

JESUS AS ADVOCATE : A CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHRISTOLOGY DEBATE¹

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JUST thirty years ago the late Professor T. W. Manson delivered a lecture in the Rylands Library series entitled "The Son of Man in Daniel, Enoch and the Gospels".² It was a distinguished item in the never-ending debate which surrounds the problematical figure of the Son of Man. The lecture was notable for its careful discrimination of the references to the Son of Man in the Ethiopic Similitudes of Enoch,³ which is the only source outside the Bible where a messianic figure is designated in this way.⁴ One of Manson's points was that the phrase in Ethiopic for the Son of Man (*walda eguala ema heyau*) is regularly accompanied by the demonstrative pronoun, which implies that it means more than "the man" in a general sense. Strangely, however, he failed to point out that this usage is best explained by the fact that the phrase always refers back to the description given in the book of Enoch itself, only a few lines before the very first mention of "that Son of Man":

And there I saw one who had a head of days, and his head (was) white like wool; and with him (there was) another, whose face had the appearance of a man, and his face (was) full of grace, like one of the holy angels. And I asked one of the holy angels who went with me, and showed me all the secrets, about that Son of Man . . . (I En. xlvi. 1 f., Knibb's translation).

¹ A lecture delivered in the John Rylands University Library on Wednesday, the 17th of October 1979.

² BULLETIN, xxxii (1949-50), 171-93. The lecture was given on 9th November 1949.

³ I Enoch xxxvii-lxxi. This section of Enoch is only known from the Ethiopic version. For text and translation, see now M. A. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch: a new edition in the light of the Aramaic Dead Sea Fragments*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1978). The text in this edition is reproduced from Rylands Ethiopic MS. 23.

⁴ In fact, II Esdras xiii should perhaps also be included, because *homo* (verses 3 and 12) represents Greek *anthrōpos*, and this could translate "the son of man" if the original were in Aramaic. In verse 51 some Ethiopic manuscripts actually read "the son of man". An Aramaic original is postulated by L. Gry, *Les dires prophétiques d'Esdras (IV^e d'Esdras)*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1938). The plural "sons of men" is translated by simple *anthrōpoi* in Dan. ii. 38 (LXX) and v. 21 (Theodotion).

The demonstrative points back to the vision of the one "whose face had the appearance of a man". It is obvious that he is the "one like a son of man" of Daniel vii. 13. There is thus no question about the identity of the Son of Man in the Similitudes of Enoch: he is the Danielic figure.

Manson also pointed out that another title for this figure in the Similitudes, i.e. the Elect One (Knibb: the Chosen One), does not have the demonstrative. This is because it is an established messianic designation, so that the application of the title is not in doubt. On one occasion (liii. 6) the double description, the Righteous and Elect One, is used. These epithets correspond with the adjectives used of the people who will be saved, who are frequently referred to as the righteous or the elect. There is thus a deliberate correlation between the Son of Man and the people of God. Unfortunately Manson took the consequences of this observation too far. He invoked the then fashionable concept of corporate personality to identify the Son of Man with the people whom he represents.¹ Having argued for this identification in the Similitudes of Enoch, he turned back to the gospels, and proposed the same interpretation for Jesus' use of the designation. "So", he says, "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 may stand for a community comparable to 'the people of the saints of the Most High' in Daniel vii, and that sometimes this community may be thought of as an aggregate of individual disciples, at others as a single corporate entity" (p. 190 f.).

This paper will be concerned mainly with a single saying of Jesus, in which he refers to himself as the Son of Man. More preliminary matters have to be attended to first, but I mention it now because the saying, in its Marcan form, has been interpreted

¹ Manson has been heavily criticized for this interpretation, which, of course, depends in the first instance on the identification of the Danielic figure with the "saints of the Most High" (Dan. vii. 18), argued earlier in the lecture. J. Jeremias (*New Testament Theology*, i (London, 1971) 274) seeks to defend him, but confuses the issue by failing to distinguish between the Son of Man as a royal person who *represents* his people, and the Son of Man as an inclusive person who is actually the people themselves considered as one man, and so acts as a symbol of the people as a whole. There is no suggestion in the Similitudes that the Son of Man is thought of in this way.

along the lines of Manson's corporate idea of the Son of Man. Mark's form is as follows (Mk. viii. 38) :

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.

There is an alternative reading, " of me and mine ",¹ and this would associate Jesus with the disciples. Adopting this reading, Vincent Taylor comments :

By it Jesus meant that people who confessed or rejected His claims, or were " ashamed " of Himself and His disciples, would be judged by the Elect Community shortly to be consummated at the coming of the Kingdom (cf. Mark ix. 1).²

So the Son of Man is identified with the Elect Community as a whole.

This corporate interpretation continues to find favour with British scholars, although it depends entirely on ideas that are claimed to be inherent in the title Son of Man itself, on the basis of Daniel vii, and has no support in the Son of Man sayings in the gospels as such. One very recent treatment of the Son of Man problem by Morna Hooker goes so far as to say : " This particular Aramaic phrase . . . would be understood to point to the Danielic idea of the suffering and vindicated righteous community." ³ On the next page she suggests that Jesus' use of the title embodies a " challenge to others to be included ". From this point of view the Son of Man is the potential community of the Elect. Moreover, this company is not merely the true Israel, as would seem to be implied by the identification of the Son of Man with the people of the saints of the Most High in

¹ " Words " (*logous*) is omitted by W k* sa Tert, and this weakly attested reading is adopted by NEB, both here and in the parallel at Luke ix. 26, where it is omitted by D a e l sy^c Or. It is an early " western " reading, possibly merely a matter of accidental omission in the manuscript tradition of one gospel, which has then influenced that of the other. C. K. Barrett, " I am not Ashamed of the Gospel ", *New Testament Essays* (London, 1972), pp. 116-43, has shown in detail that *logous* should be retained as an authentic part of Mark's text (cf. x. 40, *heneken emou kai heneken tou evangeliou*).

