

## The Son of Man: Some Recent Developments

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SOME YEARS AGO, Matthew Black observed that "the Son of Man problem in the Gospels is one of the most perplexing and challenging in the whole field of Biblical theology."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, A. J. B. Higgins has spoken of the "bewildering mass of material" that has been produced on the subject.<sup>2</sup> More recently, Higgins and Morna D. Hooker have discussed in print the question whether the Son of Man problem is finally insoluble.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Hooker has even reported that, when Black heard that she was working on the Son of Man problem, his advice consisted of a single word: "Don't!"<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, Son of Man research continues,<sup>5</sup> and, in my judgment,

<sup>1</sup> "The Son of Man Problem in Recent Research and Debate," *BJRL* 45 (1963) 305.

<sup>2</sup> "Son of Man-Forschung since 'The Teaching of Jesus,'" *New Testament Essays: Studies in Memory of Thomas Walter Manson* (ed. A. J. B. Higgins; Manchester: Manchester University, 1959) 119.

<sup>3</sup> A. J. B. Higgins, "Is the Son of Man Problem Insoluble?," *Neotestamentica et Semitica: Studies in Honour of Matthew Black* (ed. E. E. Ellis and M. Wilcox; Edinburgh: Clark, 1969) 70-87; M. D. Hooker, "Is the Son of Man Problem Really Insoluble?," *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black* (ed. E. Best and R. McL. Wilson; Cambridge: University Press, 1979) 155-68.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>5</sup> For recent bibliographies, see M. Casey, *Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7* (London: SPCK, 1979) 241-59; A. J. B. Higgins, *The Son of Man in the Teaching of Jesus* (SNTSMS 39; Cambridge: University Press, 1980) 159-68; and J. Coppens, *La relève apocalyptique du messianisme royal: III. Le Fils de l'homme néotestamentaire* (BETL 55; Leuven: Peeters and University, 1981) 2-6.

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there recently have been some highly significant developments in at least one "wing" of this research—developments that, if generally accepted, may well point in the direction of an answer to the question of the origin of the Son of Man christology. I must stress, however, that, at the moment, these developments have by no means gained the support of NT scholarship as a whole; indeed, the recent book on the subject by Higgins either explicitly or implicitly rejects all of them.<sup>6</sup> Despite this fact, I believe that the developments have merit and need further exploration. I propose, therefore, to summarize these recent developments in Son of Man research in terms of six propositions, each of which will be stated and briefly explained. Then, in conclusion, I shall offer a suggestion for further research.

### Proposition One

*There was no Son of Man title or concept as such in first-century Judaism; therefore, the titular use of the term and the concept associated with it must have originated either with Jesus himself or within the early Christian community.*

The term, "son of man," was, of course, not unknown in first-century Judaism. In the Hebrew Bible, the singular, *ben 'ādām*, occurs thirteen times in parallelism with either *'āš* or *'ēnōš* as a synonym for "human being";<sup>7</sup> similarly, *ben 'ēnōš* occurs at Ps 144:3 in parallelism with *'ādām*.<sup>8</sup> In addition, *ben 'ādām* is found some ninety-three times in Ezekiel<sup>9</sup> and at Dan 8:17 as a form of direct address or quasi-vocative, applied to the prophet himself.<sup>10</sup> Outside the Bible, however, the appearance of the Hebrew phrase is

<sup>6</sup> A. J. B. Higgins, *The Son of Man in the Teaching of Jesus*.

<sup>7</sup> Num 23:19; Isa 51:12; 56:2; Jer 49:18, 33; 50:40; 51:43; Ps 8:5; 80:18; 146:3 (in parallelism with *nā'ādīb*); Job 16:21 (in parallelism with *geber*); 25:6; 35:8. It is true that Ps 80:18 may refer to the king; see, e.g., A. Gelston, "A Sidelight on the 'Son of Man,'" *SJT* 22 (1969) 189-96. Even so, however, "son of man" is not here used as an independent title; moreover, it can plausibly be argued that the reference is not to the king at all but rather to the nation, Israel.

<sup>8</sup> Note also the many examples of the plural.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Ezek 2:1, 3; 3:1, 3, 4, 10.

<sup>10</sup> Some scholars have seen in this usage the background for the Son of Man sayings in the NT Gospels and thus have emphasized the "prophetic consciousness" allegedly implied by the term; see, e.g., P. Parker, "The Meaning of 'Son of Man,'" *JBL* 60 (1941) 151-57; G. S. Duncan, *Jesus, Son of Man: Studies Contributory to a Modern Portrait* (London: Nisbet, 1947) esp. 135-205; J. Y. Campbell, "Son of Man," *A Theological Wordbook of the Bible* (ed. A. Richardson; New York: Macmillan, 1950) 230-32; and W. Eichrodt, "Zum Problem des Menschensohns," *EvT* 19 (1959) 1-3. For a critique of this position, see, e.g., R. H. Fuller, *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus: An Examination of the Presuppositions of New Testament Theology* (SBT 12; Chicago: Allenson, 1954) 99-102.

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rare.<sup>11</sup> It is clear that the term is not used as a title in the extant Hebrew texts, either for an expected messianic or eschatological figure or for anyone else,<sup>12</sup> nor is there any Son of Man concept as such in the documents. Furthermore, it appears that the term itself was not used in ordinary day-to-day speech, but rather "only in contexts composed in poetic or solemn diction and style."<sup>13</sup>

In Aramaic, the evidence is more extensive, and it is now clear that the term was in use in Palestine by the first century, both in the generic sense of "human being" and in the indefinite sense of "someone" or "anyone."<sup>14</sup> Moreover, some scholars have argued for a third use, the so-called circumlocutional use, in which it could serve as a substitute for the first-person personal pronoun and mean "I" or "me";<sup>15</sup> this third use has been vigorously disputed, however, by others.<sup>16</sup> The Aramaic term has not been found, how-

<sup>11</sup> For a survey of the data, see J. A. Fitzmyer, "The New Testament Title 'Son of Man' Philologically Considered," *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (SBLMS 25; Missoula: Scholars, 1979) 146-47.

<sup>12</sup> The Hebrew expression with the definite article, *ben hā'ādām*, has been found only once, where the article has been added above the line, in IQS 11:20; see J. A. Fitzmyer, "The New Testament Title," 146.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., J. Y. Campbell, "The Origin and Meaning of the Term Son of Man," *JTS* 48 (1947) 145-55; J. Bowman, "The Background of the Term 'Son of Man,'" *ExpTim* 59 (1948) 283-88; M. Black, "The 'Son of Man' in the Teaching of Jesus," *ExpTim* 60 (1948) 32-36; and G. Vermes, "Appendix E: The Use of *בר נשא בר נש* in Jewish Aramaic," in M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1967) 310-30. The phrase appears in various forms: *bar nāš*, *bar nāšā'*, *bar 'ēnāš*, *bar 'ēnāšā'*, *bar 'ēnōš*, and *bar 'ēnōšā'*. According to Fitzmyer, however, it never seems to appear without the initial *aleph* until sometime after the first century; see his review of M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, in *CBQ* 30 (1968) 426-27.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., A. Meyer, *Jesu Muttersprache: Das galiläische Aramäische in seiner Bedeutung für die Erklärung der Reden Jesus und der Evangelien überhaupt* (Freiburg: Mohr, 1896) 92-97; J. Y. Campbell, "The Origin and Meaning," 152-54; R. E. C. Formesyn, "Was There a Pronominal Connection for the 'Bar Nasha' Self-designation?," *NovT* 8 (1966) 1-35; and esp. G. Vermes, "Appendix E," 310-28.

<sup>16</sup> Some scholars maintain that the Aramaic phrase for "son of man" is primarily a generic term and that, while it may at times include the speaker, such usage does not constitute a genuine circumlocution for the first person; see, e.g., F. H. Borsch, *The Son of Man in Myth and History* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967) 23 n. 4; C. Colpe, "ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου," *TDNT*, 8: 403-4; J. Jeremias, "Die älteste Schicht der Menschensohn-Logien," *ZNW* 58 (1967) esp. 165 n. 9; and *New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus* (New York: Scribner's, 1971) 261 n. 1; H. Boers, "Where Christology Is Real: A Survey of Recent Research on New Testament Christology," *Int* 26 (1972) 308; and A. Gelston, "A Sidelight," 189 n. 2. Fitzmyer allows for the possibility of a subdivision of the generic sense of "son of man" into collective and inclusive, and he does recognize the circumlocutional use of "son of man" in the Late Phase of Aramaic, insisting, however, that it is not legitimate to infer from this that the usage was current

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ever, as a form of direct address, like the Hebrew *ben 'ādām* used of the prophet Ezekiel, nor is it used as a title.

Nevertheless, at least until recently, there has been a widespread assumption among NT scholars that, when the NT speaks of "the Son of Man," it has reference to an expected messianic or eschatological figure familiar to the first-century world of Jewish apocalyptic thought and literature.<sup>17</sup> According to this view, "there existed in Jewish apocalyptic the conception of a transcendent, pre-existent heavenly being, the Son of man, whose coming to earth as judge would be a major feature of the drama of the End time."<sup>18</sup> It has been assumed by most that this Son of Man concept stemmed from the reference in Dan 7:13 to "one like a son of man" (*kēbar 'ēnāš*), that it revealed itself in various ways in the Similitudes of *1 Enoch* 37-71, *4 Ezra*, and perhaps elsewhere, and that it formed the background for the Son of Man sayings in the NT Gospels.

