

and apparently arbitrary. Passages are quoted out of their context, and with reference to things which the writers never dreamed of; frequently the force of the quotation is found in the Septuagint . . . and not in the original Hebrew, and sometimes words are quoted as Scripture which are not found in our Old Testament. But the Scriptures are not the less able to make wise unto salvation through faith in Christ because allegorical and other methods of interpretation are applicable to them. In proportion as faith in Christ Jesus transforms, by possessing, the interpreter, it has been found . . . that the Old Testament from beginning to end forms a textbook for the preaching of Jesus . . . Directly men turn to the Lord . . . all the Scriptures are found eloquent of Him."

W. H. BENNETT.

## *THE MESSIANIC CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS.*

### II.

IN a previous paper we examined Christ's favourite self-designation, the Son of man, with the view of discovering what light it throws upon His Messianic consciousness; and we found that not only is the title best understood in a Messianic sense, but that by its form it draws emphatic attention to the human side of Christ's Person in relation to His Messianic work. This side does not however stand alone, and we have now to supplement what was then said by the consideration of a second title.

### II. THE SON OF GOD.

At first sight indeed it may seem as if this title could have little to tell us regarding the inner consciousness of Jesus, for, in direct contrast to the title the Son of man, which was constantly on His own lips, there is only one passage

in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. xxvii. 43) and a few passages in St. John (John v. 25 ; x. 36, without article ; xi. 4), where it is even hinted that Jesus ever described Himself as " the Son of God." But the title is so freely given to Him by others,<sup>1</sup> and is so obviously implied in the manner in which He speaks of God as His "*Father*" (Matt. vii. 21, x. 32, etc.), and of Himself as "*the Son*" (Matt. xi. 27 ; Mark xiii. 32 ; cf. Matt. xxi. 37, xxii. 2), that we may safely accept it as a convenient summary of a large part of His self-revelation. The exact nature of the personal consciousness underlying it is by no means, however, easily determined, and in proceeding to investigate what this is, it may be well to begin by noticing the use of the phrase in the Old Testament.<sup>2</sup>

That use points to a gradually narrowing application. Thus we find the title applied generally to all mankind as the creatures or children of God (Gen. vi. 2), and then more particularly to the nation of Israel (Exod. iv. 22 ; cf. Deut. xxxii. 6-10 ; Hos. xi. 1 ; Jer. xxxi. 9), from which the transition is easy to the theocratic kings of Israel, as representatives of the people, as when Jehovah says of David :

*" He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father,  
My God, and the rock of my salvation.  
I also will make him my firstborn,  
The highest of the kings of the earth."*

(Ps. lxxxix. 26, 27.)

And of Solomon :

*" I will be his father, and he shall be my son."*

(2 Sam. vii. 14.)

<sup>1</sup> By a voice from heaven at the Baptism and Transfiguration (Matt. iii. 17 ||, xvii. 5 ||) ; by Satan in the wilderness (Matt. iv. 3 ||) ; by the demoniacs (Matt. viii. 29) ; by the disciples (Matt. xiv. 33) ; by Peter (Matt. xvi. 16) ; by the high priest (Matt. xxvi. 63) ; by the scoffers at the Cross (Matt. xxvii. 40).

<sup>2</sup> Nothing is to be gained by the attempt to trace it to a Hellenistic source, as Deissmann, *Bibelstudien*, p. 166 f. ; see Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu*, p. 224.

Nor is this all; but in at least one passage it seems hardly possible to avoid the conclusion that the title is used with direct reference to the expected Messiah, when in Psalm ii. 7 we find the Psalmist announcing:

*"I will tell of the decree:  
The Lord said unto me, Thou art my son;  
This day have I begotten thee."*

Certainly the Psalm as a whole is generally understood in a Messianic sense by the Jewish writers,<sup>1</sup> while this particular verse is found to have been fulfilled in Christ both by St. Paul (Acts xiii. 33) and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. i. 5, v. 5). At the same time we must be careful not to press the Messianic reference too far, for, as Dalman has shown, if the Psalm had been of any real importance for the Jewish representation of the Messiah, it could hardly fail to have been oftener quoted than it is. And in any case it is by itself insufficient to prove that "the Son of God" was a general Messianic designation.<sup>2</sup>