² *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (London, 1966), p. 384.

³ M. D. Hooker, " Is the Son of Man problem really insoluble ? ", in *Text and Interpretation : Studies in the New Testament presented to Matthew Black*, ed. E. Best and R. McL. Wilson (Cambridge, 1979), p. 167.

Daniel vii. It is the righteous of the whole of humanity, for the Son of Man is *ben 'ādām*, the race that springs from Adam. Though the Adam typology in the New Testament is confined to Paul (I Cor. xv; Rom. v), and possibly Hebrews (ii. 5-18), it is claimed that it belongs also to the Son of Man title, because Daniel vii has allusions to the Genesis creation myth. But obviously, if we accept the identification with the people of the saints of the Most High, which means the loyal Jews, this can only be a Christian development, and cannot be taken to be included in the accepted range of reference of the Son of Man title itself. In fact it is very doubtful if Paul's Adam typology depends upon Daniel vii at all.¹

It is clear that I do not favour the corporate interpretation of the Son of Man title, but before criticizing it further I must remind you that it is by no means merely an academic issue, but remains a point of considerable importance in the current debate on christology. What did Jesus think of himself? Can we build a case for the claim that Jesus is God's Son in a unique sense on the Son of Man sayings? Christian experience ascribes to the exalted Jesus a cosmic status. It presupposes that all men may have a real relationship with him, and indeed (to quote some words of C. F. D. Moule) "the aliveness of Christ, existing transcendently beyond death, is recognized as the prior necessity for the community's corporate existence, and as its source and origin".² This experience is expressed in different ways in all major strands of the New Testament. If Jesus actually spoke of himself as in some sense a corporate figure, this helps to root the idea in the teaching of Jesus himself. It is one way (of course, not the only way) in which there may be grounds for believing that Jesus was aware of a relationship between himself and mankind analogous to that of God himself. It is for this reason that

¹ As the identification of Jesus with the Son of Man figure in Dan. vii had certainly been made before Paul was writing, this inevitably contributes to the apocalyptic elements in Paul's picture of Christ—though these are, in fact, expressed with the aid of Psalm verses (Ps. cx. 1 in I Cor. xv. 25; Ps. viii. 6 in I Cor. xv. 27), without reference to Daniel. The chief sources, however, are the Adam speculations of the Hellenistic-Jewish and Greco-Oriental world. It cannot be assumed that, when an expression for man, or mankind, is used, these issues are implied without more ado.

² *The Origin of Christology* (Cambridge, 1977), p. 70.

all treatments of New Testament christology devote so much space to this vexed question of the Son of Man.

However, it is very doubtful if the Son of Man title *alone* can bear such a rich and specialized meaning. This supposition derives from the peculiarity of the Greek, which, by its oddness and by its consistency, suggests that it denotes one distinct concept. With one exception,¹ the phrase in the sayings of Jesus always has the article, *ho huios tou anthrōpou*. This contrasts with other uses of the expression in the New Testament, which are based on the Septuagint (where it never has the article),² and in the Apostolic Fathers, using it to denote the humanity of Jesus.³ The use of the article in the dominical sayings has virtually demonstrative force. Jesus refers to himself not as *a* son of man, but as *the* Son of Man. It has long been recognized that this is comparable to the use of the demonstrative in the Similitudes of Enoch, which refers, as we have seen, to the Danielic figure. The same may well be the implication of the definite article in this phrase too.

Difficulties begin, however, when we attempt to reconstruct the original Aramaic which lies behind the phrase. As the Greek has the article and not the demonstrative adjective, we have to postulate an Aramaic form with the article, and for this it is natural to assume that the Aramaic would use the emphatic state, *bar ʾnāšāʾ*.⁴ But this is an idiomatic expression, which simply means "the man", and should be translated into Greek as

¹ John v. 27, *hoti huios anthrōpou estin*. None of the reasons advanced for deliberate omission of the articles is convincing. The best solution seems to me to be direct influence of Dan. vii. 13 (*hōs huios anthrōpou*), to which the context as a whole alludes. This possibility is allowed by C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John* (London, 1978), p. 262, referring also to S. S. Smalley, "The Johannine Son of Man Sayings", NTS, xv (1969), 292.

² Heb. ii. 6 (cf. Ps. viii. 5); Rev. i. 13; xiv. 14 (both based on Dan. vii. 13). Acts vii. 56, in which the articles are used, is to be classed with the Synoptic sayings.

³ E.g. Ignatius, *ad Eph.*, xx. 2; *Epistle of Barnabas*, xii. 10.

