

Die Menschensohnfrage im letzten-Stadium  
Eduard Hertlein  
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In the year 1892 Paul de Lagarde proposed the theory that Dan. 7 was written in the Roman period. Sixteen years later Eduard Hertlein rescued this view from the oblivion into which it had fallen by a treatise entitled "Der Daniel der Römerzeit". Hertlein extended de Lagarde's hypothesis to the whole of Dan. 1-7. Of the four kingdoms named in both Chapters, 2 and 7, the fourth is in each case not the Ptolomaic-Seleucidic power, as recent criticism almost uniformly assumed, but the Roman power. This view, of course, necessitated a different assignment of the other kingdoms, the first coming to stand for the Neo-Babylonian power (not counted in by the view in vogue) the second for the Medo-Persian power (counted as two separate kingdoms by the modern view), the third for the rule of Alexander as continued in the Ptolomaic and Seleucidic states (currently counted as the last). With much force it was argued that the features entering into the description of the fourth power admirably fit the Roman empire. The miscogeous character (2:43, "they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men"), the trampling upon and devouring of the entire world (7:7, "a fourth beast terrible and powerful and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it"), all point to this identification. The ten horns of 7:7, 8 are the first ten emperors, the little horn coming up among them is Vespasian, the three of the first horns plucked up by the roots before it are Galba, Otho and Vitellius. On the other hand, Dan. 8-12 remain a product of the Maccabean period, here the Roman power does not enter into the field of vision of the writer.

The shades of Hengstenberg and Hävernick must have rejoiced at this most modern vindication of their old-fashioned exegesis. It adds one more to the already numerous instances, where the exegetical views of ancient champions of orthodoxy have come to honor again in recent days. To be sure, the agreement is purely exegetical: the critical superstructure differs fundamentally in both cases. To Hengstenberg and Hävernick the writer who thus described the Roman power was a true prophet living during the exile and his description was explainable only on the assumption of direct supernatural revelation in the strictest sense of the word. Hertlein simply concludes from the detailed character of the portrayal that it is a plain case of prophecy *ex eventu*. Hence his precise dating of the two most important pieces, Chap. 2 being assigned to the beginning of the Jewish revolt, Chap. 7 to between July 69 and July 70 A.D.

The author does not hesitate to accept all the corollaries which follow from his main position. The whole of the Enoch-literature becomes post-Christian, later than 70, in part even a Christian product. Another implication of the hypothesis is that the Synoptical Gospels are unhistorical when they put the self-designation "Son-of-Man" into the mouth of Jesus. For, as Hertlein rightly contends, the title is in the Gospels too obviously dependent on Daniel 7:13 to allow of any earlier date for the passages where it occurs, than the date of Daniel. Whilst, however, in his former treatise the author simply relied on the conclusions already reached by Lietzmann and Wellhausen and contented himself with negatively observing that, according to these, the occurrence of Son-of-Man in the Gospels could not furnish an instance against the date required for Deutero-Daniel, he now, in the work before us, goes farther and that in a positive direction. He takes the ground that, the date of Daniel being fixed for 70 A.D., the introduction of Son-of-Man into the Gospel-passages, on the basis of a certain

interpretation of Daniel, can be demonstrated to have taken place at the time and after some such manner as Lietzmann and Wellhausen assume. Thus the largely linguistic reasoning of these writers now can be buttressed by an independent critical line of argumentation. The linguistic and critical evidence seem to converge towards this same conclusion, viz., that the Son-of-Man title for Jesus is a specific Christian product, that not the early church received it from the historical Jesus, but that the Jesus of the Gospel-tradition received it as an adornment from the early church.

