THE SON OF MAN PROBLEM IN RECENT RESEARCH AND DEBATE

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THE Son of Man problem in the Gospels is one of the most perplexing and challenging in the whole field of Biblical theology. It is primarily a theological problem: the elucidation of the meaning of the term in the Synoptic and Johannine tradition, for it appears once only again in the New Testament, in the vision of the martyr Stephen at Acts vii. 56. But it is also a historical problem, for if the title "Son of Man" was applied by Jesus to himself (and it is more than likely that it was), then, in seeking to determine its original meaning, we are really asking, "Who was this Son of Man?" If I may so put it without irreverence (and without begging the question) the fundamental problem is this: What did the man mean when he called himself "son of man", or simply "man", for that is the meaning of the original term ben-Adam (or in Aramaic barnash);

"What is man that thou art mindful of him,
Or the son of man that thou visitest him" [Ps. viii. 4]

"Son of man" is a poetic synonym for "man", mankind as here, or individual men, like the prophet Ezekiel, or Israel, as at Ps. lxxx. 17:

"Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand
The son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself."

Israel is, so to speak, God's right hand man, the child of man God has nurtured (so Moffat renders) for himself, God's chosen man.

Who was this man, Jesus of Nazareth, who could so designate himself "Son of Man"?

Some years ago, in a series of articles in the Expository Times which appeared under the title "Unsolved New Testament

1 The Manson Memorial Lecture, delivered in the University of Manchester on 1 November 1962.
Problems", no fewer than three articles were devoted to the Son of Man question.\(^1\) It might well seem a fruitless task to continue trying to solve the apparently insoluble, but the quest of the historical Jesus—for it is no less an issue that the Son of Man problem raises—must still go on, and no one was more firmly convinced of the obligation which is laid on every *Neu­testamentler* to continue the quest than the distinguished scholar in whose memory this Lecture was founded.

There is no end to the debate on this subject (as Dr. A. J. B. Higgins's contribution to the Memorial Volume to Professor Manson, "The Son of Man Forschung since the Teaching of Jesus", abundantly shows), but the problem has recently become *aktuell* again as the result of a challenging study by Professor Philip Vielhauer of Bonn, "Gottesreich und Menschensohn" in the *Festschrift für Günther Dehn*.\(^2\) Vielhauer revived the argument of H. B. Sharman in his book "Son of Man and Kingdom of God" (New York, 1943) that, in the oldest strata of the Gospel tradition (mainly the source we know as Q) Son of Man and Kingdom of God seldom come together in the same saying or sayings source. The two concepts Son of Man and Kingdom of God, as Sharman put it, "create the impression of two foci that do not belong to the same ellipse"... "the Son of Man has no kingdom and the Kingdom of God has no Son of Man."\(^3\) We have to do, Vielhauer argues, with two quite separate strands of the Gospel tradition, and he concludes that, since Jesus certainly proclaimed the Kingdom of God, he can, therefore, never have employed the term or title Son of Man of himself or anyone else. It was a Christological title, not so much invented by the primitive Church as appropriated by it from apocalyptic Judaism, where it denoted, not the Messiah, but a "pre-existent heavenly being", and it was applied by the Church to Jesus, with particular reference to his Parousia or Second Advent.

Vielhauer's arguments have been accepted by Hans Conzelmann in a study entitled "Gegenwart und Zukunft in der

\(^1\) Vols. lix. 11, lx. 1, 2.
\(^3\) Op. cit. p. 89.
synoptischen Tradition"\(^1\) which does no more than cross the "t's" and dot the "i's" of the Vielhauer theory. The first to challenge it has been Eduard Schweizer of Zürich in two articles, "Der Menschensohn (Zur eschatologischen Erwartung Jesu)" and "The Son of Man" in which he develops, in reply to Vielhauer and Conzelmann, a thesis first set out in his book Erniedrigung und Erhöhung.\(^2\)

