

titles applied to Jesus in the Gospels have a considerable background in Jewish usage. Would it not be strange if "Son of Man" alone had no traceable pedigree?

If, however, the title "Son of Man," as used in the Gospels, cannot be understood on the basis of the Old Testament alone, why should it be denied that Jesus was acquainted with ideas which we find in the pseudepigraphic literature and that he incorporated some of these ideas into his own thought? Perhaps (as Professor D. E. Nineham has suggested in a lecture) it is thought that it would somehow have been more "respectable" for Jesus to draw on Old Testament sources than on pseudepigraphic materials. Or, alternatively, it may be argued that the "Son of Man" in the Gospels is so vastly different from the figure we meet in the "Similitudes" that Jesus could not possibly have drawn upon this source. It is undeniable that the "Son of Man" in the Gospels is very different from the Enochic "son of man." But it should be added that most Jewish messianic ideas—particularly those reflected in the Psalms of Solomon—are also vastly different from Jesus' own conceptions, yet it is apparent that the latter took shape as his creative genius reinterpreted and recreated the earlier notions. I suggest that precisely the same thing happened in the case of the eschatological "son of man" image. At the hands of a master workman the idea was recast and adapted to his own purposes, yet the task was so skilfully carried out that his hearers readily appreciated his description of himself as the "Son of Man."

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THE BISHOP OF WOOLWICH AND MARY YOUNG'S SAMPLER: A CONFRONTATION

AMONG THE SPOKESMEN for what is commonly referred to as the "new theology" it is a favourite ploy to present the world-view of traditional theology and piety in the crudest and most ridiculous terms. To be fair, I must add that it is not always easy to determine whether this ploy is an artful dodge or an unwitting confession of blissful ignorance. But in any case it is widely effective in conditioning unwary readers to accept almost any alternative to an obviously indefensible tradition.

John Robinson's polemic against the "God 'up there'" and the "God 'out there'" is a good example of this method of theological salesmanship. By more or less consistently identifying the idea of transcendence in classical theism with the notion of spatial remoteness, Robinson effectively paves the way for his own immanental doctrine in which, to say the least, the distinct identity of "God" becomes problematical.

It is easy enough to show that his argument is a tissue of confusions. For example, he writes:

The Bible speaks of a God "up there." No doubt its picture of a three-decker universe, of "the heaven above, the earth beneath and the waters under the earth," was once taken quite literally. No doubt also its more sophisticated writers, if pressed, would have been the first to regard this as symbolic language to represent and convey spiritual realities. Yet clearly they were not pressed. Or at any rate they were not oppressed by it.¹

But even the most casual reader should be able to see that the phrases that Robinson quotes from Exodus 20:4 refer to the presumed structure of the physical universe and say nothing about a supposed "location" of God, while anyone who is reasonably well acquainted with the Psalms will almost certainly think of a passage in which the "picture of a three-decker universe" is used to express the conviction of God's omnipresence:

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend to heaven, thou art there!
If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there!
If I take the wings of the morning
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
even there thy hand shall lead me,
and thy right hand shall hold me (Ps. 139:7-10).

Again, the Bishop of Woolwich writes, at the next turning-point in his argument:

. . . *In place of a God who is literally or physically "up there" we have accepted, as part of our mental furniture, a God who is spiritually or meta-physically "out there."* There are, of course, those for whom he is almost literally "out there." . . . Every one of us lives with some mental picture of a God "out there," a God who "exists" above and beyond the world he made, a God "to" whom we pray and to whom we "go" when we die. . . . This picture of a God "out there" coming to earth like some visitor from outer space underlies every popular presentation of the Christian drama of salvation, whether from the pulpit or the press.²

Perhaps the kindest possible comment is that Robinson is mixed up. As his odd phrase "almost literally" may suggest, he does not find it easy to distinguish between "God is not identical with us" and "God is spatially remote from us," and more than one critic has noted a definite tendency on his part to use statements of God's distinct reality as evidence that God is believed to be located somewhere "out there." I cannot see how, apart from such a confusion, he could find in "every popular presentation of the Christian drama of salvation" the notion of a space-travelling deity. Surely at least some popular presentations of the Christian drama of salvation have reflected the familiar passage in Acts, in which God's immanence and his independent reality and power are stated together:

1. J. A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (London: S.C.M. Press, 1963), p. 11.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15.