Scholars had long recognized, of course, that there were significant differences among the various Jewish writings supposedly reflecting this Son of Man concept, but they had attempted to reconcile or explain these differ-

in the first century. For the continuing debate between Fitzmyer and Vermes, see Fitzmyer, review of M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 424-28; Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (London: Collins, 1973) esp. 163-68, 188-91; Fitzmyer, "The Contribution of Qumran Aramaic to the Study of the New Testament," *NTS* 20 (1974) 396-97; Vermes, "The 'Son of Man' Debate," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 1 (1978) 19-32; and "The Present State of the 'Son of Man' Debate," *JJS* 29 (1978) 123-34; Fitzmyer, "The New Testament Title 'Son of Man' Philologically Considered," 143-60; and "Another View of the 'Son of Man' Debate," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 4 (1979) 58-68. A recent full-scale study of the Son of Man question concludes that "in Aramaic a speaker could use a general statement, in which the expression for 'man' was *בר אנוש*, in order to say something about himself," that such usage was "no more than a particular application of this well-known Aramaic locution," and that the application of such a statement to himself "by an Aramaic speaker is the sort of development of existing usage that could occur on the lips of native speakers of the language at any time" (M. Casey, *Son of Man*, 224-28, esp. 226-27). As I shall indicate below, I am not persuaded by Vermes's arguments and thus have no reason to believe that there was, either in the first century or later, a genuinely circumlocutional use of "son of man." Regarding the generic and indefinite uses, however, there is no disagreement.

<sup>17</sup> See, e.g., H. E. Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965) 22: "The intimate connexion of the synoptic presentation of the Son of Man with that of Jewish apocalyptic literature can no longer be seriously contested." Numerous suggestions have been offered as to the possible origin of such a Son of Man figure in Jewish apocalyptic, but a Canaanite mythological origin has gained increasing acceptance; see, e.g., C. Colpe, "ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου," 406-20; M. S. Smith, "The 'Son of Man' in Ugaritic," *CBQ* 45 (1983) 59-60.

<sup>18</sup> The quotation is from N. Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus* (New York/Evanston: Harper & Row, 1967) 164; Perrin, himself, however, did not finally accept this view (see below).

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ences in various ways.<sup>19</sup> In recent years, however, the very assumption that there ever were such a title and concept in first-century Judaism has come under increasingly serious and sustained attack.<sup>20</sup> According to a growing consensus, it is now "embarrassingly obvious that the Son of Man was not a current title in Judaism at all";<sup>21</sup> indeed, the entire concept appears to be nothing more than "a product of modern scholarship."<sup>22</sup> Son of Man is not used as a title in Dan 7:13, where the reference is simply to a "man-like figure"<sup>23</sup> in contrast to the four beast-like figures of the vision, nor does the term become a title in *1 Enoch* or *4 Ezra* or elsewhere in Jewish literature.<sup>24</sup> The closest thing to a Son of Man title or concept among first-century Jews was simply the precedent of "the varied use of the 'Son of Man imagery'"<sup>25</sup> from Dan 7:13 by various writers and for different purposes. Thus, a recent full-scale examination of the evidence leads to the conclusion: "The Jews

<sup>19</sup> See, e.g., H. E. Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition*, 30-31; and C. Colpe, "ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου," 422-33.

<sup>20</sup> See, e.g., N. Perrin, "The Son of Man in Ancient Judaism and Primitive Christianity: A Suggestion," *BR* 11 (1966) 17-26, reprinted with a "Postscript" in his *A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974) 23-30; and *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 164-75; G. Vermes, "Appendix E"; and *Jesus the Jew*, 160-91; R. Leivestad, "Der apokalyptische Menschensohn: Ein theologisches Phantom," *ASTI* 6 (1968) 49-105; and "Exit the Apocalyptic Son of Man," *NTS* 18 (1971-72) 243-67; and M. Casey, *Son of Man*, esp. pp. 7-141. Unless otherwise indicated, subsequent references to the article by Perrin will be to its original publication in *BR*.

<sup>21</sup> B. Lindars, "Re-enter the Apocalyptic Son of Man," *NTS* 22 (1975-76) 52.

<sup>22</sup> M. Casey, *Son of Man*, 139; cf., e.g., P. Winter, review of N. Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, in *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* 89 (1968) 784: "If Perrin's interpretation of the Son of Man sayings in the Synoptic Gospels is correct—and it is supported by Vermes's . . . study of the linguistic use of 'bar-nash(a)' in Jewish Aramaic—then the place of origin of the [Son of Man] myth is not to be sought in Iran, or in Judea or even in Ugarit, but in the German universities."

<sup>23</sup> M. Casey (*Son of Man*) consistently uses this term to translate the *kēbar 'ēnāš* of Dan 7:13.

<sup>24</sup> Regarding the Similitudes of *1 Enoch*, see, e.g., J. A. Fitzmyer, "The New Testament Title 'Son of Man' Philologically Considered," 153: "[Son of Man] has been regarded as a 'messianic' title, mainly because of its association with the title Messiah in Ethiopic Enoch (e.g., 48:2, 10), whereas it in no way suggests an anointed figure *per se*. But if J. T. Milik's latest theory about the second part of the Book of Enoch, the so-called Similitudes, were to prove acceptable, then the entire question of the conflated titles of the mysterious figure in that part of the book would have to be scrutinized again and precisely for the roots of this conflation in pre-Christian Palestinian Judaism. For Milik maintains that the Similitudes represent a Christian substitution. It replaced the Book of the Giants which was part of the Book of Enoch at Qumran and which he has now discovered among the published and unpublished material from Qumran." Scholars have long debated whether the Similitudes are pre-Christian in date; see, e.g., R. H. Fuller, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology* (New York: Scribner's, 1965) 37-38.

<sup>25</sup> N. Perrin, "Son of Man," 20; and *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 166.

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had no Son of man concept, and their use of Dan. 7 did not turn בר אנש into a title. It follows that the origin of the Gospel term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου must be sought in developments for which Jesus or his followers were responsible."<sup>26</sup>

### Proposition Two

*No Son of Man title or concept as such can be detected in the authentic sayings of the historical Jesus; therefore, the titular use of the term and the concept associated with it must have originated within the early Christian community.*

On the basis of certain well-known facts regarding the Son of Man sayings in the NT Gospels, most scholars in the past have assumed that Jesus did, in fact, use the term, Son of Man, as a title, with reference either to himself or to some other figure yet to come. These facts are the following: (1) The title, Son of Man, is almost completely absent from early Christian literature other than the canonical Gospels.<sup>27</sup> (2) The title occurs in all four of the canonical Gospels, and, indeed, in all of what are commonly taken to be the various strata of the gospel traditions: the triple tradition, the various double traditions, Special Matthew, Special Luke, and John. (3) With only one exception, and this in the Fourth Gospel,<sup>28</sup> the title is found in the Gospels only on the lips of Jesus himself.<sup>29</sup> (4) The references to Son of Man

<sup>26</sup> M. Casey, *Son of Man*, 139. For the argument that Son of Man was never intended or understood as an independent messianic or eschatological title, even in the gospel traditions, see R. Leivestad, "Exit the Apocalyptic Son of Man." Most scholars, however, agree that, "in the Greek text of the gospels as we have it, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is understood as a title" (J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 261).

<sup>27</sup> On this point, see further under my "Proposition Six" below.

<sup>28</sup> John 12:34.

<sup>29</sup> Cf., however, e.g., J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (I-IX): Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 28; Garden City: Doubleday, 1981) 579: "An alternate way of interpreting [Luke 5:24 with parallels in Matt 9:6 and Mark 2:10] is to make of it a comment of the evangelist (or of the pre-Markan compiler), which is addressed to the readers of the Gospel as 'you'. . . . This would mean that the Son of Man saying is no longer on the lips of Jesus—a view contrary to a pet thesis of many modern interpreters of the christological titles. . . . It seems to me that this is a better solution to the problematic v. 24; it forms a suture joining the pronouncement-story to the second part of the miracle-story. Such comments to the reader are rare, indeed, in the Synoptic tradition, but not wholly unknown (see Mark 13:14b), and more frequent in the Johannine tradition (e.g., 4:2; 17:3; 19:35; 20:30-31)." See also, e.g., G. H. Boobyer, "Mark II, 10a and the Interpretation of the Healing of the Paralytic," *HTR* 47 (1954) 115-20; "The Secrecy Motif in St. Mark's Gospel," *NTS* 6 (1959-60) 225-35; C. P. Ceroke, "Is Mk 2,10 a Saying of Jesus?," *CBQ* 22 (1960) 380; C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1959) 100. Note, too, that at Mark 8:31 (cf.

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on the lips of Jesus are always in the third person, never the first, and, in some cases, a rather clear distinction between Jesus and the Son of Man seems to be implied.<sup>30</sup> The assumption, of course, is that, if the title had originated within the early church, it would likely be found also in Christian literature outside the canonical Gospels, it might well be missing from one or more of the Gospels themselves (or, at least, from one or more of the strata of tradition lying behind the Gospels), it would probably be applied to Jesus by persons other than Jesus himself, and there would be no sayings that even appear to suggest a distinction between Jesus and the Son of Man.