Schweizer follows Bultmann in taking some of the Son of Man sayings in the Gospels as genuine sayings of Jesus, but otherwise goes against the continental stream in claiming that in these particular sayings the term refers to Jesus himself and is a self-designation of Jesus. The genuine sayings are: (1) those where Jesus refers to himself in his earthly ministry, in his humanity and humiliation (e.g. "The Son of Man came eating and drinking" (Matt. xi. 19 par.), "The Son of man has nowhere to lay his head" (Mat. viii. 20 par.)). Jesus in his earthly ministry is a sign to this generation as Jonah was to the Ninevites (Matt. xii. 41 par.); the "days of the Son of Man", which are like the days of Noah before the Flood (Mat. xxiv. 37 par.), also refer to the earthly ministry of Jesus. The saying about the the Son of man being Lord of the Sabbath (Mark ii. 28) may also come into this category. On the other hand (2), the Marcan predictions of the suffering, death and resurrection of the Son of Man are all late: the prediction of the resurrection is *vaticinium post eventum*. Nevertheless, the tradition of the suffering and rejection is ancient and authentic teaching of Jesus. Both these groups of selected sayings come into the category of the Erniedrigung of the Son of Man, his abasement, humiliation, suffering and death, and they are all genuinely part of what Jesus said about himself as Son of Man. (3) There is also, however, another category of eschatological sayings which are genuine and which refer to Jesus as Son of Man in his Erhöhung

\(^1\) *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, Jahrgang 54, Heft 3, pp. 277 ff.

or "exaltation". It is a very attenuated list, for none of the sayings which speak of the coming of the Son of Man (in effect, the main Q tradition) can be above suspicion as the invention of the early Church. There are, in fact, two sayings only in this category which are genuine: the first is Mark xiv. 62, Jesus' reply to the High Priest "... ye shall see the son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven". This refers to Jesus' Erhöhung, but the "coming" of the Son of Man is not from heaven to earth, as the early Church reinterpreted it, but as Daniel vii. 13, which is here quoted, originally meant, the exaltation of the Son of Man to the Ancient of Days. In this aspect of his theory Schweizer follows (among recent interpreters) Glasson and J. A. T. Robinson. The other genuine eschatological saying is Luke xii. 8 par.

"Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will the son of man confess before the angels of God.” Jesus is not here distinguishing himself from another as coming Son of Man (as Bultmann contended), but referring to himself in his exalted role at the eschaton. It is an exalted role, yet a subordinate one, for the exclusive role of Jesus Son of Man in the Last Judgement will be the role of witness, counsel for the defence and prosecution alike—and nothing more.

The foundation of Schweizer’s theory outside the Gospels is his reconstruction of Jewish eschatological belief of the period about the Erniedrigung und Erhöhung of the righteous man (or righteous man). A familiar presentation of it is in the well-known carol:

Now, Job he was a patient man,  
The richest in the East:  
When he was brought to poverty,  
His sorrows soon increased.  
He bore them all most patiently;  
From sin he did refrain;  
He always trusted in the Lord;  
He soon got rich again.  
Come all you worthy Christian men  
That are so very poor,  
Remember how poor Lazarus  
Lay at the rich man’s door,

1 Jesus and His Coming (London, 1957).
While begging of the crumbs of bread
That from his table fell.
The Scriptures do inform us all
That in heaven he doth dwell...  