In the present work the author devotes much space to criticizing the peculiar views and methods of the new “religionsgeschichtliche” and “mythological” school of biblical interpretation. The names of Winckler, Gunkel, Jeremias, Gressmann, Bāntsch, Marti and others, figure prominently in its pages. Especially Bertholet and Bousset, who both had dealt somewhat contemptuously with the earlier treatise, receive considerable attention. This is but natural. In dealing with the Son-of-Man question the author could hardly avoid coming to close quarters with the “religionsgeschichtler” and “mythologists”. For these have of late drawn the Son-of-Man-conception, together with many other things in the New Testament, within the circle of their speculation. No one who believes in the Indian or Persian or Babylonian or Hellenistic origin of the figure in Daniel and identifies it with the mythological “Urmensch”, can be expected to encourage a view according to which all such exotic derivations are out of place because the concept in question originated in the broad light of day, through exegetical abuse of an innocent symbol in Dan. 7 and that as late as the year 70 after Christ. It does not follow from this, of course, that on the other hand Hertlein’s advocacy of the late Roman date of Dan. 1-7 would be necessarily affected by an earlier occurrence of a mythical “Urmensch” or “Son-of-Man”. The appearance of such a figure in earlier documents, bearing more or less resemblance to the symbolic figure in Daniel, might, after all, be mere coincidence, or, even if there were historic connection, the dependence might be on the part of Deutero-Daniel. But, as has been already stated, Hertlein seems at present concerned not so much about the defense as about the exploitation of his hypothesis. He thinks it enables him to make a real contribution towards solving the great Son-of-Man riddle. And because the alleged Oriental or Hellenistic provenience of the conception would deprive him of these laurels, he launches out upon a vigorous controversy with the prominent representatives of the “religionsgeschichtliche” and “mythological” schools.

So far as this controversial part of the work is concerned one can have nothing but praise for the cogency and skill of the argument. It would be difficult to find or even to conceive a more effective exposure of the utterly unscientific character of the methods employed by the above-named writers in finding analogies and tracing historic connections between biblical figures or ideas and Oriental mythologoumena, than is here offered. He reduces them to ridicule by observing that many of these analogies have less in their favor than that assumed by Drews between *Agni Deus* and *Agnus Dei*, or the facetious comparison between “*Sandalenmacher*” and “*Salamanderchen*”, or the geographical identification of the town Magdala in Palestine, with the place of the same name in Saxony. Under Hertlein’s hands very little remains of the “Urmensch”, the alleged prototype, under the name of Adapa, of the biblical Son-of-Man. Sennacherib also appears in imminent danger of losing his interesting semi-mythological character of “Adapa, the God of a new age turned into man” (p. 89). The reference to the “Urmensch” in the name Zer ameluti “Sprout of mankind”, given to Adapa, is also shown to be quite doubtful, for the “Urmensch” is naturally a solitary person, whilst Adapa, “the Sprout of mankind” is regent over a populous region, dwells in a city and associates with “bakers” (ibid.). Nor can Winckler’s assertion that Ea is called “the god Man”, and that therefore

his son Marduk must have been called “the son of Man” be accepted with certainty, for the words in question, *ila amelu*, possibly may not mean “the god Man”, but simply “the god of mankind”. At any rate, whatever Marduk might have been called, there is no evidence to show that he was actually called “the son of Man”, and in so far figured under this title as “a Babylonian Christ”, and that Jesus, in dependence upon this, could have put into the Son-of-Man-title the meaning: I am the Savior (p. 91). No better substantiated is the claim that the biblical Son-of-Man has his ancestor in the Hellenistic “Urmensch”, as occurring in the Hermetic literature, in Philo or in Gnostic speculation, as Reitzenstein has of late advocated. For in all these cases the “Urmensch” stands for the whole of mankind and symbolizes the old sad story, eternally repeating itself in each individual, of man’s lapse into the material. The connection between this mythical being and the biblical Son-of-Man which Reitzenstein and others have discovered, has been first established by *Christian Gnostics*. “The Archanthropos and the Son-of-Man have as much, and no more, in common as the golden staff of Hermes and the iron staff of Ps. 2:9, which the learned Naässenian in Hippolytus identifies, notwithstanding the difference in material” (p. 96). In regard to the alleged dependence of this Hellenistic “Urmensch” on the Persian and Indian figures bearing the same name Hertlein points out that the meaning of the figure is in the latter case a widely-different one from what it is in Hellenism. In the Persian and Indian mythologies the “Urmensch” seems to explain the genesis of the entire present world, on the principle that through his sacrifice, the world comes into being. The thought is cosmical, the myth is connected with the cultus, in which through the sacrifice of a man or animal, the renewal of nature in Spring is effected. In Hellenism the meaning of the myth is anthropological. But in either of its forms the representation has nothing to do with and no possible bearing on the picture of Dan. 7:13 (p. 98).