Most discussions of the authenticity of the various Son of Man sayings have disregarded the Fourth Gospel on the grounds that "it makes no positive contribution to the problem of Jesus and the Son of Man"<sup>31</sup> but simply reflects a later development of the types of tradition already present in the Synoptics. Moreover, at least until rather recently, most scholars have accepted the now conventional division of the Synoptic Son of Man sayings into three groups: (1) sayings in which Jesus alludes to the present situation, status, activity, and/or authority of the Son of Man—the so-called present Son of Man sayings; (2) sayings in which he refers to the impending betrayal, rejection, suffering, death, and/or resurrection of the Son of Man—the so-called suffering Son of Man sayings; and (3) sayings in which he speaks of the exaltation and/or future coming of the Son of Man—the so-called future Son of Man sayings.<sup>32</sup> Various types of criteria have been proposed

Luke 9:22); Mark 9:9 (cf. Matt 17:9); and Luke 24:7 the discourse attributed to Jesus is indirect rather than direct (in each of these passages the reference is to the impending suffering and/or resurrection of the Son of Man); this could be interpreted as an indication that someone other than Jesus uses the title.

<sup>30</sup> E.g., Mark 8:38/Luke 9:26.

<sup>31</sup> A. J. B. Higgins, *Jesus and the Son of Man* (London: Lutterworth, 1964) 185. For more positive assessments of the Johannine materials, see, e.g., F. H. Borsch, *The Son of Man in Myth and History*, 257-313; S. S. Smalley, "The Johannine Son of Man Sayings," *NTS* 15 (1968-69) 278-301; and B. Lindars, "The Son of Man in the Johannine Christology," *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament: In Honour of Charles Francis Digby Moule* (ed. B. Lindars and S. S. Smalley; Cambridge: University Press, 1973) 43-60. For other studies, see, e.g., S. Schulz, *Untersuchungen zur Menschensohn-Christologie im Johannesevangelium: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Methodengeschichte der Auslegung des 4. Evangelium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957); R. Schnackenburg, "Der Menschensohn im Johannesevangelium," *NTS* 11 (1964-65) 123-37; E. D. Freed, "The Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 86 (1967) 402-9; F. J. Moloney, *The Johannine Son of Man* (Rome: Libreria ateneo salesiano, 1976); J. Coppens, "Le Fils de l'Homme dans l'évangile johannique," *ETL* 52 (1976) 28-81; and *La relève apocalyptique du messianisme royal*, 45-103.

<sup>32</sup> This division is most often attributed to R. Bultmann; see, e.g., his *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols., New York: Scribner's, 1951-55), I. 30. Actually, it had been suggested earlier in F. J. Foakes Jackson and K. Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity* (5 vols.; London:

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for distinguishing between authentic and inauthentic sayings within these groups,<sup>33</sup> but it would not be correct to say that any general consensus has been reached. It has been argued by some that all three types of Son of Man sayings—"future," "suffering," and "present"—include genuine self-references of the historical Jesus;<sup>34</sup> others have found an authentic element primarily in the "present" and/or "suffering" sayings;<sup>35</sup> still others have rejected all of the sayings except a few with a "future" reference.<sup>36</sup> In recent years, however,

Macmillan, 1920), 1. 368-84, and it was worked out in J. Héring, *Le royaume de Dieu et sa venue: Étude sur l'espérance de Jésus et de l'apôtre Paul* (Paris: Alcan, 1937) 88-100. More recently, it was reaffirmed in the unpublished Heidelberg dissertation: G. Iber, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Begriff des Menschensohn im Neuen Testament* (1953), summarized in *TLZ* 80 (1966) 115-16. For opposing views, see n. 45 below.

<sup>33</sup> See, e.g., H. M. Teeple, "The Origin of the Son of Man Christology," *JBL* 84 (1955) 216-23.

<sup>34</sup> E.g., T. W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus: Studies in Its Form and Content* (2d ed.; Cambridge: University Press, 1935) 211-34; V. Taylor, *The Names of Jesus* (New York: St. Martin's, 1953) 33-34; E. Stauffer, *New Testament Theology* (New York: Macmillan, 1955) 109-11; and O. Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (2d ed.; London: SCM, 1963) 152-64.

<sup>35</sup> E. Schweizer, for example, maintains that the first group has the best claim to authenticity, that the second probably preserves some authentic traditions, and that there may well be a genuine core in the third group. In the first group, the authentic core would be the reference to "humility"; in the second group, the reference to being "handed over"; and in the third group, the reference to "exaltation" (not "coming"). Thus, it is likely, according to Schweizer, that Jesus spoke of himself as the Son of Man who was to be humiliated and rejected by men but then exalted by God. See his *Erniedrigung und Erhöhung bei Jesus und seinen Nachfolgern* (Zurich: Zwingli, 1955) 88-93; "Der Menschensohn (Zur eschatologischen Erwartung Jesu)," *ZNW* 50 (1959) 185-209; reprinted in his *Neotestamentica: Deutsche und Englische Aufsätze 1951-1963: German and English Essays 1951-1963* (Zurich/Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1963) 56-84; *Lordship and Discipleship* (rev. ed. of *Erniedrigung und Erhöhung bei Jesus und seinen Nachfolgern*; SBT 28; London: SCM, 1960) 39-41; "The Son of Man," *JBL* 79 (1960) 119-29; *Erniedrigung und Erhöhung bei Jesus und seinen Nachfolgern* (2d ed.; Zurich/Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1962) 33-52, 65-71; and "The Son of Man Again," *NTS* 9 (1962-63) 256-61, reprinted in his *Neotestamentica*, 85-92. Cf. also, e.g., J. A. T. Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming: The Emergence of a Doctrine* (New York/Nashville: Abingdon, 1957) 37-82.

<sup>36</sup> See esp. H. E. Tödt, *The Son of Man*; cf. also, e.g., R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 1. 26-32; and, for the individual texts, his *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (rev. ed.; New York/Evanston: Harper & Row, 1969); cf. also his "Reich Gottes und Menschensohn," *TRu* ns 9 (1937) 1-35; J. Knox, *The Death of Christ: The Cross in New Testament History and Faith* (New York: Abingdon, 1958) esp. pp. 86-102; G. Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York: Harper, 1960) 175-78, 228-31; F. Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology: Their History in Early Christianity* (London: Lutterworth, 1969) 15-67; E. Jünger, *Paulus und Jesus: Eine Untersuchung zur Präzisierung der Frage nach dem Ursprung der Christologie* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck] 1962; 2d ed., 1964) 215-62; and R. H. Fuller, *The Foundations*, 119-25. A. J. B. Higgins, (*Jesus and the Son of Man; The Son of Man in the Teaching of Jesus*) agrees on the question of authenticity but, unlike the others, maintains that Jesus did identify himself with the coming Son of Man.

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scholars working from two quite different directions have made a strong case that none of the sayings in which Son of Man appears as a title is authentic.

Particularly among German scholars, the tendency, until recently, has been: (1) to attribute both the "present" and the "suffering" Son of Man sayings to the early Christian community, with the possible exception of a relatively small number of "present" sayings, where the term is used not as a title but simply in the common Semitic sense of "a human being," "someone" or "anyone," or possibly as a circumlocution for the first-person personal pronoun;<sup>37</sup> and (2) to find an authentic element in certain of the "future" sayings, maintaining, however, that Jesus here speaks not of himself but rather of some other figure yet to come.<sup>38</sup> Philipp Vielhauer and others, however, have worked out detailed arguments, based both upon exegesis of the relevant texts and upon studies in the history of religions, against the authenticity even of the "future" sayings.<sup>39</sup> These arguments have not been universally accepted, of course, but even scholars who reject Vielhauer's conclusions have been compelled to acknowledge that his work is "thoughtful and highly significant,"<sup>40</sup> and some have been much more positive, speaking, for example, of "the devastating evidence" produced by Vielhauer and commenting that his "exegetical arguments have been questioned, but not disproved," that "there have been at best protests against" his use of materials from the history of religions, and that his "work thus remains fundamentally unchallenged."<sup>41</sup> The development of the thought of Norman Perrin regarding this matter is, I think, both impressive and perhaps indicative of the shift in opinion: Perrin initially maintained that the only "two viable positions

<sup>37</sup> On this last possible use, see nn. 15 and 16 above.

<sup>38</sup> See n. 36 above.

<sup>39</sup> See esp. P. Vielhauer, "Gottesreich und Menschensohn in der Verkündigung Jesu," *Festschrift für Günther Dehn zum 75. Geburtstag am 18. April dargebracht* (ed. W. Schneemelcher; Neukirchen: Erziehungsverein, 1957) 51-79; "Jesus und der Menschensohn: Zur Diskussion mit Heinz Eduard Tödt und Eduard Schweizer," *ZTK* 60 (1963) 133-77; and "Ein Weg der neutestamentlichen Theologie? Prüfung der Thesen Ferdinand Hahns," *EVT* 25 (1965) 24-72, esp. pp. 26-28; all of these reprinted in his *Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1965) 55-91, 92-140, and 141-98 (esp. pp. 145-46), respectively. Cf. also, e.g., E. Käsemann, "Sentences of Holy Law in the New Testament," "The Beginnings of Christian Theology," and "On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," in his *New Testament Questions of Today* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969) 66-81, 82-107, and 108-37, respectively; H. Conzelmann, "Present and Future in the Synoptic Tradition," *God and Christ: Existence and Province* (ed. R. W. Funk; JTC 5; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck]; New York: Harper & Row, 1968) 26-44; and *Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973) 43-46; and H. M. Teeple, "The Origin of the Son of Man Christology." Cf. also the works by N. Perrin cited in n. 57 below.