What is important in Schweizer's presentation of the theme is his claim that in contemporary Jewish eschatology the righteous who had suffered death itself in this life would survive death to confront their tormentors in the final reckoning with their deeds on earth. The sources for the theory are Jubilees 4.23, 10.17, Wisdom 2-5 and in particular 1 Enoch 71. Schweizer is sceptical about the value of the rest of this part of 1 Enoch (the Son of Man Similitudes), but 1 Enoch 71 is genuinely ancient tradition and here the translated Enoch is exalted to a special place in the counsels of the Almighty. According to Schweizer his function is to be witness, for the defence as well as the prosecution, at the Last Judgement. He is also called in that chapter "the son of man who is born unto righteousness". For the readers for whom this book was written, Enoch is the righteous Man *par excellence*, recapitulating in himself the final destiny of God's "right-hand man". (It will be recalled that in his modification of his Son of Man theory in the *Teaching of Jesus*, in his Rylands Lecture on "The Son of Man in Daniel, Enoch and the Gospels", Professor Manson maintained a similar position. In the earlier chapters of 1 Enoch he argued that the Son of Man was still as in Daniel a collective symbol: in chapters 70 ff. Enoch becomes the first historical actualization of the Son of Man, the nucleus of the elect community.)

To come to the main point: Enoch and the suffering and vindicated righteous at the judgement are prototype and pattern for the ministry of the Gospel Son of Man in his *Erniedrigung und Erhöhung*. His role at the Judgement is the subordinate role of witness and no more—and this is why he is never mentioned in connection with the proclamation of the Kingdom of God in the oldest Gospels sources.

The role seems a subordinate one, yet, as one reads Dr. Schweizer's further exposition, it appears to grow in importance. For Jesus, Son of Man, was not just another in the long line of the righteous in Israel. He was the eschatological Righteous
Man par excellence, representative of Israel: in him is Israel: in him is Man himself in the purpose and intention of God. He is the Man whom God has chosen to stand at his right hand in the Last Judgement of mankind.

One's first reaction to the theory is that the Son of Man sayings admitted as genuine seem suspiciously tailor-made to fit the Jewish myth of the suffering and exaltation of the righteous at the Last Judgement. Nor is the argument free from contradiction: the Son of Man at the Judgement may be reduced to the role of witness, but he is in no other respect diminished in stature, as the true Israel or as representative Man. In any case, the difficulty Dr. Schweizer's theory is intended to meet seems to me to have been grossly exaggerated, even possibly unreal, for other explanations can be given of the facts to which Vielhauer draws attention. Analysis of Vielhauer's source criticism reveals some notable exceptions to his general theory.

At Luke xxi. 27 the coming of the Son of Man is to be accompanied by certain premonitory signs and portents: "... then ye will see the son of man coming on the clouds with great power and glory". Verse 31 declares, after the parable of the fig-tree ripe for harvest (a well-known eschatological symbol for the Kingdom), "When ye see these things happening (the same signs and portents mentioned at verse 27) know that the Kingdom of God is near". Similarly, Kingdom of God and Son of Man are brought together at Mark viii. 38, ix. 1, Luke xxi. 31, 37, in both cases primary tradition. Most of the Son of Man sayings in the source Q, it is true, are about the Coming of the Son of Man, and there is none in that source about his suffering and rejection. But Q has also the sayings about the sign of the Son of Man and the "days of the Son of Man", surely, incidentally, eschatological sayings, even though they do refer to the earthly ministry of Jesus as Son of Man. It may be no more than accident that Q knows this tradition only, or due to the excessive preoccupation of its compiler with the Second Coming of the Son of Man; there would undoubtedly be a tendency to elaborate this part of the tradition, though here it must also be said that, if one saying (Mark xiv. 62) can have the original Danielic sense of the exaltation of the Son of Man, others too which speak of
his Coming may bear the same meaning. So far as the predictions of the rejection and resurrection of the Son of Man are concerned, it is indeed a bold piece of critical surgery to accept one half of a saying as authentic and reject the second half; it puts too great a strain on credence to imagine that, in these solemn predictions, two of which follow the story of the transfiguration, where Jesus is exalted above Moses and Elijah, the Son of Man sayings contained no reference to his exaltation (Mark ix. 9, 12). If we are not prepared to accept the genuineness of the resurrection prophecy, consideration ought to be given to what it may have replaced—and to this I shall return before the end of the lecture.