Another point on which to a large extent we find ourselves in unison with the author concerns the dependence of the Son-of-Man title in the Gospels on the Daniel-passage and its full Messianic import in each Gospel-passage. In this respect also the discussion is trenchant and clarifying. Not merely where the reference is plainly eschatological as in the Parousia-passages but also where this element is lacking and consequently recent expositors have thought to discover traces of an original generic use of the phrase for “man as such”, as in Mark 2:10, 28 and Matt. 8:20, Hertlein rightly insists upon it, that the words are a title of Christ and have full Messianic import. He observes with great force that the thought, as if man as such could sovereignly dispose of the Sabbath, or forgive sins must have been foreign and repugnant to the minds of the Evangelists, and we may add, to Jesus himself. In his opinion Matthew and Luke could not even tolerate the proposition of Mark 2:27 “the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath” and for this reason omit it. If they could not conceive of man as the end of the Sabbath they certainly would not have entertained the idea that he was lord of the Sabbath. As to Matt. 8:20 the exegesis which finds here “man as such”, puts into the saying the trivial thought, that a poor man often has to spend the night in the open, when the birds can slip into their warm nests.

Less convincing to us is the author’s discussion of the Daniel-passage and its context, although even here the argument is skillfully put, and as good a case made out for the un-Messianic interpretation as is possible. One must leave Hertlein the credit of having at least given serious and detailed consideration to what has been urged in favor of the personal, Messianic interpretation of the figure like unto a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. Most recent expositors deem it unnecessary to take notice of these arguments and think they have settled the question by observing,

that in 7:27 the kingdom is given to the people of the saints of the Most High, and that, therefore, the Son-of-Man figure must be a symbol for these, when he receives the kingdom (vs. 13). But we must reckon with the possibility, that the figure does not symbolize merely, but represents the saints, in which case the conclusion would not follow, that in vs. 13 there is nothing more than a symbol. Hertlein lays great stress on the coordination of the figure like a son of man and the figures of the beasts. If the latter are purely symbolical, the former can be nothing more. But the two cases are not alike. In the case of the world-powers, there is a succession of rulers in each kingdom, therefore no single king could represent each, a symbol here necessarily had to be chosen, and it could be nothing more than a symbol. On the other hand, if we suppose that the Messianic conception was in the author's mind associated with the kingdom of God, the possibility may have suggested itself to him, to use the Messiah as the symbol for this kingdom, a very natural thought under the circumstances, since the Messiah is so closely identified with the kingdom. In that case the symbolic figure would at the same time be a portrait. And there are several elements in the description in 7:13 which seem to favor the personal, Messianic exegesis. These have been best stated by Grill in his *Untersuchungen über die Entstehung des Vierten Evangeliums*, pp. 80 ff. We think Grill is right in saying that the text ascribes to the figure descent from heaven. To be sure, the judgment-scene is not in heaven but on earth. For this very reason, however, the coming with the clouds must be a movement from heaven to earth, for that the clouds should be, as Hertlein suggests, simply a vehicle to bring the figure near from the distance, is not plausible. The characterization of the clouds as "clouds of heaven" points to the other view, and the force of this is not taken away by comparing this phrase to "the birds of heaven", for in the latter the birds occur as mere birds, whereas in "the clouds of heaven", the clouds figure as a divine vehicle, and thus being associated with heaven certainly suggest a movement from there downwards. Wherever the conceptions of the clouds and of coming appear together, the clouds are the clouds of theophany. This feature, however, does not suit the people of Israel, which is not of heavenly origin. To the other arguments adduced by Grill we attach less importance, and in regard to some we even think that Hertlein has effectually disposed of them. He certainly makes it very clear that the comparative  $\sphericalangle$  "as" a man, does not express that the figure had merely the semblance of a man, but was in reality something superhuman. The  $\sphericalangle$  occurs also with the first three beasts, and here as there it simply serves to express what resemblance in the vision the appearing shapes assumed to the perception of the seer. But after carefully weighing the author's discussion as a whole we see no reason to change our opinion, that in Dan. 7:13 the figure which appears "as a son of man" is the figure of the Messiah, and that his preexistence is implied in the descent from heaven. Nor can the rank of this figure be identified with that of the angels occurring elsewhere in Daniel, as Hilgenfeld, and Nathaniel Schmidt and also Grill himself propose. Against Schmidt, who would identify the Son-of-Man-figure with Michael, the patron angel of Israel, Hertlein, properly observes, that in that case the world-powers likewise would have been represented in the vision by their patron-spirits (p. 77).