⁴ Or *bar nāšāʾ*. The difference is not unimportant, because evidence for the possible meaning of the phrase on the lips of Jesus has been derived from material in which this form occurs. It is held by Fitzmyer that all such material is too late for consideration of the meaning of the phrase in New Testament times, cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, "Another View of the 'Son of Man' Debate", JSNT, issue 4 (1979), pp. 56-68.

ho anthrōpos.¹ It is true that the translation-Greek of the Septuagint is satisfied with *huios anthrōpou* to denote a man as a specimen of humanity or as a collective for the whole of humanity, and the use of the definite article is quite natural in the plural, "the sons of men" (*hoi huioi tōn anthrōpōn*, e.g. Mark iii. 28). But this never has the article in the singular. Consequently the Greek phrase presented a problem when the gospels were translated into Syriac, a language which is very closely allied to Aramaic. In order to preserve the peculiarity of the Greek phrase, the translators adopted the expression *b^ereh d^e'nāšā'*, or alternatively *b^ereh d^e'gabrā'*,² which properly means "the man's son", implying the son of a known father. Of course it is inconceivable that such a phrase should lie behind the Greek, as there is no point of reference for the man who is the father.³ The Syriac is, then, a literal translation of the Greek, designed to preserve the uniqueness of the expression, whereas *bar 'nāšā'* is used from time to time to translate the simple *anthrōpos* (e.g. Matt. xii. 12, Old Syriac).

The conclusion appears to be inevitable that the Greek phrase translates an expression which does not have the same distinctiveness in the Aramaic, and which is best understood simply as "the man". But before we rush to adopt this in our modern translations of the New Testament, we should remember that the Greek does *not* mean simply "the man". So it is incumbent upon us to decide how this extraordinary translation came to be used in the tradition of the sayings of Jesus. Here we can benefit from a most valuable observation of Martin Hengel, the full consequences of which appear not to have been generally realized.⁴ He has pointed out that the *consistency* of this strange Greek expression in the sayings of Jesus, which is not at all the

¹ Cf. the remarks on II Esdras, p. 476, n. 4 above.

² E.g. Mark viii. 38 in the Old Syriac version. This form was dropped for the sake of consistency in the Syriac Peshitta. It is significant, however, because *gabrā'* is the Syriac word usually employed when *ho anthrōpos* refers to a particular man, e.g. Matt. xii. 35.

³ The same argument applies to the suggestion that the underlying Aramaic was *b^era' d^e'nāšā'*, which would still denote the son of a particular man.

⁴ "Zwischen Jesus und Paulus", ZThK, lxxii (1975), 151-206. The relevant passage (p. 202 f.) is quoted in C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology*, p. 11, n. 1.

normal translation of the Aramaic, proves that this translation goes back to a definite place and time in the history of the sayings tradition. It was adopted, because Jesus' use of *bar* 'nāšā' was by this time felt to represent a particular christological conception. As this could well be the identification of the exalted Jesus with the Danielic figure (Hengel suggests that it started with the vision of Stephen, Acts vii. 56, in which there is direct allusion to Dan. vii. 13), the definite articles in the Greek are explained as specifying this figure. The Greek *ho huios tou anthrōpou*, then, *does* mean the Son of Man of Daniel vii. 13.

The important point, however, is that this observation with regard to the *translation* creates a sharp distinction between the *original meaning* of the sayings and their present Greek form. It has, in fact, long been recognized that some of the Son of Man sayings misrepresent the force of the original, e.g. Matthew xii. 32 = Luke xii. 10: "Whoever says a word against the Son of 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". The contrast is, of course, between slandering *men* and blaspheming God. But we now have an explanation of all the other sayings, where Jesus uses *bar* 'nāšā', not of mankind in general, but with reference to himself. In each case the Greek translator has taken advantage of the use of a term for man to make the identification of Jesus with the Danielic figure explicit. It then becomes an open question whether Jesus intended this in any given instance or not. Indeed cautious scholars, like Ian Marshall, are prepared to allow for variety in the meaning which Jesus himself attached to the phrase.¹ In any case there is a tendency for Son of Man sayings to undergo development in the direction of making the reference to the Danielic figure explicit. We shall observe this in our chosen text on Jesus as advocate (Mk. viii. 38, quoted above). The process never works the other way round.

We may also note that Hengel's observation opens the way to a convincing explanation of another thorny problem, why the Son of Man appears as a title of Jesus only in sayings attributed

¹ Cf. I. H. Marshall, *The Origins of New Testament Christology* (Inter-Varsity Press, 1976), pp. 63-82.

to him (plus Acts vii. 56), and never in the christology of the New Testament elsewhere. There is no evidence, for example, that Paul, who wrote in Greek, ever used, or even knew, the phrase *ho huios tou anthrōpou*, though he was certainly not unaware of sayings of Jesus. The reason for this remarkable phenomenon is that the phrase was never an accepted title for Jesus, but solely an interpretative translation of *bar' 'nāšā'* in the sayings of Jesus. We can then go further, and assert that the presence of *ho huios tou anthrōpou* always points to *bar' 'nāšā'* in the underlying text, except where the evangelist has inserted it into his source. But these cases, which are not numerous, always imply the identification of Jesus with the Danielic figure.¹ We can thus draw the conclusion that, just as the Greek phrase is a peculiar style-feature of the sayings of Jesus in the gospels, so the underlying *bar' 'nāšā'*, whatever its precise meaning in any particular context, is a style-feature of the sayings in their original Aramaic form. Consequently we should be very cautious about accepting the contention of Jeremias that many of the Son of Man sayings have been developed out of originals in which quite different expressions are used.² In fact, I would go so far as to say that, even in those few cases where the first person *ego* replaces the third person Son of Man in parallel passages, we probably have variant traditions, rather than a deliberate change by one of the evangelists. We shall see this feature in one of the parallels of our "advocate" text in a moment.