When all this has been said, it remains Dr. Schweizer's merit to have focused attention in the discussion on some features of contemporary Jewish eschatology, namely, the role of the suffering and exalted righteous at the Judgement, to which we do well to give serious attention. The idea of the righteous in Israel or the righteous Israel, sometimes represented by a chosen Israelite like Enoch, playing a part with God Himself in the Last Judgement, is well-attested in pre-Christian Jewish sources. Daniel vii itself is simply a variation on the same theme. But the most striking form of the belief must still be that in 1 Enoch 71 where the patriarch Enoch is himself declared to be "the Son of Man that is born unto righteousness". A generation ago it would have been said without fear of contradiction that the Similitudes of Enoch (1 Enoch 37-71) saw the individualizing of the Danielic symbol in the Son of Man Messiah. Lohmeyer¹ and Stauffer² are undoubtedly right that the term "Messiah" ought not to be applied to this figure, but reserved for the traditional Son of David Messiah. Any individualizing there is, in chapter 71 at any rate, is in the patriarch Enoch, selected or elected to his exalted role as heavenly scribe and witness at the Last Judgement because of his perfect righteousness. None of this can be Christian even in inspiration, and the presence of the legend in Jubilees shows how firmly it has established itself in pre-Christian Jewish tradition.

¹ Das Urchristentum I Johannes der Täufer (1932), pp. 157 ff.
How are we to assess the value of the remainder of the *Similitudes* of Enoch, outside chapter 71. Is there pre-Christian Jewish tradition in the Son of Man visions where the Son of Man appears to be quite distinct from Enoch, is perhaps a pre-existent heavenly being and is invested with the status and function of vice-gerent of God himself in the Last Judgement. Here it is impossible to suppress the suspicion that, while there is nothing distinctively Christian about the Son of Man figure in the *Similitudes*, it may have been inspired by the Gospels. Fragments of 1 Enoch in Aramaic have been found at Qumran; they show that the Book of Enoch circulated in at least eight different recensions, and there are fragments of every chapter of the Book from chapters 1-101 with the exception of chapters 37-71, the *Similitudes*. In view of this, it seems to me that the *Similitudes* (with the exception of chapters 70-71) cannot be cited as first-class evidence for pre-Christian Judaism. It may be, of course, that the absence of these chapters at Qumran means no more than that the recensions in circulation in Judaea did not contain chapters 37-71. Lohmeyer maintained that the Son of Man speculations came from North Palestine, Galilee or Samaria, and R. H. Charles also argued for a northern provenance for some parts of 1 Enoch. The value of the testimony of the *Similitudes* must still, however, be considered *sub judice*; and they must be used with caution. The view of Bultmann, Vielhauer, Conzelmann, etc., that the early church took over its Son of Man conception from a form of apocalyptic Judaism which held a belief in a "pre-existent heavenly being" receives therefore only a very qualified support from the Ethiopic *Similitudes*—and that would seem hitherto to have been the main prop of the theory. In any case, as Manson and Messel argued, it is by no means certain that the Enoch "Son of Man", apart from his identification with Enoch himself in chapters 70-71, is anything more than a collective symbol for Israel.