<sup>40</sup> H. E. Tödt, *The Son of Man*, 329.

<sup>41</sup> H. Boers, "Where Christology Is Real," 308.

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with regard to the Son of man in the synoptic tradition" were that represented by H. E. Tödt ("all except a very small core of apocalyptic sayings must be ascribed to the church") or that maintained by Vielhauer ("all Son of man sayings must be ascribed to the church");<sup>42</sup> eventually, however, Perrin was led by his own research to embrace the position that all Son of Man sayings must be ascribed to the early Christian community.<sup>43</sup>

Proceeding along rather different lines, two scholars in Great Britain, Geza Vermes and Maurice Casey, have reached somewhat similar conclusions.<sup>44</sup> Vermes rejects the conventional threefold grouping of the Son of Man sayings,<sup>45</sup> noting that it is based "on purely subjective exegetical criteria," and proposes another method of classification based on criteria "that are objective and formal"; his groups are (1) sayings with no reference to Dan 7:13; (2) sayings with an indirect reference to Dan 7:13; and (3) sayings with a direct reference to Dan 7:13.<sup>46</sup> After a careful study, Vermes concludes that none of the sayings directly or indirectly referring to Dan 7:13 can be traced back to the historical Jesus and that the only authentic sayings are those that are independent of Dan 7:13, in which, according to standard Aramaic usage, Jesus uses the term, son of man, not as a title, but either in the generic sense of a "human being," in the indefinite sense of "someone" or "anyone," or as a circumlocution for "I" or "me."<sup>47</sup> Similarly, Casey pro-

<sup>42</sup> N. Perrin, "The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition," *BR* 13 (1968) 3, reprinted with a "Postscript" in his *A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology*, 57. Unless otherwise indicated, subsequent references to this article will be to its original publication in *BR*.

<sup>43</sup> See the works by N. Perrin cited in n. 57 below.

<sup>44</sup> See G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, esp. 177-86; and M. Casey, *Son of Man*, esp. 157-240.

<sup>45</sup> Other scholars have objected that the conventional grouping, although convenient, is also somewhat arbitrary, artificial, and perhaps even misleading; that it is difficult to determine the appropriate category for certain of the sayings (e.g., Matt 20:28/Mark 10:45); that the categories are not applicable to the Son of Man sayings in the Fourth Gospel; and that even the labels assigned to the groups may be misleading. See, e.g., M. D. Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark: A Study of the Background of the Term "Son of Man" and Its Use in St. Mark's Gospel* (London: S.P.C.K., 1967) 80; and "Is the Son of Man Problem Really Insoluble?," 159-60. Cf. also, e.g., W. Manson, "The Son of Man and History," *SJT* 5 (1952) 113-22, where a twofold grouping is proposed. Most recently, see C. Tuckett, "The Present Son of Man," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 14 (1982) 58-81.

<sup>46</sup> G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 177-78; see p. 179 for a list of passages in each group.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 180-86: Vermes identifies twenty sayings, noting that these sayings "echo a peculiar speech-form that is genuinely Aramaic, and fit so well into the Gospels that, if the interpretations advanced [by me] are accepted, there is no reasonable doubt why Jesus should not have uttered them" (p. 182). The twenty sayings are: Mark 2:10/Matt 9:6/Luke 5:24; Mark 2:28/Matt 12:8/Luke 6:5; Matt 16:13; Mark 8:31; Mark 9:9/Matt 17:9; Mark 9:12/Matt 17:12; Mark 9:31/Matt 17:22/Luke 9:44; Mark 10:33/Matt 22:18/Luke 18:31; Mark 10:45/Matt 20:28; Mark 14:21/Matt 26:24/Luke 22:22; Mark 14:41/Matt 26:45; Luke 6:22; Matt 8:20/Luke 9:58; Matt 11:19/Luke 7:34; Luke 12:10; Matt 12:40/Luke 11:30; Matt 26:2; Luke 19:10; 22:48; 24:7.

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poses a tentative fourfold division of the Son of Man sayings: (1) sayings that can reasonably be regarded as examples of the Aramaic idiom; (2) sayings that predict the death of the Son of Man; (3) "sayings which were produced by the early Church under the influence of Dan 7:13"; and (4) "a disparate group" of other Son of Man sayings.<sup>48</sup> Casey then argues that none of the sayings influenced by Dan 7:13 has a serious claim to authenticity.<sup>49</sup> His conclusion is that "the term *בן אנוש* has its *Sitz im Leben* in the life of Jesus, but *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* as a title has its *Sitz im Leben* in the work of the early Church."<sup>50</sup>

Thus, it seems to me, a very strong case has been made against the authenticity of any of the Son of Man sayings in the NT Gospels where Son of Man is used as a title.<sup>51</sup> If this case is valid, then the inevitable implication is that the titular use of Son of Man and the related concept must have originated within the early Christian community. This conclusion will be further confirmed by the development to be discussed below under my "Proposition Three."

Before moving on to "Proposition Three," however, it is necessary to take account of the possibility, argued by Vermes and Casey, that Jesus did use the term, son of man, not as a title, but rather as a simple circumlocution for the first-person personal pronoun; that this usage stands behind some of the Son of Man sayings in the Gospels; and that, when seen in the light of Dan 7:13 by early Christians, it formed the basis for the Son of Man title and concept. As has already been noted,<sup>52</sup> the case for the circumlocutional use of son of man in Aramaic has been argued in detail by Vermes, who cites a number of alleged examples from extant Aramaic documents, and has been supported in principle by Casey. Vermes's evidence has been criticized in various ways, however, by such scholars as F. H. Borsch, C. Colpe, J. Jeremias, H. Boers, A. Gelston, and J. A. Fitzmyer. The criticism of Fitzmyer

<sup>48</sup> M. Casey, *Son of Man*, 237; see p. 236 for a list of passages in each group.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 213.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 239. Casey (pp. 228-33) identifies twelve sayings that he believes "may reasonably be held to be derived from this Aramaic idiom," suggesting "that these sayings go back to twelve authentic sayings of Jesus, and that, with the exception of Mark 9:12, . . . all other Son of man sayings in the Gospels are to be attributed to the activities of the early Church." The twelve sayings are: Mark 2:10/Matt 9:6/Luke 5:24; Mark 2:28/Matt 12:8/Luke 6:5; Matt 8:20/Luke 9:58; Matt 11:19/Luke 7:34; Matt 12:32/Luke 12:10; Luke 22:48; Mark 10:45/Matt 20:28; Mark 14:21a/Matt 26:24a/Luke 22:22; Mark 14:21b/Matt 26:24b; Luke 12:8b; Mark 8:38/Matt 16:27/Luke 9:26; Mark 8:31/Luke 9:22; Mark 9:31/Matt 17:22/Luke 9:44; Mark 10:33/Matt 20:18/Luke 18:31 (the same authentic saying lies behind the last three passages in the list).

<sup>51</sup> This is not necessarily to say, of course, that Jesus never used the term, "son of man," in the generic, the indefinite, or possibly even the circumlocutional sense; on this, see below.

<sup>52</sup> See n. 15 above.

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relates almost entirely to the question whether the circumlocutional use had appeared as early as the first century, and thus is countered rather easily by Casey;<sup>53</sup> other criticisms, however, are more substantive. Boers, for example, asserts:

. . . the Aramaic expression *bar nasha* without the demonstrative, "this (son of man)," is never a self-designation. . . . The only exception is where *bar nasha* is used generically in such a way that it is evident the user claims for himself what is true for every other man. In not a single instance of the new evidence brought forward by Geza Vermes does the speaker claim for himself anything which he does not claim as something which is true for man in general. This is the only sense in which any of the "present" sayings could be considered authentic. . . .<sup>54</sup>

Similarly, Borsch observes:

Despite Vermes's convictions . . . , it does not appear to us that any of his examples provide unambiguous illustrations. The references may still be just to *any man*. Though the speaker may occasionally include himself under this reference, this does not make it into a genuine circumlocution any more than would a comparable usage in English. E.g., "A man can't work miracles. What do you expect of me?"<sup>55</sup>

My own judgment is that Vermes has not made his case, and that Jeremias is correct when he asserts: "It is not true that *bar ʾnāšā* is to be found as a periphrasis for 'I'"<sup>56</sup> This does not, of course, rule out the possibility that Jesus may have used the term, son of man, in the generic or indefinite sense, but it does mean that such usage could not have formed the basis for the later Christian view that Jesus himself was *the* Son of Man in any titular sense. Thus, my own judgment is that the conclusion stands: the titular use of Son of Man and the concept associated with it originated within the early Christian community and not on the basis of any authentic sayings of the historical Jesus.

### Proposition Three

*The origin of the Son of Man title and concept can be found within early Christianity as the product of a peshar-type exegetical process similar to that which has been discovered among the sectaries of Qumran.*

<sup>53</sup> *Son of Man*, 227.

<sup>54</sup> "Where Christology Is Real," 307.