Lastly, Hengel's observation finally disposes of the contention, common among German scholars, and particularly promoted by Tödt³ and Hahn,⁴ that Jesus used the Son of Man phrase as a title referring to a person other than himself. Once more, our "advocate" text is the classic passage for this theory, in spite of

¹ This is clear in the Fourth Gospel, where John, building creatively on Son of Man sayings, uses the identification with the Danielic figure as the basis of a vital aspect of his christology, cf. B. Lindars, "The Son of Man in the Johannine Christology", in *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament: Studies in Honour of C. F. D. Moule*, ed. B. Lindars and S. S. Smalley (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 43-60.

² J. Jeremias, "Die älteste Schichte der Menschensohn-Logien", ZNW, lviii (1967), 159-72.

³ H. E. Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (London, 1965).

⁴ F. Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology* (London, 1969), pp. 15-67.

the implications of the *ego* form in one of the parallels. But it really became impossible to maintain when Vermes showed that there was no such title as the Son of Man in the Jewish background to the New Testament.¹ Hengel's point delivers the *coup de grâce* by showing that the title was *created* in the process of translation precisely with reference to Jesus and to no other.

We can now turn to our text on Jesus as advocate, and try to see what it reveals in the light of these considerations. The three synoptic gospels give it us in five forms, but these are commonly reduced to two, one being the form in Mark, which we have already glimpsed briefly, and the other the form in Q. The Marcan form (Mark viii. 38) is reproduced in greatly abbreviated form in Matthew xvi. 27, and a slightly abbreviated form in Luke ix. 26. The differences are not relevant for our present purpose, and so I will just remind you of the text of Mark :

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.

You can see the basis of the distinction between Jesus and the Son of Man, because Jesus speaks of himself in the first person in the first clause, and then changes to Son of Man when referring to the future judgement. However, this point need not occupy us further, as it has already been shown to be untenable. More important is the fact that Mark here really preserves only half the saying. For the full saying we have to go to the Q version, and this time it is necessary to quote both forms in which it has been preserved. I will give first the form in Luke xii. 8 f.:

Everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of man also will acknowledge before the angels of God ; but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

The form in Matthew preserves the rhythm of the original better, but this is the one which has *ego* instead of the Son of Man (Matt. x. 32 f.) :

¹ G. Vermes, " The use of *bar nash/bar nasha* in Jewish Aramaic ", Appendix E in M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford, ³1967), pp. 310-28 ; cf. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (London, 1973), pp. 160-91.

Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven.

Before we go into details, we may just observe that this form of Matthew with *ego* takes us most simply and easily to the meaning of the saying. Jesus warns his hearers that their attitude to him now, in present circumstances, will be recalled by Jesus himself in the coming judgement. The part of the saying preserved by Mark only gives the negative side, in which Jesus will be the accuser. But in the first half of the Q form we have the positive side, and here we have Jesus as the advocate on men's behalf.

Mark's form is not only defective in omitting one half of the saying. It also has considerable differences of detail. In the first place, where Q has "denies me", Mark has "is ashamed of me and my words" (the alternative reading, "of me and mine", mentioned above, is not to be accepted as the true text). This spoils the symmetry, and is dependent upon the variant verb "ashamed". It will be shown in a moment that the Q verb "denies" is to be preferred. Hence the phrase "and of my words" is a secondary feature of the saying, though it may well be a correct interpretation of the overall meaning, and almost certainly goes back behind Mark.¹ Secondly, "in this adulterous and sinful generation" replaces the simpler "before men" of the Q version. This suggests that the saying in Mark's form has begun to gain currency as a moral warning. As the phrase is not characteristic of Mark, it may well also be a pre-Markan addition. Thirdly, the future judgement scene, which in Matthew is indicated by the phrase "before my Father who is in heaven", and in Luke by "before the angels of God", has been expanded to a full-scale picture of the Parousia: "when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." This is an important difference, because it shows that the interpretation of the underlying *bar 'anāšā'* in the sense implied by the Greek translation *ho huios tou anthrōpou* has brought about a modification of the text, whereby the future judgement has been identified

¹ In his brilliant article, "I am not Ashamed of the Gospel" (see p. 478, n. 1 above), Barrett connects the Marcan form with Rom. i. 16, claiming that Paul is indebted to this tradition.

with the coming of Jesus in glory as the Danielic Son of Man. Finally, as already mentioned, Mark has "ashamed" for Q's "denies". This is a particularly interesting variation, because it has been pointed out that the difference is likely to be due to confusion between two very similar-sounding Aramaic words, *h^aphar*, meaning to be ashamed, and *k^ephar*, meaning to deny.¹ This clinches the argument, to which my comments have clearly been leading, that the Marcan and Q forms ultimately go back to one saying. Now we can see that the bifurcation into two traditions began in the Aramaic stage in the course of oral, not written, transmission. I would suggest, further, that Mark's loss of the positive form of the saying had already happened in this oral stage, when the negative half is in use as a warning (as pointed out above), because so long as it was attached to the positive form, in which "confess" is correlative to "deny", the misunderstanding of the Aramaic word would be much less likely to arise.²

We can now return to the Q form, and it should now be clear that Luke's form of it, including mention of the Son of Man, and describing the divine judgement as "before the angels of God", is a little nearer to the version underlying Mark than Matthew's form. The positive half in Luke can thus be accepted as representing the Q form unchanged.³ But Luke has spoiled the negative half, on account of his liking for stylistic variation.⁴

¹ Cf. J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* i. 7, n. 2.