Possibly it is the Jubilees tradition to which we ought to pay most respect, for no doubts have ever been cast on its pre-Christian and Jewish character, as they have on the whole of the *Similitudes* section of 1 Enoch (chapters 37-71). Enoch's office, we are told at 10. 17, "was ordained for a testimony to the
generations of the world, so that he should recount all the deeds of generation unto generation, till the day of judgement". Earlier at 4. 23 we are informed that Enoch "was taken from amongst the children of men" and "conducted into the Garden of Eden in majesty and honour, and behold there he writes down the condemnation and judgement of the world, and all the wickedness of the children of men ... for there he was set as a sign and that he should testify against all the children of men, and that he should recount all the deeds of the generations until the day of judgement". Next in importance is Wisdom 2-5, for at ii. 13 the suffering righteous is described in language borrowed from the Servant prophecies of II Isaiah: "He professeth to have knowledge of God, and nameth himself servant of the Lord.... He is grievous unto us even to behold, because his life is unlike other men's, and his paths are of strange fashion.... With outrage and torture let us put him to the test, that we may learn his gentleness and may prove his patience.... Thus reasoned they, and they were led astray, for ... they knew not the mysteries of God.... Because God created man for incorruption ... the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God. In the eyes of the foolish they seem to have died; and their departure was accounted to be their hurt, and their journeying away from us to be their ruin: but they are in peace. For even if in the sight of men they be punished, their hope is full of immortality; and having borne a little chastening, they shall receive great good; because God made trial of them, and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace he proved them. And in the time of their visitation they shall shine forth.... They shall judge nations, and have dominion over peoples; and the Lord shall reign over them for evermore." Erniedrigung und Erhöhung: the suffering righteous are the true immortals by whom mankind will be judged.

The thought in this famous passage moves constantly between the righteous (collective), i.e. the righteous Israel, the Remnant and the righteous individual. At the end of chapter iv one righteous Israelite is singled out for special mention. The identity of this righteous one par excellence is unmistakable: it is the patriarch Enoch: "Being found well-pleasing unto God
he was beloved of him, and while living among sinners he was translated . . . lest wickedness should change his understanding or guile deceive his soul. Being made perfect in a little while, he fulfilled long years; for his soul was pleasing unto the Lord. . . . But a righteous man who was cut off shall condemn the ungodly that are alive." ¹ Nothing could show more clearly how widespread the Enoch myth was in pre-Christian Judaism, for Wisdom comes from the Alexandrian Judaism of the second or first century B.C.

To sum up the argument to this point: Dr. Schweizer has done a real service to the subject by drawing attention to this important background of the Son of Man concept: there was, in contemporary Judaism, a (possibly) widely held belief that in the coming Judgement—sooner or later—Israel or the afflicted and righteous Israel, through a chosen representative, such as Enoch, would be exalted to the heavens, and play a decisive role in the Last Assize. And Israel may stand for Man, representative Man, clothed with the righteousness which alone exalteth, not only a nation, but mankind.

It seems idle to attempt to deny the relevance and importance of this background of Jewish eschatological belief for the Son of Man problem.

The one question now outstanding is—granted the existence of such a belief of Erniedrigung und Erhöhung in pre-Christian Judaism—is it possible to isolate, as Schweizer does, an original and authentic Jesus—Son of Man tradition in the New Testament in line with this conception? I venture to suggest that the place in the New Testament to look first for it is, not in the Gospels, but in what is now widely acknowledged to be the oldest piece of Aramaic tradition in the New Testament, viz. the old Choral or hymn which St. Paul embodies in Philippians ii. If we cannot be absolutely certain that this is what Jesus taught about himself as Son of Man, it may at least point in this direction.

¹ I take the reference to be to the "young man" who was "caught up" (v. 11), i.e. Enoch (cf. v. 16, the same context). The text has "a righteous man who has died (καμῶν)", but καμῶν renders Hebrew qat, which means literally "who was cut off", "broken off"; and the choice of word seems to me to be dictated by the reference to Enoch who did not die but was translated (v. 11, μετερεθη = καμῶν).
At the time Professor Manson was writing his *Teaching of Jesus* a short monograph appeared in the *Sitzungsberichte* of the Heidelberg *Akademie der Wissenschaften* under the name of Ernst Lohmeyer and bearing the title *Kyrios Jesus.* It was a study of Philippians ii. In a critical *Auseinandersetzung* with Bousset’s well-known theory of the origins of the Kyrios title in Hellenistic religious cults, Lohmeyer argued that the title and idea came, not from Hellenism in the first place, but directly out of Judaism. The bridge between the Man Jesus and the Lord Jesus was the Son of Man concept of the primitive Jewish Christian tradition. The *Choral* or hymn, written (Lohmeyer conjectured) in Greek strongly influenced by Aramaic idiom, is all about the humiliation and death, followed by the vindication and triumph of One Who was “found in fashion as a man” (*σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἀνθρώπος*), a phrase directly traced by Lohmeyer to Daniel vii 13. (We can now argue that the earlier words about “being made in the likeness of men” (*ἐν ὄμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος*) is even closer to the text of Daniel, since the variant *ἐν ὄμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος,* “being made in the likeness of man”, has now the support of P46; and *ἐν ὄμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων* is the Danielic *καρναρν*, “one like a man”. At Rev. xiv. 4 the expression appears in an unmistakable allusion to Daniel vii. 13 as *δόμοιος νῦν (νῦν v. 1) ἀνθρώποι.*)