Nor is it different when we pass to the extracanonical use of the term. It is customary indeed to find here a growth in its Messianic usage, and Schürer<sup>3</sup> appeals to such passages as Enoch cv. 2, where Jehovah speaks of "I and my son" uniting with the children of earth "for ever in the paths of uprightness in their lives"; and 2 Esdras vii. 28, 29, where we read: "For my son Jesus shall be revealed with those that be with him, and shall rejoice them that remain four hundred years. After these years shall my son Christ die, and all that have the breath of life." But the language of such passages is too general to carry any great weight. And on the whole it must be admitted that the usage of the phrase alike in the Old Testament and in Jewish literature

<sup>1</sup> See the references in Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, ii. 716.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Worte Jesu*, p. 219 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, E. Tr. div. ii. vol. ii. p. 159.

is vague and indeterminate,<sup>1</sup> and that certainly, even when applied Messianically, the title has not yet received any metaphysical sense.<sup>2</sup> It points simply to one uniquely loved, chosen, and endowed by God for some particular purpose.

This is not to say, however, that in the Gospels "the Son of God" may not have attained a more definite meaning. And what we have now to do is to examine its usage there with the view of seeing how far this is the case; and, if so, what is the exact application and force of the phrase.

As to its general Messianic reference there can at least be no doubt. For not only is it evidently so used by the demoniacally possessed (Matt. viii. 29, etc.), but it is also found united with the specific Messianic designation  $\delta$  Χριστός in such a way as to suggest that the two titles were very closely related, as when in his great confession Peter addresses Jesus as "*the Christ, the Son of the living God*" (Matt. xvi. 16<sup>3</sup>), or as when at His trial the high priest adjures Him to declare whether He is "*the Christ, the Son of God*" (Matt. xxvi. 63).

But while this is so, it is hardly possible to weigh the passages just adduced impartially without feeling that something more than a merely official designation underlies the use of the term. This is especially clear in the latter instance, where Jesus' avowed claim to be the Son of God is immediately made the ground of a charge of blasphemy against Him. For in what did the blasphemy consist, if the claim amounted to nothing more than to a human Messiahship? Some reference at least to Divine being must

<sup>1</sup> "In relation to this most essential characteristic of the Messiah, the traditional attribute 'the Son of God' denotes only an incidental notion of very indefinite contents." Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus*, E. Tr. ii. 131.

<sup>2</sup> "Niemals wird aber aus dem Ausdruck gottheitliches Wesen des Sohnes gefolgert." Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu*, p. 223.

<sup>3</sup> Even if the shorter forms in Mark and Luke are considered more original, we have still the significance of the first Evangelist's combination to consider. See Stevens, *The Theology of the New Testament*, p. 59 note.

be thought of as underlying it. Beyschlag indeed has tried to get rid of this conclusion by pointing out that "the Jews understood by blasphemy, not merely blasphemous utterances in themselves, but every assumption of a prerogative or privilege which could only be conferred by God, the right of forgiving sins for example, or, as in the case of Jesus, claiming to be Messiah."<sup>1</sup> And with the same end in view Holtzmann says that "the 'blasphemy' could only have been found in this, that a man belonging to the lower classes, one openly forsaken of God, and going forward to a shameful death, should have dared to represent himself as the object and fulfilment of all the Divine promises given to the nation."<sup>2</sup> But is not all this, to say the least, most unnecessarily to weaken the full force of the passage? Certainly no one can read it in its whole context without feeling how immensely it gains in significance when we attach to the phrase "the Son of God" the deeper personal meaning that in our traditional theology we have come to associate with it.<sup>3</sup>

And in this conclusion we are confirmed when we come to regard the evidence of the Gospels as a whole. Thus if we were right in believing that the full consciousness of His Messianic vocation was brought home to Jesus at His Baptism, we cannot fail to notice that this consciousness rested upon a definite personal basis. It was because He was the "beloved" Son in whom His Father was "well pleased" that Jesus came also to recognize the full extent of the work to which He had been called in the world. Or, to put it generally, not only are the Messianic and the filial

<sup>1</sup> *New Testament Theology*, E. Tr. i. 69.