<sup>55</sup> *The Son of Man in Myth and History*, 23 n. 4.

<sup>56</sup> *New Testament Theology*, 261 n. 1.

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Although Vielhauer rejected the authenticity even of the eschatological Son of Man sayings in the Gospels, he nevertheless accepted the prevailing view that there were an eschatological Son of Man title and concept in first-century Judaism and thus made no attempt to explain how such a title and concept might first have originated within early Christianity. Here, the decisive breakthrough was made by Perrin, who, unlike Vielhauer, rejected the widespread assumption of a Son of Man title and concept in Judaism. In agreement with Vielhauer, he denied, on form-critical and traditio-historical grounds, the authenticity of the eschatological Son of Man sayings, but then, moving beyond Vielhauer, he argued that the expectation of the coming of Jesus as eschatological Son of Man was the product of exegetical developments at work within the early Christian community.<sup>57</sup> This process began, according to Perrin, with the interpretation of Jesus' resurrection in the light of Ps 110:1 (LXX 109:1), which reads: "The Lord said to my lord, 'Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool'" (εἶπεν ὁ κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου, κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου). The Christian exegesis of this verse produced the *mārēh* christology, as well as the particular eschatological expectation expressed in *maranatha*.<sup>58</sup> The origin of the Son of Man christology, however, can be

<sup>57</sup> See esp. N. Perrin, "Mark XIV.62: The End Product of a Christian Peshar Tradition?," *NTS* 12 (1965-66) 150-55; "The Son of Man in Ancient Judaism and Primitive Christianity," 17-28; "The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition," 3-25; all of which, together with other essays, introductory and concluding chapters, and "Postscripts" to some of the essays, are included in his *A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology*, 10-18, 23-36, and 57-83, respectively (subsequent references, however, will be to the original publications unless otherwise indicated); and *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 164-99. On the *peshar* method of interpretation, see, most recently, M. P. Horgan, *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books* (CBQMS 8; Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1979) esp. pp. 229-59; and W. H. Brownlee, *The Midrash Peshar of Habakkuk* (SBLMS 24; Missoula: Scholars, 1979) esp. pp. 23-36. For a brief summary statement, see, e.g., M. Black, "The Christological Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," *NTS* 18 (1971-72) 1: "Peshar . . . describe[s] the free, creative, imaginative, and at times bold, even audacious, exegesis of the Qumran writings, to a very large extent inspired by their apocalyptic character. Its chief characteristics are its assumptions: (a) that scripture has a veiled, eschatological meaning; (b) that this cryptic meaning may be ascertained, if necessary, by a forced and even abnormal construction of the Biblical text, e.g., by combining texts, by interpreting textual variants, even by rearranging letters; and (c) that the meaning so obtained can then be applied to present events or circumstances in which it is fulfilled."

<sup>58</sup> This latter judgment, however, is open to question; see, e.g., F. Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology*, 73-103; R. H. Fuller, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology*, 156-58; M. Black, "The Christological Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," 6-11; H. Boers, "Where Christology Is Real," 315-17; and J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Semitic Background of the New Testament *Kyrios*-Title," in his *A Wandering Aramean*, 115-42.

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traced to a secondary Christian exegetical tradition, in which the initial interpretation of the resurrection on the basis of Ps 110:1 was expanded by the use of Dan 7:13, with the result that the resurrection was then seen as Jesus' ascension to God *as Son of Man*. Thus, the concept of Jesus as Son of Man originated within the exegetical tradition of the early church, and it represented a secondary, not the primary, development within this tradition.

Perrin's hypothesis appears to me to represent the most likely solution to the problem of the origin of the Son of Man christology within the early church.<sup>59</sup> What Perrin failed to explain, however, was precisely *why* and *how* Ps 110:1 first came to be interpreted by the further use of Daniel 7, so that Jesus' presence at God's right hand became his presence there *as Son of Man*. What caused the two texts to be combined in the early Christian exegetical tradition? I have attempted elsewhere to demonstrate that the link between Ps 110:1 and Dan 7:13 was Psalm 8,<sup>60</sup> and my argument was subsequently accepted in print by Perrin, who spoke of it as a "refinement" that both strengthened and distinctly improved his own hypothesis.<sup>61</sup> Ps 110:1 ends with the words, ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου, in the Greek. The entire verse is quoted almost *verbatim* in Acts 2:34b-35 and applied to Jesus. It is also quoted in Matt 22:44/Mark 12:36/Luke 20:42b-43, but here an apparently insignificant difference appears in the Matthean and perhaps the Marcan versions:<sup>62</sup> in place of ὑποπόδιον ("footstool"), the text reads ὑποκάτω ("under"), resulting in the phrase, ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν σου ("under your feet"), rather than the ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου ("a footstool for your feet")

<sup>59</sup> See, e.g., H. Boers, "Where Christology Is Real," 312: "Once the exegetical traditions suggested by Perrin are recognized, it is not difficult to explain the further development of all the other Son of Man sayings. . . ." Note, however, that M. Casey (*Son of Man*, 181-82) rejects Perrin's hypothesis, arguing that it is "not convincing."

<sup>60</sup> W. O. Walker, Jr., "The Origin of the Son of Man Concept As Applied to Jesus," *JBL* 91 (1972) 482-90, reprinted in *The Bible in Its Literary Milieu: Contemporary Essays* (ed. V. L. Tollers and J. R. Maier; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 156-65 (subsequent references will be to the original publication in *JBL*).

<sup>61</sup> "Postscript" to "Mark 14:62," *A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology*, 19, 21-22; cf. also his "Son of Man," *IDBSup*, 835, where my argument is incorporated into his own reconstruction of the origin of the Son of Man christology.

<sup>62</sup> The textual evidence is rather equally divided for Mark but is clear for Matthew. In my article cited above (n. 60), I failed to note this fact and called attention only to the Marcan reading, observing that "Matt 22:44 follows Mark's ὑποκάτω, but Luke 20:43 returns to the ὑποπόδιον of Ps 110:1" (p. 488 n. 30). This not only overlooked the textual problem in Mark but also presupposed the priority of Mark and its use by both Matthew and Luke. For a concise treatment of the textual problem and its implications for the Synoptic Problem, see G. D. Fee, "Modern Text Criticism and the Synoptic Problem," *J. J. Griesbach: Synoptic and Text-critical Studies 1776-1976* (ed. B. Orchard and T. R. W. Longstaff; SNTSMS 34; Cambridge: University Press, 1978) 163-64.

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of Ps 110:1. It is to be noted, however, that the phrase, ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν, also appears in Ps 8:6 (LXX 8:7). It seems, then, that the early Christians initially used the first part of Ps 110:1 (εἶπεν ὁ κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου, κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου) to interpret the resurrection of Jesus as an ascension to the right hand of God, but the second part of the verse (ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου), which served the purpose of explaining the nature of Jesus' activity at God's right hand, subsequently led them to Ps 8:6 with its strikingly similar ending (ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ), and the result was that Psalm 8 as a whole was then also applied to Jesus.<sup>63</sup> Of decisive significance at this point, however, is the fact that Psalm 8 also refers, two verses earlier, to "son of man" (υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου), here used, of course, simply as a synonym for "human being" (ἄνθρωπος). To the early Christian mind, however, which had already associated Psalm 8 with Jesus on the basis of its link with Ps 110:1, this would almost inevitably have been understood as an identification of Jesus as "Son of Man" and would then have suggested a connection with another passage using the term, "Son of Man," viz., Dan 7:13. Thus, the movement from Ps 110:1 to Ps 8:6 to Ps 8:4 to Dan 7:13 seems clear and logical, and, as Perrin observed, "this kind of movement from one text to another is characteristic of early Christian exegesis."<sup>64</sup>

This reconstruction of the origin of the Son of Man title and concept within the early Christian exegetical tradition, if valid, greatly strengthens the case, summarized under my "Proposition Two" above, against the authenticity of the eschatological Son of Man sayings and thus of the Son of Man title and concept presupposed by these sayings.

<sup>63</sup> Ps 110:1b and Ps 8:6 are also conflated, either explicitly or implicitly, at 1 Cor 15:27; Eph 1:22; Phil 3:21; Heb 2:6-9; and 1 Pet 3:22.

<sup>64</sup> "Postscript," 21-22. Cf. his *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 181, for the observation that, once the use of a text has been established, "it would be natural to use other aspects of the passage." Cf. also, e.g., C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology* (New York: Scribner's, 1953); and *The Old Testament in the New* (FBBS 3; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1963), for the argument that the early Christians tended to draw material from whole blocs of OT material (e.g., entire "chapters"), rather than just from individual sentences or phrases, and that the context in which a particular word, phrase, or statement originally stood was very much in the mind of the Christian exegete. Cf., however, R. H. Fuller, *The Foundations*, 233, for an opposing view: "In view of the atomistic exegesis current at the time (cf. only Isa. 53!) it is a hazardous *argumentum e silentio* to infer that Ps. 8:4 was in Paul's mind when he quoted Ps. 8:6." For alternative suggestions that the connecting link between Ps 110:1 and Dan 7:13 might be either Ps 80:17 or Ps 110:2-3, see, respectively, A. Gelston, "A Sidelight," 189-96; and J. W. Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Assen: von Gorcum, 1954) 152-53. Cf., on the other hand, M. Casey, *Son of Man*, 181-82, for the argument that it is not necessary "to suppose that there was another OT passage which was used to connect Ps. 110:1 and Dan. 7:13 and was subsequently dropped." Note, nevertheless, that Casey does not disagree, in principle, with the notion of such movement from text to text; he simply finds it unnecessary in this particular instance.