² Hence I cannot accept the argument of M. D. Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark* (London, 1967), p. 118 ff., that Mark has deliberately dropped the positive form, having already represented its meaning in Mark viii. 34. The point of that verse would have been much enhanced if he had included the positive form at the end of the paragraph.

³ Both Matthew and Luke retain the Semitic construction of the verb (*homologēsei en*), cf. BDF §220 (2); O. Michel, TDNT, V. 208 n. 7.

⁴ It is characteristic of Luke to change indefinite relative clauses into participles, cf. Luke xii. 10 = Matt. xii. 32; Luke xv. 4 f. = Matt. xviii. 12 f.; Luke xvi. 18 = Matt. xix. 9 and Mark x. 11 f. Also *enōpion*, which never occurs in Matthew, is frequently found in Luke in preference to *emprosthen*. The change to the passive verb, thus obscuring the part of the Son of Man himself, seems to be due to the wish to avoid needless repetition. It is not to be classed as a case of the "divine passive", because the logical subject is the Son of Man, not "the angels of God" (even if this phrase were the logical subject, the verb would not be strictly a case of the "divine passive", cf. Jeremias, *op. cit.* p. 11).

It should be reconstructed to conform exactly with the first half, as in Matthew. Matthew's form is in any case so close to Luke's, apart from his very characteristic "before my Father who is in heaven" in place of Luke's "before the angels of God", that we have to reckon with only one serious difference, and that is his use of *egō* in place of the Son of Man. Which of the two is right? There has been much dispute whether Matthew is likely to have altered an original with the Son of Man, or whether Luke has inserted this in place of an original *egō*. The fact is that we should expect Matthew to insert Son of Man into his source, rather than remove it, to judge from his practice in xvi. 13, 28; xix. 28.¹ In the one other place where he has the *egō* form against Luke's Son of Man (Matt. v. 11 = Luke vi. 22) there are other signs in the context that the two evangelists are working on the basis of independent traditions. The same is true of Luke xxiv. 27, where *Luke* has the *egō* form against Matthew and Mark, but is clearly using a different source. On these grounds it can be taken as certain that some sayings, at least, circulated in two forms, an *egō* form and a Son of Man form. In the present instance, however, there are grounds for thinking that the *egō* form stood in the text used by Luke, and that he has altered it exceptionally under the influence of the parallel in Mark viii. 38.² However, this parallel in Mark is, as we have seen, certainly an independent translation from the Aramaic original. Hence we do here have evidence for two Greek forms, differing in this important feature.

Now, if we accept that *bar 'anāšā'* became a title denoting the Danielic figure only in the course of interpretation, reflected in the Greek translation, there is no option but to accept the position of Vermes that Jesus used this word, meaning "the man", as an

¹ In Matt. xvi. 21 the substitution of the pronoun *auton* for Mark's Son of Man is to be explained by Matthew's wish to maintain continuity, as the Son of Man (verse 13) has just been identified with the Christ (verses 16, 20), cf. Jeremias, *op. cit.* p. 263 n. 3.

² As the whole of Matt. x. 26-33 is extremely close to Luke xii. 2-9, suggesting a common Greek source, rather than parallel traditions circulating independently, it is not possible to avoid the conclusion that one of the evangelists is responsible for the change. It is notable that, apart from deliberate changes by the evangelists, the Greek text of the saying is virtually identical.

oblique form of self-reference.¹ From this point of view the two forms of the saying are alternative renderings of the same Aramaic original. In Mark's form Jesus' use of *bar* 'anāšā' has been retained, not simply because of the desire to represent his words as literally as possible, but because the translator intended it to imply identification with the Danielic figure. In the Q form, however, the expression has been represented more idiomatically as a surrogate for the first person.

The net result of this long and detailed discussion is that we can be certain that Jesus actually used the expression *bar* 'anāšā' in the second half of each side of the saying, when referring to his position in the coming judgement, but in doing so he did not include the concept of the Danielic figure, but simply spoke of himself. The question then arises why he refers to himself in the *egō* form in the first half of each part, and uses *bar* 'anāšā' only in the second half. Here again the position of Vermes has to be accepted, that this idiom is preferred when the context demands a certain delicacy in speaking about oneself.² In this case it is used for the second half of each part of the saying *to soften the audacity of appearing to claim a privileged position in the presence of God*. It is obvious that this motive has a bearing on the implications of our chosen text for christology.

Let us now try to see what Jesus intended to achieve in saying these words. He refers to confession and denial of himself, and it is natural to assume that this is part of his warning to the disciples that they must expect persecution on account of their allegiance to him. Mark's form of the saying, however, with its inclusion of "my words", makes it a warning of the dire consequences of failing to uphold his teaching, and this may well be right. Personal allegiance to Jesus is not really separable from fidelity to his teaching, and abandonment of his teaching is equivalent to denial of his authority. The saying, then, is a strong warning to the disciples, who accept him as a teacher sent by God, not to fall away. Their attitude to him now will be taken into account at the coming judgement. This is not be-

¹ Cf. G. Vermes, "'The Son of Man' Debate", JNTS, issue 1 (1978), pp. 19-32. See also M. Black, "Jesus and the Son of Man", *ibid.* pp. 4-18.

