wohl Israel das in David als dem König vertreten ist’. In the New Testament, Heb. vii. 1-10, we have an elaborate argument concerning Abraham's payment of tithes to Melchizedek, in which the nerve of the proof is the idea that Abraham represents the Levitical priesthood that would one day be descended from him, and that so the Levitical priesthood can be thought of as paying tithe to Melchizedek. In Eph. i. 4 we have the idea of the Church being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. In these cases we have an individual representing a community that does not yet exist in such a way that the community, when it does come into being, may be thought of as an extension of his personality. I am inclined to think that it is along these lines that we may find a solution of the problem of Enoch. Enoch incarnates, not a ‘pre-existent heavenly being’ but a divine idea. He is hailed by God as the incarnation of the idea, after he has lived a life of righteousness on earth. He becomes the first actualisation in history of the Son of Man idea and the nucleus of the group of the elect and righteous. Some of these have died and are with
Enoch in Paradise; others are still *militantes in saeculo*. The thing for which all wait is the manifestation of the Son of Man idea in triumph in the Messianic vindication of the elect and righteous.

Now an idea, a piece of God's purpose, which has been actualised in a famous man in the past, is actualised in the people of the saints of the Most High in the days of the Maccabees, and is destined to be more fully actualised in the expected Messiah, is something specially characteristic of the Hebrew way of looking at life and history. It has obvious points of contact with another characteristically Hebrew and Semitic idea, that of corporate personality. It is not possible here to do more than indicate the most important points. ¹ Chief among these is one, to which I allowed too little weight in my earlier discussion of the Son of Man in the *Teaching of Jesus*; that is the constant oscillation between the conception of the social unit as an association of individuals in the plural or as a corporate personality in the singular. ² Along with this goes the fact that where the conception of corporate personality is dominant there is often a tendency to see the corporate personality as embodied in a person. The king in some sense embodies the corporate personality of his subjects. ³

So when we come to study the use of the term Son of Man in the sayings of Jesus, we should be prepared to find that it


² Cf. A. R. Johnson, *op. cit.*, 15. Something of the same sort comes into our own thinking when we hesitate over 'The Committee were of the opinion ...' or 'The Committee was of the opinion ...', and solve the problem by saying 'The Committee came to the conclusion ...'.

³ Cf. N. A. Dahl, *Das Volk Gottes*, 20 ff.; D. Daube, *Studies in Biblical Law*, 154-189. Something similar may be observed in the Roman Empire in the idea of the Emperor as carrying the person of the state. On this see C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 127 and cf. Seneca, *de Clementia*, i. 4 f. 'tu (Nero) animus rei publicae tuae es, illa corpus tuum'.

may stand for a community comparable to ‘the people of the saints of the Most High’ in Dan. vii., and that sometimes this community may be thought of as an aggregate of individual disciples, at others as a single corporate entity. Again we should be prepared to find that this corporate entity is embodied *par excellence* in Jesus himself in such a way that his followers, who together with him constitute the Son of Man as a group, may be thought of as extensions of his personality, or, as St. Paul puts it later on, limbs of his body. And I think that all the authentic instances of the use of the term ‘Son of Man’ in the Synoptic Gospels should be interpreted along these lines. When I wrote the *Teaching of Jesus*, I was prepared to make two exceptions, and to regard Son of Man in Mk. ii. 10 and 28 as signifying ‘man’ in general. It now seems to me certain that in Mk. ii. 27 f. we should read, ‘The Sabbath was made for the Son of Man and not the Son of Man for the Sabbath: and so the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath’. In the other and more perplexing saying about the right of the Son of Man to forgive sins on earth, I am more and more disposed to think that the essential thing about forgiveness of sins on earth is restoration to full fellowship with the community. Sin cuts off the member: forgiveness restores him. With whom, then, does the right of restoration and reintegration lie? Mk. ii. 10 says that it lies with the community itself; and the community in this matter acts through Jesus who embodies and represents it.

If now we look at the Gospel occurrences of ‘Son of Man’ as a whole, I think we can lay down a number of propositions about them.

(1) Jesus took the term Son of Man, and with it its primary meaning, from Dan. vii. We have evidence in Mk. xiv. 62 that he knew the Daniel passage and was influenced by it. We have no good reason to suppose that he was aware of any other Son of Man than the Danielic.  

1 For the proof of this see my article in *Coniectanea Neotestamentica*, xi. (1947), 138-146. I take the essential meaning of the saying to be that the Son of Man (= Jesus and his disciples) is engaged on a task whose requirements override those of the Sabbath laws.

(2) The Danielic Son of Man represents the people of the saints of the Most High; and his destiny, which is theirs, is to ‘receive the kingdom’. This reception of the kingdom I take to be a comprehensive expression covering all the popular hopes of the vindication of the Chosen People, all the ideas associated with the Divine promises made in favour of the dynasty of David, the kind of thing that is set out in detail in the *Psalms of Solomon* xvii. f., the *Magnificat*, and the *Benedictus*. The people of the saints of the Most High is the actualisation in history of the Israelite ideal. The concept of the Son of Man thus links the Davidic hope to the Israelite ideal.

(3) The tension in the Gospels between Jesus and his contemporaries is in the interpretation of all this. The crucial questions are about the way in which the kingdom is to be transferred to its rightful owners, and about the nature of the Israelite ideal. In the days of Jesus there was a powerful inclination to answer the former question in terms of the acquisition of political power and economic advantage by Israel, and the latter in terms of the establishment of the Jewish Law as the supreme standard of behaviour.

(4) Jesus took a different line. He defined the ‘Son of Man’ in terms of the ‘Servant of the Lord’.¹ We can see this definition worked out in detail in the Son of Man sayings themselves, and in a series of sayings concerning the task of the disciples and the nature of the true greatness and power which a disciple may hope to attain. Above all we can see it in the nature and progress of the Messianic Ministry itself. The best reason for calling Jesus Son of Man *par excellence* is the fact that his Ministry reveals perfectly the true meaning of the term. If we say that the Son of Man must be the Servant of the Lord—and I think that is what Jesus said—it means that the Messiah must be the Servant of the Lord and that Israel (or the Remnant) must be the Servant of the Lord, and that the Israelite ideal must be the ideal portrayed in the picture of the Servant of the Lord. It means all three; and we may add that the Messiah Jesus embodies the Israelite ideal and embodies Israel.

¹ On this vitally important point see W. Manson, *Jesus the Messiah*, 110 ff.
(5) Finally, it has to be said that the supreme and dominating figure in all this is the Ancient of Days or the Most High in Daniel, the Lord of Spirits in *Enoch* and the God and Father of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. The kingdom is his kingdom, and it comes as his gift. Its actualisation in history is a revelation of divine power. Similarly, the Israelite ideal is a God-given standard; whether as embodied in the Torah or in the Messianic Ministry it is a revelation of the Divine wisdom. So Paul can speak of Jesus as the power and wisdom of God, for in him the power and wisdom of God are actualised. In him the kingdom of God comes to Israel and the God-given Israelite ideal is realised.