What is of special interest and importance for the Son of Man problem is (as Lohmeyer noted) that at no point in this Hymn is there any mention of the resurrection of the Son of Man: instead we read only of his triumph and vindication, his “exaltation”; the verb employed is *ὑπερυψώ*, “he (God) highly exalted him”, a verb standing alone here in Paul, and, in the uncontracted form *ὑψώ*, in precisely the same connection (the “exaltation” of the Son of Man) in four passages in the Fourth Gospel (John iii. 14, viii. 28, xii. 32, 34), and at Acts ii. 33, v. 31. In the two passages in Acts the word is used to describe the “exaltation” of Christ to the right hand of God, his “Ascension”, though this follows on the mention of Christ’s resurrection. But John’s usage corresponds with the Philippians passage. John

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almost certainly intended an allusion to the crucifixion and no doubt assumes, as Lohmeyer suggests Philippians ii also assumes, belief in the resurrection. But it is arguable that in Philippians and John we have an even earlier stratum of the tradition where the belief is solely in the triumph and vindication, the exaltation of the Son of Man.¹

One other passage falls into this same category. It is the closing words of Stephen's speech in Acts vii. 56. All the speeches in Acts conform to the pattern of the Apostolic Kerygma where the constant elements are the proclamation of the death and resurrection. Stephen's speech falls out of that pattern: he speaks of the humiliation and death, but it is the exaltation of the Son of Man, not his resurrection, which is his last word: "... I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

In his Baird Lecture for 1949 the late Professor William Manson traced a close connection between the speech of Stephen and the Epistle to the Hebrews: there is the same attitude to the cultus and the Law and the same type of eschatology, in particular in Stephen's closing vision of the opened heavens and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. There is, in fact, a prominent Son of Man Christology in Hebrews, e.g. in chapter ii where the testimony text Psalm viii.4 is applied to Jesus. In the translation of the New English Bible:

What is man, that thou rememberest him,
Or the son of man, that thou hast regard to him?
Thou didst make him for a short while lower than the angels;
Thou didst crown him with glory and honour;
Thou didst put all things in subjection beneath his feet.

The auctor ad Hebraeos is referring to Man, Adam of the Genesis mythology, who was given dominion over all things, for he goes on to say

¹ Professor F. F. Bruce reminds me that the same verb (ἀυξάνω) is used for the vindication or "exaltation" of the Servant of the Lord at Isa. lii. 13: "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and exalted, and be very high" (LXX Ἰδοὺ συνήσῃ ὁ παῖς μου, καὶ ἀυξηθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται σφόδρα). Both ἀυξηθήσεται and δοξασθήσεται are key Johannine Christological terms. Is this the original foundation in the Old Testament of the Christology of the suffering and exalted Servant of the Lord?
"But in fact we do not yet see all things in subjection to man". Then he adds

In Jesus, however, we do see one who for a short while was made lower than the angels, crowned now with glory and honour because he suffered death, so that, by God's gracious will, in tasting death he should stand for us all.