² *Jesus the Jew*, p. 163 ff.

cause Jesus has an inflated notion of his own personal importance. His use of *bar* 'anāšā' in the judgement halves of the saying attests his modesty. It is because he believes most sincerely that his message comes from God and that the people's response to it is intimately connected with the judgement, which is imminent. Moreover, the saying is a promise as much as it is a warning. Confession of Jesus now, going about and spreading his message fearlessly among the people, will certainly be rewarded. This is the *first* part of the saying, and in this case more important.¹ The second part, though it easily attracts the greater attention, and survives alone in the Marcan version of the saying, makes the first more prominent by providing its antithesis. The aim of Jesus is to promote confession of what he preaches.

So we have this saying in which Jesus, modestly referring to himself as "the man" (*bar* 'anāšā'), suggests that his position at the judgement will be advocate or accuser before God in relation to the response to his teaching. For the christology debate, this is the matter of crucial importance. What did Jesus mean, when he spoke of himself in this way? Did he really think of the impending judgement quite straightforwardly in terms of the court procedure of his time, with himself taking the role of advocate and accuser? How could such a position affect our estimate of his place in relation to God?

The first thing to notice is that the picture of the judgement implied by Jesus' words does not, in fact, correspond with normal judicial practice in his day. In Old Testament times there was neither prosecuting witness on behalf of the aggrieved party, nor counsel for the defence on behalf of the accused.² By New Testament times such assistance was beginning, but the functions were not clearly defined. For instance, an advocate would speak

¹ As a rule the emphasis falls on the *second* part in antithetic couplets ascribed to Jesus (Jeremias, *op. cit.* p. 18 f.), but in a number of cases it is difficult to decide. In Matt. vii. 15-20 this kind of parallelism is used in a warning against false prophets: So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit (verse 17). But in Luke vi. 43-45 the same material is used in an appeal to the hearers to look to their own discipleship, and the sense is, you are either a good tree bearing good fruit or a bad one. The moral is, obviously, make sure that you are good! This is a close parallel to the intention of our present saying.

² Cf. R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: its Life and Institutions* (London, 1961), p. 156.

in general for the good name of the accused, rather than attempt to prove his innocence. Such practice was open to abuse, and could affect the impartiality of the proceedings, and accordingly we find it discouraged by the rabbis.¹ Consequently there were no traditional Jewish technical terms for these functions, and the tendency was to use Greek loan-words, *paraklētos* for advocate, which appears in rabbinic texts as *p^raqliṭ*, and *ḱatēgoros* for accuser, which appears as *qāṭēgôr*. Because they did not correspond with actual functionaries in the Jewish courts, these words are usually used metaphorically. From this point of view they are available for apocalyptic pictures of heavenly court scenes, which are not bound by the actual practice of earthly courts. However, quite apart from the use of these terms, the apocalyptic imagination had used the idea of intermediaries (the classic example is the role of the Satan in the first chapter of Job). One convention of apocalyptic court scenes is a sort of recorder, who keeps the heavenly record of men's deeds and supplies the information when judgement is to be given. In the Book of Enoch, this function is performed sometimes by an angel and sometimes by Enoch himself. The references to Enoch in this capacity belong to the earliest strands of the book, well before New Testament times.² The identification of Enoch with the Danielic Son of Man, which belongs only to the Similitudes, and is now dated around the *end* of the first century A.D., is perhaps a development of this feature, and of course invites comparison with the development of christology.³ At any rate, here we have a possible background in Jewish thought for the position which Jesus appears to ascribe to himself at the judgement. As God's agent to announce the coming kingdom, Jesus expects to be present at the judgement with which it is inaugurated, ready to speak for or against those who are judged. As they come for-

¹ *B. Shabbath* 32a. See the remarks of A. E. Harvey, *Jesus on Trial* (London, 1976), p. 109.

² *I Enoch* xii-xvi; cf. *Jubilees*, iv. 21-24.

³ No fragments of the Similitudes have appeared among the eleven scrolls of *Enoch* found at Qumran, so that a date after A.D. 70 is certain. The very late date proposed by Milik, c. A.D. 270, presupposes that it is a Christian work, but this is most improbable. A date roughly contemporary with *II Baruch* and *II Esdras* iii-xiv seems best, cf. M. A. Knibb, "The Date of the Parables of Enoch: A Critical Review", *NTS*, xxv (1979), 345-59.

ward, he faces them with their response to his words, thus making it impossible to conceal the truth, and the just judgement of God is then meted out accordingly.

This interpretation of our saying might suggest that Jesus actually saw his role in the light of contemporary speculation concerning Enoch, and this would then be an important factor in the origins of christology. We should then have a striking parallel in the development of christology, Jesus being later identified with the Danielic Son of man, just as Enoch receives the same identification in the later Similitudes.

However, it is not at all likely that Jesus thought of himself as a figure comparable to Enoch. There is no hint of it in the gospel traditions. The parallel does not seem to have been recognized until a later stage. The earliest sure reference is in I Peter iii. 19, which significantly alludes to Enoch's role in I Enoch xii-xiv, and knows nothing of the Son of Man. The most that we can safely say is that, in this saying, Jesus appears to ascribe to himself the sort of role in the heavenly court which was *also* filled either by an angel or by such a personality as Enoch in popular imagination.