The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all men life and breath and everything. . . . Yet he is not far from each one of us, for "In him we live and move and are." . . . The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead (Acts 17:24ff.).

The God of this way of thinking is certainly other than man and the world, but it can scarcely be said that he is pictured as acting upon the world from somewhere "out there."

It is hard to understand how a competent scholar—and a distinguished biblical exegete at that—could commit such crashing blunders as I have noted in Robinson's basic argument. But perhaps the real explanation is that in a sense Robinson is right—that in fact Christians do commonly find the picture of God as "up there" or "out there" in Bible and creeds and liturgies, whether it is there or not—in other words, that Robinson's own confusion is essentially a reflection of a confused Church. It may be that, whatever Scripture actually says, and whatever the Church's classical theologians teach, the mass of Christians do believe in a spatially located "God." It is conceivable that conventional Christian preaching has been so consistently bad that it has left this intolerable notion firmly fixed in the Christian consciousness.

It is clearly impossible to conduct a poll of Christian believers, past and present, to determine what "picture" of God has predominated in the Christian mind through the centuries. What we can do is keep our eyes and ears open for scattered indications of what Christians have thought in the past or think today. It is one such small indication that I want to set over against Robinson's statements quoted above.

One morning in July, 1965, I found myself in the historic town of Windsor, Nova Scotia, with an hour or so to spare. It occurred to me that it might be rewarding to pay a visit to the Haliburton Museum at "Clifton," the sometime home of the creator of "Sam Slick." Theologically speaking, it proved more rewarding than I had anticipated. As I stepped into Judge Haliburton's study, my eye was caught by a framed sampler—"Mary Youngs sampler worked in the 9 year of her age AD 1826." Who Mary Young was—apart from being the daughter of Clarke Young and Sarah Johnson, whom I cannot identify—or where she lived, or where she found a pious quatrain for her sampler, I do not know. But the lines this eight-year-old girl worked so carefully on her sampler struck me forcibly as a testimony of simple piety against the careless generalizations of the "new theologians." This is what she said:

Within thy circling power I Stand
On every side I find thy hand
Awake asleep at home abroad
I am surrounded still with God

I found it encouraging to think that so long ago—sixty years before the birth of Paul Tillich, and one hundred and thirty-seven years before *Honest to God*—a British North American child had pondered on such a clear affirmation of God as the omnipresent Ground and Sustainer of her being. It seems likely that many other simple expressions of the good sense of long-departed Christians are waiting to be noticed.

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SAMUEL DWIGHT CHOWN AND THE METHODIST CONTRIBUTION TO CANADIAN CHURCH UNION

CURRENT INTEREST in church union has caused many to re-examine the past in the hope of finding guidance there for the future. Unfortunately, many treasures of the past are neglected because they have no spokesmen in the present. This is the case with the Methodist contribution to the 1925 union of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches in Canada, which was a milestone in church union activity. In these notes, I want to present a brief résumé of that contribution, which is often sadly neglected or forgotten, even in Canada. One man, Samuel Dwight Chown, figured largely in the Methodist movement towards church union and was the leading personage in the final phase of the drama. I propose, then, to consider the life and work of S. D. Chown, his activities in the fields of social reform and evangelism within the context of Methodism, and his labours for interdenominational church union.

Samuel Dwight Chown was born in Kingston, Canada West, in 1853, and was educated at the Kingston Grammar School. On the death of his father in 1867 he left school and, after a short time, joined the army, in which he served during the Fenian raids. After leaving the army he worked for a time in the family hardware business, but was dissatisfied. Even before the death of his father he had become interested in the Methodist Church, through the influence of Edward B. Ryckman and Salem G. Bland. He now became convinced that he was called to the ministry, and in 1874 he was accepted on probation in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. (At that time Methodism in Canada was divided into seven branches, which reflected the national origin of their members and/or their preferences in church polity.)

During the first two years of his probation, Chown was appointed successively to the charges of Melbourne, Quebec, and North Gower, Ontario. In 1874 union was achieved between the Wesleyan Methodist Church in