Least of all can we join the author in the critical assumptions that follow in the wake of his theory. We do not repose particular faith in the generally accepted views as regards the dating of the various apocalyptic writings. That much uncertainty still prevails we are quite willing to grant the author. The Similitudes in the Book of Enoch may be post-Christian, as a matter of chronology. But when this conclusion is based on their alleged Christian character, we find the argument unconvincing. In general this part of the discussion seems to us to be unfairly dominated by the one enquiry, whether there is anything in the documents considered, that absolutely compels a date before 70 A.D. Hertlein

does not ask about what date it would seem most plausible, taking all things into consideration, to put a document, but simply asks: is the date after 70 A.D. absolutely impossible. This is an unfair procedure. Even so it does not yield the desired result, for 1 Macc. 2:59 presupposes Deutero-Daniel. Hertlein acknowledges this, but falls back upon the mere possibility, that the original Hebrew text of this passage, which we no longer possess, may have differed from the present Greek text, and that, if we knew the former, perhaps the difficulty would disappear. This is a remote contingency, and it will hardly induce those who differ from the author to make no use of the passage until the Hebrew original shall have been discovered. And in case it should be discovered, and the text prove to be identical with the Greek translation, this alone would be sufficient to overthrow the whole Deutero-Daniel, for the date of 1 Macc. is fixed. As an argument from a contingency, this is just as good as the other.

The author, however, also applies this negative method of critical reasoning to the Gospels. There is nothing that compels to put their date so early that the Deutero-Daniel of 70 A.D. cannot have influenced them. Everybody is, of course, entitled to his own view concerning the earlier or later origin of the Synoptics. But the present trend in Synoptical criticism is certainly in the opposite direction from that pursued by the author. He hearkens back to Bruno Bauer and Volkmar. His hypothesis requires him to go considerable beyond the year 70, for time must be left for the development, which made out of the descriptive phrase of Dan. 7:13 a formal title and then again, after it had become a formal title in the Similitudes of Enoch, introduced it into the Gospel-tradition. Of subsequent interpolation into the Gospel-text we cannot think in the present case, because the use of Son-of-Man, even in Mark, is too pervasive for that.

Finally, what does Hertlein offer us by way of explaining the strange use to which this pseudo-title was put in the discourses of Jesus? He professes to have reduced the Son-of-Man problem to purely literary terms and lays great stress upon the advantage of this. As a matter of fact he does not abstain from using the literary result in the interest of a historical construction. If the title cannot teach us anything concerning the history of Jesus, it does lift the veil from an episode in the history of the production of the Gospel-picture of Jesus. Hertlein falls back upon the hypothesis of Wrede. He thinks that the use of the title ascribed to Jesus, reflects the consciousness of the cryptic character of the Messiahship of Jesus. With Mark (no longer consistently with Matthew and Luke) Jesus calls himself Son-of-Man to conceal his Messianic character. The Pauline idea according to which Jesus was not recognizable as the Christ before his crucifixion and resurrection finds a clumsy expression in this. And yet he was the Messiah and must have revealed himself as such. Hence the compromise is revelation in secret. And for this compromise the name Son-of-Man presented the appropriate formula, for it discloses the superhuman power and glory of Jesus only to those who know the Messianic exegesis of Dan. 7:13. All this has, of course, nothing to do with the self-consciousness of the historical Jesus: it is the precipitate of a Christological process in the mind of the early church. Hertlein applies to the Son-of-Man passages the same principle which Wellhausen applies to the section in the Synoptics which he calls "the nest" of the Gospel, i.e., the seat of the specifically Christian delineation of the Messiahship of Jesus. In view of the cryptic meaning of the name, he does not think Dalman's one-time surmise implausible that Son-of-Man may have passed as a denomination *ex opposito*, viz. for Son-of-God, just as in Rabbinical writings a "sharp-sighted man" is called "blind" and the Old Testament for "to blaspheme God" stands "to bless God". It goes without saying that all this has for its background a thoroughly skeptical attitude towards the Gospel-history.

The greater part of the self-attestation of Jesus is on this hypothesis wiped out, for, as Hertlein truly observes, the sayings of Jesus in which he calls himself Son-of-Man are such that, especially in Mark, form and content cannot be separated. But the author does not worry over this. Only theologians will be distressed by the change of attitude in the scientific mind towards the character of the Synoptical Gospels. One should free himself from the "trübseliger Realismus" which finds in the legends of sacred history nothing but transcripts of a "spröde dingliche und geschichtliche Wirklichkeit", while they are in reality organic embodiments of religious sentiment and creative production.

In the title this solution of the Son-of-Man problem is called the last stage. We presume this is meant not merely chronologically, but in the absolute sense, of the final stage, in which the problem has come to rest. We do not believe that this belief of the author will be verified. But if it were, we would surely be warranted in affirming that the last stage of the problem is worse than the first.