This consideration then leads to a further possibility. If the court scene is a matter of apocalyptic imagination, how far did Jesus mean it to be taken literally? When he says that he will confess or deny those who accept or reject his message, is he not chiefly concerned with the present moment? To say that response to the message *now* will be decisive at the coming judgement is surely a vivid way of expressing the crucial importance of the decision which he is actually placing before his audience. This way of understanding Jesus' saying agrees remarkably with the saying ascribed to R. Eliezer b. Jacob (a pupil of Akiba, early second century A.D.) in *M. Aboth* iv. 11: "He that performs one precept gets for himself one advocate (*p^eraqliṭ*); but he that commits one transgression gets for himself one accuser (*kātēgôr*). Repentance and good works are a shield against retribution." Here we have a typically rabbinic spiritualizing interpretation of the judgement idea, carefully removed from the eschatological setting which is characteristic of the preaching of Jesus, and gave to his message its urgency. The sense of crisis,

requiring immediate action, has been replaced by a timeless situation, in which it is possible to count up one's successes and failures in keeping the Law. But the fundamental motif is exactly the same.

Now, if this is the real thrust of the saying of Jesus which we have been considering, it means that, so far from embodying a definite christological statement, it tells us nothing about Jesus' ideas concerning his future role at all. It does tell us very forcefully about the importance which he attached to his preaching ministry. He is the spokesman for God at the decisive moment in the history of God's dealings with men. It is therefore a very urgent saying, memorable alike for its poetic form and for its bold imagery of the court-room. It is reasonable to suppose that it has been remembered in the first instance for these reasons, without any consideration of its usefulness for christology. The disciples, in carrying out their apostolic task, shared the sense of urgency, and could well have appealed to this saying to reinforce their message. They spoke as themselves the agents of him who was God's agent (Matt. x. 40), and in principle there is no reason why they should not have applied the saying to themselves, seeing that Jesus had promised that they would "sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke xxii. 30).¹ But of course the message was not theirs but *his*. If your response to the message decided whether the speaker was your advocate or not, the advocate would always be Jesus himself, whose message was passed on by the disciples, even if the idea remains metaphorical.

At some stage in the years following the first Easter, Jesus' characteristic self-designation *bar 'anāšā'* began to be interpreted in the light of an identification of him with a particular personality, the Son of Man of Daniel vii. This identification was not brought about by the implications of the saying which we have been studying, because it contains no hint of the conferring of royal state upon Jesus himself, which is the essence of the Danielic picture. That came about because of the gradual perception after Easter of the meaning of Jesus as Christ and Lord (Acts ii. 36). In the case of our present saying, the translation

¹ Note how the parallel in Matt. xix. 28 has introduced the Danielic picture into the saying: "When the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne . . .".

ho huios tou anthrōpou is part of a wholesale process, in which at one place and time *all* the known *bar* ^a*nāšā* sayings were translated in this way (elsewhere, of course, they were not so translated, as we have seen in the Q form of our saying preserved by Matthew). This translation imports into the saying the more splendid aspects of Jesus' position before God, which were not necessarily intended in the original saying. But it also implies that the saying is being understood literally, and not just metaphorically. At the coming judgement, Jesus will actually be there, and he will perform the functions of advocate and accuser. It is altogether probable that this literal interpretation was established before the addition of the Danielic overtones, indeed very likely from the very beginning. This leads me to my final considerations, which I hope may be regarded as making some small contribution to the christology debate of our time.

In dealing with apocalyptic imagery we always have to face the question whether the authors were thinking metaphorically or literally. But it is clear enough that, in spite of the welter of allegory and symbolism, there were some quite definite expectations concerning the future, which, in spite of differences of details, had a recognizable pattern. This is taken for granted between Jesus and his audience, and so forms a framework in which the essence of his teaching can be expressed. Thus in our chosen saying the references to the coming judgement are intended literally. They belong to the frame of discourse. But the reference to the part of Jesus himself is elusive, and could be considered playful, if the point of the saying were not so serious. It means, in effect, if you heed my words, it will always stand you in good stead ; but if you disregard them, it will come back at you in a way which you will regret. But he is *not* speaking in this timeless way, like R. Eliezer b. Jacob. He is speaking literally of the judgement which he has been commissioned by God to announce. It is thus easy to see how ambiguous is the reference to Jesus himself in the saying. He means the saying as a whole literally, his own part in it metaphorically. It is natural to take his part literally too, and assume that he will play the role of a kind of Enoch in the coming judgement. And when many other factors are conspiring to make people recognize

in Jesus the exalted one, who is Messiah and Lord and Son of God, then the literal interpretation of Jesus' reference to himself in this saying becomes inescapable.

It will be seen that I speak of the beginnings of christology in terms of perception, even of gradual perception. This seems to me to be the right way round to look at it. Otherwise the variety in the christology of the New Testament is inexplicable. The New Testament shows how the early Christians formed various conclusions concerning the relationship between Jesus and God, which culminated in a doctrine of divine Sonship.¹ The doctrine of the Incarnation, based primarily on the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel, is an attempt to place these perceptions on a sound rational basis. But the fact that Jesus did not himself claim to be the Son of God is no proof that the early church was wrong. Rather, the reverse is true, because to make such a claim about oneself, which is in the nature of the case incapable of proof, is to cast doubt upon one's integrity. Christology is far more secure when it is seen to rest on the perceptions which Christians gained from their subsequent reflection about Jesus in the light of their experience of salvation, than it would be if it depended upon individual sayings attributed to Jesus.