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## Proposition Four

*Of the various types of Son of Man sayings preserved in the Gospels, those that reflect the influence of Dan 7:13 and thus are eschatological in nature most nearly represent the earliest stage in the development of the Son of Man title and concept; all other types are secondary and derivative.*

If my "Proposition Three," discussed above, is valid, then the earliest use of Son of Man as a title and the earliest form of the concept associated with it were those based upon a combination of Dan 7:13 and Ps 110:1 (with possibly some influence from Psalm 8).<sup>65</sup> Traces of this combination can be found in at least two places in the NT: (1) Matt 26:64/Mark 14:62/Luke 22:69 speaks of the Son of Man "sitting (καθήμενον) at the right hand (ἐκ δεξιῶν) of power (τῆς δυνάμεως)" and (in Matthew and Mark) "coming (ἐρχόμενον) on/with (ἐπι/μετά)<sup>66</sup> the clouds of heaven"; and (2) Acts 7:56 has Stephen refer to "the Son of Man standing (ἑστῶτα) at the right hand (ἐκ δεξιῶν) of God."<sup>67</sup> Once the Son of Man title and concept were established on the basis of this combination of Dan 7:13 and Ps 110:1, further developments could occur, sometimes without reference to Ps 110:1. For example, it appears that an apologetic tradition using Zech 12:10-14 to interpret the passion was

<sup>65</sup> The possibility cannot be ruled out, of course, that the title and concept originated on the basis of a combination of Ps 8:4 with Ps 110:1, even before 8:4 led the scribes on to Dan 7:13. In a letter to me, dated September 10, 1980, H. W. Attridge offers the following suggestion: "Have you given any thought to the use of Son of Man terminology in Hebrews? 'Son of Man' appears there only in the quotation of Ps. 8:5-7 at Heb. 2:6-8. The term is clearly understood as a reference to Jesus, as the exegetical comments in Heb. 2:8-9 indicate. Ps. 110 plays a conspicuous role in Heb., of course. Note in particular that the catena of scriptural quotations in chap. 1 ends with Ps. 110:1 and that the quotation of Ps. 8 ends with the *hypokaiōtōn podōn autou* phrase. I think that you could argue that Heb. gives evidence of precisely the sort of *Stichwort* association of the two texts which you postulate. It is also interesting that Heb. makes virtually no use of Dan. At most there are a few allusions to Danielic language, but none of them involve Son of Man imagery. Is it possible that the interpretation of Son of Man from Ps. 8 as a reference to Jesus in Hebrews is independent of the use of Daniel for this purpose? I think in any case that Heb. is independent of the Synoptic tradition. (On the supposed allusion to Gethsemane in Heb. 5:7, the most likely text on which Synoptic dependence might be based, see my little piece in *JBL* 98 [1979] 90-93.) I wonder, then, if Heb. might reflect the earliest phase of development of the Son of Man tradition."

<sup>66</sup> Matthew has "on" (in agreement with the LXX); Mark has "with" (in agreement with Theodotion and the Aramaic).

<sup>67</sup> N. Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 176-80. Perrin argues (pp. 177-79) that the combination of Ps 110:1 and Dan 7:13 found in Matt 26:64/Mark 14:62/Luke 22:69 and the same combination found in the pre-Lucan *Vorlage* of Acts 7:56 cannot be dependent upon one another and thus represent independent evidence of this combination in the early Christian exegetical tradition. He also finds traces of the same combination in the ascension story in Acts 1:9 (p. 179).

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brought in to produce the idea that "all the tribes of the earth" will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven and will mourn; traces of this are present in Matt 24:30/Mark 13:26/Luke 21:27.<sup>68</sup> Eventually, all reference to Ps 110:1 dropped out, as did the connection with Zech 12:10-14 and the passion apologetic, "as emphasis came to be put more and more upon the expectation of Jesus' 'second coming', as Son of Man, and as this expectation came to exist in its own right, independently of the exegesis which gave it birth."<sup>69</sup> All of these developments, however, can quite legitimately be designated as, in some sense, eschatological in nature, and they lie behind a number of the Son of Man sayings in the Gospels.<sup>70</sup>

Once this eschatological concept of Jesus as Son of Man had developed, additional Son of Man sayings were formulated.<sup>71</sup> One group of sayings spoke of the earthly career of Jesus as that of the Son of Man (the so-called present Son of Man sayings). In some cases, sayings of this type may have been based upon sayings (possibly even authentic sayings of Jesus) already using "son of man" in the generic or the indefinite sense;<sup>72</sup> in others, the title

<sup>68</sup> Cf. also John 19:37; Rev 1:7.

<sup>69</sup> N. Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 184; cf. pp. 173-84. According to Perrin, the idea of the *parousia* did not make its appearance until the fusion of Son of Man tradition (Dan 7:13) with passion apologetic (Zech 12:10-14); i.e., the earliest Christian use of Dan 7:13 was as an interpretation of the ascension. M. Casey (*Son of Man*, 181-82), however, argues that, from the very beginning, Christian exegetes applied Dan 7:13 to the *parousia*. The question, of course, is whether these exegetes interpreted the "coming" of Dan 7:13 as a coming *to* God (i.e., ascension) or a coming *from* God to earth (i.e., *parousia*). Theodotion's version, in agreement with the Aramaic, clearly refers to a coming *to* God: "and behold, with (μετά) the clouds of heaven one like a son of man was coming (ἐρχόμενος ἦν), and he came (ἐφθασεν) to the ancient of days and was presented (προσηνέχθη) before him." The LXX, on the other hand, is ambiguous: "and behold, upon (ἐπι) the clouds of heaven one like a son of man was coming (ἦρχετο), and as an ancient of days he came (παρῆν), and those present (οἱ παρευριστάς) came with (παρῆσαν) him." In general, the NT use of Dan 7:13 seems to reflect the text of Theodotion more closely than that of the LXX; see, e.g., J. W. Wevers, "Theodotion," *IDB*, 4. 619. My own conclusion is that Perrin, rather than Casey, is likely correct on the matter.

<sup>70</sup> In the triple tradition: Matt 16:27/Mark 8:38/Luke 9:26; Matt 24:30/Mark 13:26/Luke 21:27; Matt 26:64/Mark 14:62/Luke 22:69; in the double tradition: Matt 24:27/Luke 17:24; Matt 24:37/Luke 17:26; Matt 24:39/Luke 17:30; Matt 24:44/Luke 12:40; in Special Matthew: Matt 10:23; 13:41; 16:28; 19:28; 25:31; in Special Luke: Luke 12:8; 18:1; 21:36.

<sup>71</sup> Note that H. E. Tödt (*The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition*, 224-31), among others, also regards the eschatological Son of Man sayings as the oldest: first, for him, are the authentic sayings in which Jesus, without reference to Scripture, speaks of the Son of Man as an expected figure other than himself; then come the sayings that refer to the heavenly activity of the Son of Man in terms of Dan 7:13; finally there are the expanded apocalyptic traditions regarding the activities of the Son of Man. Only subsequently were the earthly ministry sayings and the passion sayings produced (pp. 141-219).

<sup>72</sup> E.g., Matt 8:20/Luke 9:58; Matt 9:6/Mark 2:10/Luke 5:24; Matt 11:19/Luke 7:34; Matt 12:8/Mark 2:28/Luke 6:5; Matt 12:32/Luke 12:10; Matt 12:40 (cf. Luke 11:30); Matt 26:64/Mark 14:21/Luke 22:22; Luke 22:48.

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may have been substituted for the first-person personal pronoun in already existing sayings;<sup>73</sup> elsewhere, altogether new sayings may have been created to express the view that Son of Man was an appropriate title for Jesus during his lifetime on earth. In any case, what is apparently reflected here is the tendency, which can be observed elsewhere, to project back into the lifetime of Jesus the attributes and status originally believed to have become his only after the resurrection (or perhaps not to become his until the *parousia*).<sup>74</sup> Another group of sayings referred to the betrayal, rejection, suffering, death, and/or resurrection of the Son of Man (the so-called suffering Son of Man sayings). These apparently reflect a series of developments, in which passion apologetic and Son of Man tradition interacted.<sup>75</sup> Which of these two groups developed first cannot be determined with any real certainty, but H. E. Tödt and others maintain that the passion sayings were later than the earthly ministry sayings.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, it may even be the case that the passion sayings represent simply a further development of the earthly ministry sayings.<sup>77</sup>

It is true, of course, that Vermes and Casey argue for the authenticity of a number of the sayings dealing with the earthly ministry and/or the passion of the Son of Man, either in essentially their present form or in some earlier

<sup>73</sup> E.g., Luke 6:22 (cf. Matt 5:11); Matt 16:13 (cf. Mark 8:27/Luke 9:18).

