

THE SON OF MAN IN MARK, by Morna D. Hooker, S.P.C.K. 1967. 38s. 6d.

In Daniel 7, 13 we read: 'I saw in the night visions and behold with clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man.' This mysterious being is enthroned alongside the Ancient of Days who is God. The Son of Man is to be given 'dominion, glory and kingdom, that all peoples nations and languages should serve him' (7, 14). That kingdom which he is to head is God's kingdom which was prophesied of old, and which was to be an 'eternal' kingdom following upon temporal empires (symbolized by the beasts) which have been condemned by the Ancient of Days. There are innumerable hypotheses about the origin and meaning of this Son of Man. With some moderns it is simplest to suggest that Daniel 7 is a re-writing of Ezekiel 1, 26-28 in terms better adapted to a generation which had lost all hope of a davidic dynasty. Thus the Son of Man in Daniel stands for a transcendent heavenly Being who corresponds, in this apocalyptic type of writing, to that personified Wisdom who dwells alongside God, yet comes upon earth to dwell with men and grant them gifts of eternal significance. (Thus in Prov. 8-9, Sirach 24, Wisdom 6-9, and Baruch 3; 9, 4; 7.)

If the Old Testament use of 'Son of Man' is debated and complex, in the New Testament it is even more so. Recent criticism has again questioned whether our Lord ever used the phrase, and whether he ever looked upon himself as Son of Man.

Dr Hooker's work presents a reasoned and convincing case, and she is sure that 'the evidence that the term was used by Jesus himself is overwhelming' (p. 77). The plan of this scholarly work, within the limits set, is to examine first the meaning of Son of Man in Daniel and then in I Enoch and intertestamentary literature generally. This forms Part I or the background which, as is rightly maintained, is indispensable. Daniel 7 provides the leading idea which continued to play an important part in II Esdras, Wisdom, Jubilees, Sirach and especially in I Enoch.

Part II is a detailed examination of every 'Son of Man' text in the gospel of St Mark: 'Our purpose in this book is to study the impact which the Son of Man sayings make when we look at one gospel, St Mark's' (p. 7). Admittedly our knowledge of the words and deeds is mediated via the evangelist's understanding of those words and deeds; and so the task is difficult. We are urged to consider the total situation of each text examined and to avoid anything like imposing a pre-determined pattern upon the material (p. 80). Our author makes short shift of Bultmann on Mark 8, 31, rejecting 'the judgment of one who has already decided the meaning of the Son of Man before approaching the gospel evidence' (p. 103). Patiently, each text is surveyed in terms of situation, background, parallels, psychological appropriateness, etc. Thus text and contexts of the passages in chapter 2 seem to bring out Jesus' claim to authority, which anyway is dominant in St Mark's gospel. St Mark also appears to be contrasting the present rejection of our Lord's claim by the Jewish authorities (2, 10; 2, 28; 3, 6; 14, 62), and that acknowledgment that would be made in the future (8, 28; 13, 36 and 14, 62).

Mark 14, 62 is indeed the most important and crucial of all the Marcan sayings because it formulates the answer of Jesus to Caiphas' question regarding messianic status, and because it is in fact the text closest to Daniel 7, 13, providing as it does the strongest supporting evidence that the New Testament use of 'Son of Man' is primarily derived from Daniel 7, 13. There remains of course an immense diversity of opinion about the authenticity of this saying. But Dr Hooker remains faithful to her method which is quietly solvent of the often massive assertions of other scholars. So she concludes: 'Mark 14, 62, as it stands, is, like other Son of Man sayings, a claim to authority, and it is a claim to ultimate authority' (p. 173).

A last section synthesizes the findings of the detailed survey of texts. The conclusions are ranged under four headings, thus: (a) the

setting of the sayings, (b) the Marcan pattern, (c) Jesus' own use of the term, (d) Jesus the Son of Man. And so Dr Hooker concludes in a

way which is wholly consonant with the more usual findings of Christian tradition.