Jesus is representative Man—the Son of Man who, through his suffering and death, was exalted, "crowned with glory and honour". This exaltation of Jesus, Son of Man, is a central motif of the whole Book (e.g. i. 3, viii. 1, x. 12, xii. 2): but nowhere again is there any reference to the resurrection of Jesus. Here is the same kind of Christology as in John and Philippians ii. Was it a pre-Pauline Christology and was the prominence of the doctrine of the resurrection the creation of the Apostle Paul? At any rate the central motif of rejection and exaltation by God is the same as in contemporary Jewish thought about the vindication of the righteous and their exaltation to "be reckoned among the sons of God" (Wisdom v. 5).

There is, therefore, support for the theory that the oldest stratum of the Son of Man tradition referred only to his rejection and exaltation, bringing this earliest Christian belief into line, in its main structure, with current forms of Jewish eschatology. Did Jesus, however, ever predict his exaltation in terms of his resurrection? We come back to the question of the authenticity of the Marcan predictions of the rejection and resurrection of the Son of Man. Is it too fanciful to see in the Johannine version of this tradition, δει υψωθηναι τὸν νῦν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου "the son of man must be exalted" (iii. 14), the most primitive form of the Gospel tradition and a genuine saying of Jesus? The resurrection prediction would then be secondary tradition, yet at the same time a quite legitimate inference from the "exaltation" of the Son of Man, since his 'uplifting' to God, as in the exaltation and vindication of the righteous, led him through death to immortality.

It is even more difficult to decide the role of the Son of Man in the eschatia in the original tradition: if, however, we can believe that some of the Parousia sayings referred originally to the exaltation of the Son of Man then it meant more than the role of witness; John again may be nearer the mind of Jesus
when he declared that the Father "hath given him authority to execute judgement, because he is the Son of Man" (v. 27).

Finally: Jesus looked forward to the vindication and triumph of himself as Son of Man. But was it only of himself he was thinking? Was it not, in the simplest of all terms, of the righteous cause in the ways of men—what the Gospels call the Kingdom of God? Was it not Man himself? Schweizer has again underlined the corporate significance of the term: it is all the righteous who are vindicated in the triumph and exaltation of the "proper man". We come full circle to the idea which is so inalienably associated with the scholar whom we commemorate in this Lecture; and it still seems to me that what Professor Manson wrote in this connection remains the most penetrating insight we have obtained in this century into the mind and intention of Jesus, however much we may differ with details of his exposition.

It seems appropriate to conclude this Memorial Lecture with the much-quoted words from his Teaching of Jesus. And it may serve also as a tribute to his memory:

... "Son of Man" in the Gospels is the final term in a series of conceptions all of which are found in the Old Testament. These are: the Remnant (Isaiah), the Servant of Jehovah (2 Isaiah), the "I" of the Psalms, and the Son of Man (Daniel). It has been argued above that it is the idea of the Remnant which is the essential feature about each of these: and it is now suggested that Son of Man in the Gospels is another embodiment of the Remnant idea. In other words, the Son of Man is, like the Servant of Jehovah, an ideal figure and stands for the manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth in a people wholly devoted to their heavenly King. How, then, does it come about that in the Gospels the term "Son of Man" is so often and so obviously a designation of Jesus himself? The answer to this question is that the restriction of the denotation of the term is the outcome of the prophetic ministry of Jesus. His mission is to create the Son of Man, the Kingdom of the saints of the Most High, to realise in Israel the ideal contained in the term. This task is attempted in two ways: first by public appeal to the people through the medium of parable and sermon and by the mission of the disciples: then, when this appeal produced no adequate response, by the consolidation of his own band of followers. Finally, when it becomes apparent that not even the disciples are ready to rise to the demands of the ideal, he stands alone, embodying in his own person the perfect human response to the regal claims of God.

1 Teaching of Jesus, p. 227.