<sup>74</sup> On this, see, e.g., B. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* (London: SCM, 1961) 138-39. Cf. also, e.g., N. Perrin, "The Use of (*Para*)*didonai* in Connection with the Passion of Jesus in the New Testament," *Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde: Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias* (ed. E. Lohse et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970) 204-12; reprinted with a "Postscript" in his *A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology*, 94-103 (subsequent references will be to the reprinted version), esp. p. 102: "There was a very definite tendency in early Christianity to reflect on the significance of the ministry of Jesus as the ministry of the Son of Man as can be seen from Matt. 13:37. . . ." Just how widespread this tendency may have been in the case of the Son of Man christology must, however, await further consideration below under my "Proposition Six."

<sup>75</sup> F. Hahn (*The Titles of Jesus in Christology*, 37-42) identifies three types of suffering Son of Man sayings: (1) those that predict his suffering without reference to Scripture (Matt 17:22/Mark 9:31/Luke 9:44; Matt 20:18/Mark 10:33/cf. Luke 18:31; Matt 26:45/Mark 14:41); (2) those that do refer to Scripture (Matt 26:64/Mark 14:21/Luke 22:22; Mark 8:31/Luke 9:22/cf. Matt 16:21); and (3) one that appeals to Isaiah 53 for a soteriological interpretation of his death (Matt 20:28/Mark 10:45). Somewhat similarly, N. Perrin ("The Use of (*Para*)*didonai*") argues that an original development of (*para*)*didonai* as a technical term to describe the passion interacted with a passion apologetic using certain OT passages and Son of Man traditions and later with the use of Isaiah 53 to interpret the cross.

<sup>76</sup> *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition*, 269-77, cf. pp. 141-219.

<sup>77</sup> On, e.g., Matt 20:28/Mark 10:45, see N. Perrin, "The Use of (*Para*)*didonai*," 102. Cf. also C. Tuckett, "The Present Son of Man" for the argument "that most of the present Son of Man sayings in Q are, as in Mark, not so much about the present authority of Jesus as about rejection and suffering" (p. 70).

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form.<sup>78</sup> In so doing, however, they also argue that these sayings, in their original form, did not involve the titular use of Son of Man or the concept associated with it. Thus, their arguments support the view that the Son of Man title and concept, as such, were originally eschatological in nature, since, even if other types of sayings now involving the title and concept are earlier in origin, they nevertheless did not properly become *Son of Man sayings* in the present sense until they were associated with an already developed Son of Man title and concept.

### Proposition Five

*Relatively speaking, the Son of Man christology developed rather late within the exegetical tradition of the early church, and it apparently developed among Greek-speaking, not Aramaic-speaking, Christians.*

It is often assumed that the Son of Man concept was an essential part of the very earliest christological thinking of the Christian community,<sup>79</sup> but this assumption must be revised if my "Proposition Three," discussed above, is valid. According to Perrin, the first stage of the exegetical process that led to the Son of Man christology was the interpretation of Jesus' resurrection in terms of Ps 110:1, and the use of Dan 7:13, with its Son of Man reference, represented, at best, a second stage. According to my argument, however, which was subsequently accepted by Perrin, the Son of Man concept represented at least a third stage in the process, with the move from Ps 110:1 to Psalm 8 intervening between it and the initial stage. It must now be pointed out, however, that both Hendrikus W. Boers and I have independently identified exegetical traditions that, in our judgment, antedated even the use of Ps 110:1 to interpret the resurrection of Jesus. In Boers's view, it was an understanding of Jesus' death resulting from a combination of Psalm 16 and Psalm 18 that prepared his followers for the resurrection "appearances," which then became the real basis for the resurrection faith, which, in turn, was interpreted in light of Ps 110:1 (and other passages, such as Ps 2:7).<sup>80</sup> This view was subsequently accepted by Perrin as a "refinement" that greatly

<sup>78</sup> See above under my "Proposition Two."

<sup>79</sup> This assumption generally presupposes the authenticity of at least some of the eschatological Son of Man sayings; see, e.g., R. H. Fuller, *The Foundations*, 143-44: "Jesus had declared that his own eschatological word and deed would be vindicated by the Son of man at the end. Now his word and deed had received preliminary yet certain vindication by the act of God in the resurrection. The earliest church expressed this new-born conviction by identifying Jesus with the Son of man who was to come."

<sup>80</sup> "Psalm 16 and the Historical Origin of the Christian Faith," *ZNW* 60 (1969) 107-10; and "Where Christology Is Real," 310-12.

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strengthened and improved his own hypothesis.<sup>81</sup> I have called attention to "traces of at least three . . . exegetical developments [that] can be detected in the early chapters of Acts"—involving the use of Ps 68:19a (18a in English), Deut 18:15-19, and Ps 16:8-11—and have suggested that the origin of the resurrection faith in its most primitive form was based, at least in part, on such exegetical developments.<sup>82</sup> Finally, Ferdinand Hahn and others have argued convincingly that Ps 110:1, itself, contains three different elements; that the first element ("Sit at my right hand") played a role in the very early Palestinian tradition; but that the second element ("till I make your enemies your footstool"), which, according to my own hypothesis, formed the bridge between Ps 110:1 and Ps 8:6, was not applied to Jesus until somewhat later, when the church found it necessary to explain and clarify the nature of his present activity at the right hand of God and to account for the delay in the final coming of God's kingdom.<sup>83</sup> Much more work needs to be done along these lines, but, if such arguments as those advanced by Hahn, Boers, and me have any validity at all, then it is clear that the Son of Man christology appeared relatively late in the exegetical tradition of the early church.

This conclusion is strengthened and further clarified by an aspect of my hypothesis regarding the origin of the Son of Man christology that is easily overlooked: this is my contention that the use of Psalm 8 to serve as a link between Ps 110:1 and Dan 7:13 could have occurred only among Greek-speaking, not Aramaic-speaking, Christians.<sup>84</sup> The basic argument here is that the requisite verbal parallels between Ps 110:1 and Ps 8:6 are to be found in the Greek, but not in the Hebrew, texts.<sup>85</sup> It should be noted, too, that other scholars have argued on quite different grounds for the Hellenistic

<sup>81</sup> "Postscript," 19-21; cf. also his "Son of Man," 834-35, where Boers's hypothesis is incorporated into his own reconstruction of the origin of the Son of Man christology.

<sup>82</sup> "Christian Origins and Resurrection Faith," *JR* 52 (1972) esp. pp. 52-55. Cf. also, e.g., J. A. T. Robinson, "The Most Primitive Christology of All?" *JTS* ns 7 (1956) 177-89, reprinted in his *Twelve New Testament Studies* (SBT 34; Naperville: Allenson, 1962) 139-53, esp. p. 144, for the suggestion that the most primitive christology was based, at least in large part, upon an interpretation of Deut 18:15-19.

<sup>83</sup> F. Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology*, esp. pp. 129-35; cf. also, e.g., R. H. Fuller, *The Foundations*, esp. pp. 184-86.

<sup>84</sup> "The Origin of the Son of Man Concept as Applied to Jesus," 489.

<sup>85</sup> In the Hebrew, Ps 110:1 ends, 'ad-ʾāšit ʾōyēbe(y)kā hādōm lēragle(y)kā, while Ps 8:6 (8:7) ends, kōl šaitā tahar-raglā(y)w. Thus, the similarities are much less striking than in the Greek. Moreover, it should be noted that Ps 8:4 (8:5) uses *ben ʾādām* (Hebrew) for "son of man," while Dan 7:13 has the Aramaic *bar ʾēnāš*; on this point, however, note, e.g., K. Grayston, "The Reinterpretation of Psalm VIII and the Son of Man Debate," *NTS* 27 (1980-81) 656-72, with its observation that the Aramaic targum on Ps 8:5 has *bar nāšāʾ* (in its present form, at least, this targum is late).

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origin of the Son of Man christology.<sup>86</sup> If this view is correct, then the Son of Man concept did not develop within the earliest Aramaic-speaking Palestinian church but rather among later Greek-speaking Christians, either Hellenistic-Jewish or non-Jewish.<sup>87</sup>

### Proposition Six

*Outside the canonical Gospels, early Christian literature contains almost no traces of the Son of Man christology found in the Gospels; therefore, it must be concluded that this christology never became widely established in the early church.*

It has often been noted that, with only one exception, no NT writing other than the four Gospels ever applies the term, Son of Man, to Jesus as a title.<sup>88</sup> The one exception is Acts 7:56,<sup>89</sup> with its unique reference to the Son of Man "standing" at the right hand of God.<sup>90</sup> Elsewhere, the phrase occurs in the anarthrous form (υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου rather than ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου)<sup>91</sup>

<sup>86</sup> See, e.g., H. M. Teeple, "The Origin of the Son of Man Christology," 238, 250: "Since the Son of man logia originated in the church, there is no certainty that they ever existed in Aramaic. They may have originated in Greek. . . . We conclude that the Son of man Christology did not begin with any sayings of Jesus nor even in the original Jerusalem church of Jesus' disciples. Instead, it began in hellenistic Jewish-Christianity." Cf. also, e.g., H. Boers, "Where Christology Is Real," 312: "The fact that the Son of man tradition appears to have been absent in the Hellenistic Christian atmosphere in which Paul was at home may be an indication that these traditions were not yet firmly established when Christianity started to move beyond the borders of Palestine. The Son of man sayings may thus not belong in the earliest phases of primitive Christianity." M. Casey (*Son of Man*) concludes that the use of Dan 7:13 to form Son of Man sayings, while not original with Jesus himself, could have originated either in the Aramaic or in the Greek (234-35; cf., e.g., pp. 168-71, 178, 183, 196-97).