The growth of christology in the church has to be seen in the context of the work of God himself. At this point christology depends upon theism. If we do not believe in the living God, active in relation to men, we can have no basis for christology at all. But if we do believe in God in this way, we can see that what God was doing in Jesus does not end with his death on the cross. It includes the Easter experience, itself a matter of perception because, of course, the return of a dead man to life is no basis for christology in itself. It goes on to include the whole history of the great religion which stems ultimately from Jesus' preaching of the kingdom. The fundamental doctrines of Christianity are the central perceptions of Christians in response to the act of God in Christ. The task of christology is to analyse these perceptions, and see how far they can be regarded as valid ; and the task of hermeneutics is to see how far, if they are con-

¹ The brief study of M. Hengel, *The Son of God* (London, 1976), has made an outstanding contribution to our understanding of this process.

sidered valid, they can be rendered meaningful to people today. Meanwhile the Christian religion itself, as the living expression of the proclamation of Jesus, is in the last analysis the only proof that the church's perceptions were true and that God *was* active in a unique way in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Now the way in which these perceptions were made is extremely complex, and it is the task of New Testament scholarship to try to sort it out. Our study of the saying in which Jesus appears as advocate and accuser illustrates one facet of this process. The advocate theme, which, as we have seen, Jesus shared with Judaism, is capable of moving in two different directions. In the rabbinic literature it has become spiritualized and timeless. In the primitive Christian usage it has been taken literally in terms of the consistent eschatology of the proclamation of Jesus himself. There is some evidence that Jesus could be referred to as the advocate without the large implications of the Son of Man imagery.¹ It is doubtful if advocate was ever a recognized title of Jesus, but he was assumed to have this capacity in view of his personal righteousness.² Hence he was the righteous teacher (like the unknown "teacher of righteousness" who left his mark on his followers in the Qumran Sect) who would act as advocate in the coming assize. Meanwhile more and more facts of christology were being discovered. It would be a mistake to suppose that they happened in watertight compartments, so that distinct streams of thought could be traced in different geographical areas, though this can be done to some extent. But obviously new perceptions have to start somewhere, and may take some time to achieve wide acceptance. The identification of Jesus with the Danielic Son of Man was inevitable once he had been recognized

¹ In a seminar paper read at the 34th General Meeting of *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas* (Durham, 1979), H. D. Betz pointed out that Matt. vii. 21-23 shows Jesus in the position of advocate, and not as judge, and proposed that this is one element in a Jewish-Christian christology in which Jesus is considered to be the righteous teacher, and in which there is no theology of his death and resurrection. In this connection it is interesting to note that a Q saying on "the sign of the Son of Man" (Matt. xii. 38-42 = Luke xi. 29-32) includes a metaphorical use of the idea of the accuser: "The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them. . . . The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it . . .".

² Cf. Acts iii. 14, and the remarks on 1 John ii. 1 below.

as the exalted Lord.¹ But other things were coming into the picture at the same time—in particular an interest in the death of Jesus as an atoning sacrifice.²

It so comes about that the only place in the New Testament in which Jesus is actually referred to as advocate shows an aggregation of christological ideas, which is exactly what we should expect in view of the above remarks (I John ii. 1 f.) :

If any one does sin, we have an advocate (*paraklētos*) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; and he is the expiation (*hilasmos*) for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Here Jesus has the appellation Christ, the oldest title in christology, though not necessarily universal in Christian circles in the earliest days. God is spoken of as Father in the manner of the Johannine christology, which of course goes far back into the words of Jesus himself. His death is considered to be a sacrifice for sin, universal in its scope. It is this which now appears to constitute his "advocacy". But the appellation "advocate", and the additional adjective "righteous" may well go back to a more primitive setting, when these things were only perceived more dimly—to an outlook which would have taken our saying from Mark and Q literally, but without necessarily including the Danielic interpretation of the Son of Man.³

This text takes us back, finally, to the observations of T. W. Manson, with which this lecture started. The adjective "righteous" applies both to Enoch as the Son of Man and to the Elect Community whom he represents. In the work which Jesus did he was the righteous agent of God's righteous (i.e. vindicating) action on behalf of his people, whom he hoped to save as the holy and righteous people of God. But Jesus had this position in relation to the people, not through any corporate sense inherent in the Danielic Son of Man figure (which Jesus in his lifetime

¹ The fundamental text for this concept is Ps. cx. 1. See the full study of M. Gourgues, *À la droite de Dieu : résurrection de Jésus et actualisation du psaume 110 : 1 dans le nouveau testament* (Paris, 1978).

² See my Manson Memorial Lecture, "The Apocalyptic Myth and the Death of Christ", *BULLETIN* (1974-75), lvii. 366-87.

³ The use of *paraklētos* here seems to have no direct bearing on the application of the same word to the Holy Spirit in John xiv-xvi. On the other hand John xiv. 16 shows that the evangelist regarded this word as equally applicable to Jesus.

may never have claimed to be),¹ but because he spoke to them the word of God. This he did in such a way that the subsequent perceptions were made possible, and the superstructure of christology began. And so in him the creative word of God really did become flesh and dwell among us. And those who heed it will find that Jesus is their advocate before the angels of God.

¹ It is impossible here to embark on the question of those Son of Man sayings in which Jesus appears to be unquestionably making this identification, in particular the answer to the high priest in Mark xiv. 62; but if the argument of this article is sound, it is clear that they will need reconsideration in the light of it.