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THE HUMANITY AND DIVINITY OF CHRIST: A STUDY OF PATTERN IN CHRISTOLOGY, by John Knox. *Cambridge University Press*, 1967. 118 pp. 20s.

The first three chapters of this book contain an account of the development of Christology within the New Testament; the remaining three contain a critical reformulation of Christology in accordance with the author's own outlook. The New-Testament development is seen as moving from an initial adoptionism through a kenotic phase to docetism, though, as Dr Knox makes plain, docetism was not the form of story which the Church was willing finally to accept. This does not mean, however, that Dr Knox is himself willing to accept the classical Chalcedonian doctrine in anything other than a highly symbolic and mythological interpretation. For him the personal pre-existence of Jesus is simply incompatible with the reality of his human nature. This is not argued but repeatedly asserted: 'We can have the humanity without the pre-existence and we can have the pre-existence without the humanity. There is absolutely no way of having both' (p. 106). However, Dr Knox wishes to retain the traditional formulas, while giving them a meaning that Chalcedon would certainly have repudiated: 'When we join the congregation in confessing the pre-existence, we are asserting, as we are bound by our own existence as Christians to do, that God, the Father Almighty, Maker of the heavens and the earth, was back of, present in, and acting through the whole event of which the human life of Jesus was the centre. We are saying that *God* was in Christ—not in the resurrection only, but in the whole of the human career from conception through death' (p. 107. 'Through' in American English means, of course, 'up to and including', not 'up to and beyond'). Surprisingly, Dr Knox denies that this position is adoptionist; the reason for this would seem to be that he does not in any case hold that the purpose of Christology is to make sense of the life of Jesus as it is recorded in the Gospels; it is to make sense of the experience of the primitive Church. What it does, and what the Church has done from the start, is to weave a pattern of myth around the figure of the earthly Jesus in order to provide a conceptual scheme for the expression of the Church's own experience. In spite of the way in which Dr Knox speaks of

the Church as having a 'memory' of Jesus, it seems clear that for him the Gospels do not constitute in any sense a record of the witness of those who saw the deeds and heard the words of Jesus; what they are really *about* is not Jesus but the consciousness of primitive Christians. And, as far as Jesus himself is concerned, it is axiomatic that if he is fully human he cannot be, in anything other than a symbolic or pictorial sense, divine. Thus Dr Knox tells us that to speak of God the Word as being made flesh in Christ 'is by no means the same thing as identifying Jesus of Nazareth with this pre-existing, and always existing, hypostasis. Just as the reality of God is not exhausted in the Logos, yet is fully present in it, so the reality of the Logos was fully present in the Event of which the human life of Jesus was the centre and therefore pre-eminently in that human life itself, but without being simply identical with Jesus' (p. 109). He says categorically that 'it is impossible to conceive that God could become a man' (p. 111).

It is perfectly clear that Dr Knox believes himself to be interpreting the classical Christian doctrine of the Incarnation and not to be putting something else in its place; it is equally clear to me that he is in fact doing nothing of the sort. That this is so appears from the fact that, if he is right, it would have been idolatrous for the Apostles during the earthly life of Jesus to have given Jesus the worship which we now give him. Dr Knox, by his own avowal, is not happy to say that the Word was incarnate in Jesus but that 'the Incarnation took place in Jesus-in-the-midst-of-his-own—in other words, in the nascent Church' (p. 112). This is not a matter of theological technicalities and hair-splitting; it strikes at the root of Christian discipleship, the giving to a man who was crucified in Palestine the unconditional allegiance which God alone can rightly receive. The assertions which Christians make at their baptism are no longer assertions about Jesus; 'Jesus' becomes simply the model for the correlation and systematization of the experience of the Christian Church, parallel to the way in which the concepts of atomic physics provide a model for the correlation and systematization of physical phenomena. It is significant and disquieting