<sup>87</sup> H. M. Teeple ("The Origin of the Son of Man Christology," esp. pp. 247-50) argues for a Hellenistic-Jewish-Christian origin.

<sup>88</sup> For the argument that, even in the canonical Gospels, the term is not properly a title, see n. 26 above.

<sup>89</sup> Even here, a few witnesses read "Son of God" rather than "Son of Man," and G. D. Kilpatrick argues that the former reading may well be original; see his "Acts vii.56: Son of Man?," *TZ* 21 (1965) 209; and "Again Acts vii.56: Son of Man?," *TZ* 34 (1978) 232. According to Kilpatrick, the change to "Son of Man" in the textual tradition can be explained as an attempt both to avoid repeating the word, "God," four times in two verses and to assimilate Acts 7:56 to Luke 22:69.

<sup>90</sup> See, e.g., H. P. Owen, "Stephen's Vision in Acts 7.55-56," *NTS* 1 (1954-55) 224-26; H. E. Tödt, "Excursus II: Discussion of the Concept of the Heavenly Son of Man in Acts 7:56," *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition*, 303-5; and C. K. Barrett, "Stephen and the Son of Man," *Apophoreta: Festschrift für Ernst Haenchen* (ed. W. Eltester; BZNW 30; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964) 32-38.

<sup>91</sup> In the Gospels, except for John 5:27, and in Acts 7:56, the phrase is always arthrous (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου), and it has even been suggested that the ὄτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἔστιν of John

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at Heb 2:6, which is a quotation of Ps 8:4, and at Rev 1:13; 14:14, which speak of "one like a son of man" (ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου) and thus would appear to be direct references to Dan 7:13, with its ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου. It is not clear whether these passages reflect preliminary stages prior to the use of Son of Man as a christological title, independent appeals to the OT in an attempt to portray the significance and role of Jesus, or possibly even later traces of an earlier titular use of the term, but, in any case, they do not use Son of Man as a title and thus cannot be regarded as evidence for a Son of Man christology in the early church. A number of scholars have suggested that Paul's designation of Jesus as ἄνθρωπος ("human being") and perhaps his concept of the "second Adam"<sup>92</sup> are related, either directly or indirectly, to the Son of Man christology,<sup>93</sup> but this view has been seriously questioned by, among others, R. H. Fuller, who concludes that the argument in its support "is much weaker than is generally supposed."<sup>94</sup> B. Lindars has even argued that "what may be called a Son of Man christology is basic to the New Testament, being found in all the major theological strands."<sup>95</sup> In order

5:27 might be simply an idiomatic equivalent for *ὅτι ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*; see E. C. Colwell, "A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament," *JBL* 52 (1933) 12-21; and P. B. Harner, "Qualitative Anarthrous Predicate Nouns: Mark 15:39 and John 1:1," *JBL* 92 (1973) 75-87; cf. however, C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* (Cambridge: University Press, 1977) 16-17 n. 15, where the idea is rejected. Moule argues that the arthrous form reflects some Aramaic expression that meant "the Son of Man" or even "that Son of Man" and was a direct reference to "the (well-known Danielic) Son of Man"; see his "Neglected Features in the Problem of 'the Son of Man,'" *Neues Testament und Kirche: Festschrift für Rudolf Schnackenburg* (ed. J. Gnilka; Freiburg: Herder, 1974) 413-28; and *The Origin of Christology*, 10-22.

<sup>92</sup> See, e.g., Rom 5:12-21; 1 Cor 15:21-23, 45-50; cf. Phil 2:5-11.

<sup>93</sup> See, e.g., F. J. Foakes Jackson and K. Lake (eds.), *The Beginnings of Christianity*, I, 380: "All the essentials of the eschatological doctrine connoted by the apocalyptic Son of Man are found in Paul, but not the phrase itself. Is not this because he was too good a Grecian to translate *Bar-nasha* by so impossible a phrase as *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, and rendered it idiomatically by *ὁ ἄνθρωπος*?" Cf. also, e.g., O. Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, esp. pp. 141-52, 166-81.

<sup>94</sup> *The Foundations*, 233-34; cf., e.g., F. Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology*, 20; and H. Boers, "Where Christology Is Real," 312: ". . . the Son of Man tradition appears to have been absent in the Hellenistic Christian atmosphere in which Paul was at home. . . ." For the view that Paul's Adam typology is not a part of any Son of Man christology, see, e.g., B. Lindars, "Re-Enter the Apocalyptic Son of Man," esp. p. 62 n. 2.

<sup>95</sup> "Re-Enter the Apocalyptic Son of Man," 64; cf. pp. 61-65; cf. also, e.g., S. S. Smalley, "The Johannine Son of Man Sayings," 300: "In this way we can see afresh that a Son of man christology belonged to a tradition (fostered by the Hellenists?) which was given expression and shape in the early kerygma, came into the substructure of the Gospels and Acts, and survived in the adaptations found in Rom. v and viii, Phil. ii, Col. i, 1 Tim. iii and so on." Similarly, P. Giles ("The Son of Man in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *ExpTim* 86 [1975] 328-32) argues "that there was a wide knowledge" of the Son of Man tradition in the early church.

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to sustain his argument, however, Lindars is compelled to acknowledge that "this christology does not depend on the use of Son of Man as a title, so that the absence of it [i.e., the title] outside the gospels is no more significant than the absence of it from the major part of the relevant apocalyptic texts," and it becomes clear that what he regards as "basic to the New Testament" is really simply "the apocalyptic notion of the agent of the divine intervention," which, only in the sayings tradition of the Gospels, ever involves Son of Man terminology or imagery *per se*.<sup>96</sup>

Outside the NT, except in quotations from or allusions to the canonical Gospels, the term, Son of Man, is found only once in its original eschatological sense. According to Hegesippus,<sup>97</sup> James the brother of Jesus, at the point of his own martyrdom, responded to a question regarding "the gate of Jesus" with the words: "Why do you ask me about the Son of Man (τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου)? He, himself, is sitting in heaven at the right hand of the great power, and he will come on the clouds of heaven." Otherwise, the term is found in the esoteric Adam/Son of Man/Prophet speculations of the Pseudo-Clementine literature and the literature of Christian Gnosticism, but in ways that are quite foreign to the NT usage, and in certain writings concerned with the debate over the human nature of Christ.<sup>98</sup> In the last instance, the title becomes simply "a designation for Jesus' humanity, contrasted with 'Son of God' as a designation for his divinity," and "any idea that it was originally a title of majesty is completely lost."<sup>99</sup>

Thus, the judgment holds that the Son of Man christology reflected in the canonical Gospels cannot be found with any certainty outside these Gospels except at Acts 7:56 and in the Hegesippus report concerning James,<sup>100</sup> and, where the term continued to be used at all, it became either part of an elaborate metaphysical system of esoteric speculation or simply a cipher for the humanity of Jesus.<sup>101</sup> The almost inevitable implication is that the Son of Man christology reflected in the Gospels' titular use of the term never became widely established in the early church.

<sup>96</sup> "Re-Enter the Apocalyptic Son of Man," 64, 61.

<sup>97</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.23,13.

<sup>98</sup> See, e.g., C. Colpe, "ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου," 473-77.

<sup>99</sup> R. H. Fuller, *The Foundations*, 229. Note that *Barn.* 12:10 rejects "Son of Man" as a designation for Jesus in favor of "Son of God." In the thought of Irenaeus, the Son of Man terminology figures prominently in the Adam/Christ typology; but, here too, the title designates the humanity of Christ in contrast to his deity.

<sup>100</sup> Note the similarity of these two passages: both are parts of martyrdom accounts, and both contain similar terminology and imagery.

<sup>101</sup> For a brief summary of the argument that the absence of the Son of Man terminology and concept is "not as complete as is usually assumed," see, e.g., J. M. Robinson, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus* (SBT 25; London: SCM, 1959) 102-3 n. 2.

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**Conclusion**

Taken as a whole, the line of research that has been summarized appears to suggest rather clearly: (1) that the Son of Man title and concept originated within the limited circle of a particular Christian exegetical tradition, (2) that they developed relatively late within this tradition, (3) that they never became widely known or accepted outside this limited circle, and (4) that their earliest form was eschatological in nature. My own suggestion, at this point, and it requires much further investigation, is that the Son of Man christology originated, flourished, and, for the most part, died within what can be called the "Q Community," i.e., the community from whose traditions the authors of both Matthew and Luke drew material for their respective Gospels. This suggestion is supported, it seems to me, by some significant recent research regarding the Q Community and its relationship to the Son of Man christology.<sup>102</sup> The suggestion also has some rather important implications regarding the Synoptic Problem<sup>103</sup> and the relationship between the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel; these, however, cannot be explored in the present paper.

<sup>102</sup> See, e.g., H. Schürmann, "Beobachtungen zum Menschensohn-Titel in der Redequelle: Sein Vorkommen in Abschluss- und Einleitungswendungen," *Jesus und der Menschensohn: Für Anton Vögtle* (ed. R. Pesch and R. Schnackenburg with O. Kaiser; Freiburg: Herder, 1975) 124-47.

<sup>103</sup> See W. O. Walker, Jr., "The Son of Man Question and the Synoptic Problem," *NTS* 28 (1982) 374-88.