<sup>2</sup> *Neutest. Theologie*, i. 266.

<sup>3</sup> Schleiermacher pronounces this affirmative *Yea* of Christ (Matt. xxvi. 64), in view of the surrounding circumstances, "das grösste Wort, was je ein Sterblicher gesagt hat, die herrlichste Apotheose; keine Gottheit kann gewisser sein als die, welche so sich selbst verkündigt" (*Reden über die Religion*, 4te Aufl., 1831, p. 292; quoted Schaff, *The Person of Christ*, p. 163).

consciousness inseparably associated in Jesus' mind,<sup>1</sup> but the former springs from the latter. He is "Messiah," because He is first "Son."

And so too when we pass to notice the manner of Jesus' application of the term "sonship" to His disciples, it is very noteworthy that He nowhere represents it as standing on the same footing as His own. On the contrary, He is always careful to distinguish between "*my Father*" (Matt. vii. 21, x. 32, etc.) and "*your Father*" (Matt. v. 16, 45, 48, vi. 1, 14, etc.), and, so far as we know, on no single occasion unites Himself with others in common prayer to God.<sup>2</sup> At most men "*become*" sons (*γένησθε*, Matt. v. 44, 45), whereas He is not merely "a son," but "*the Son*" in an altogether pre-eminent degree (Mark xiii. 32, etc.). Or, as the distinction is drawn in the Fourth Gospel, believers are τέκνα θεοῦ (John i. 12, xi. 52), Jesus is ὁ μονογενῆς υἱός (John iii. 16, 18).

It will probably be objected to this last distinction that, occurring as it does in the Fourth Gospel, we cannot be sure that it is due to Jesus Himself, and is not the result of later Apostolic reflectiveness. But if so, it is sufficient to point by way of corroboration of its underlying truth to one remarkable passage in the Synoptic Gospels, whose authenticity can hardly be denied, and whose Christology is as advanced as anything we find in the Johannine writings.<sup>3</sup> The passage is found in close parallelism both in the First and Third Gospels, and forms part of Jesus' exaltation over

<sup>1</sup> "Es fällt also sein messianisches mit seinem Sohnesbewusstsein wesentlich zusammen" (Titius, *Lehre vom Reiche Gottes*, Freiburg, i. B., 1895, p. 116).

<sup>2</sup> The Lord's Prayer is no exception. It is a prayer for the disciples' use. Cf. Matthew vi. 9: "*After this manner therefore pray ye*," and note the fifth petition, which Jesus could never have used. On the significance of Jesus' abstention from common prayer, see especially Forrest, *The Christ of History and Experience*, pp. 22 ff., and the same writer's reply to criticisms of his view in *The Expository Times*, xi. p. 352 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Sanday, *Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 109.

the triumphant return of the Seventy. "*All things,*" so He is represented as saying, "*have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son ('who the Son is,' Luke) save the Father; neither doth any know the Father ('and who the Father is,' Luke), save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him"* (Matt. xi. 27; Luke, x. 22).

The importance of the words is unmistakable, and has been freely admitted by critics of all schools,<sup>1</sup> even while the individual clauses have been subjected to a great variety of interpretations.

Thus the first clause, "*All things have been delivered unto me of my Father,*" has been taken to mean no more than Christ's control of all things essential to His Messianic work, or the whole of God's revelation in the Gospel that has been entrusted to Him. But the terms are too general to be thus limited, and, when taken along with the words that follow, can hardly point to less than perfect, absolute intercommunion between the Father and the Son, an intercommunion of knowledge so close that it can only be described in strictly parallel terms, and which, further, is clearly distinguished from that revelation of the Father which it is in the Son's power to make to whomsoever He willeth. But if so, can any interpretation involving a merely humanitarian view of this consciousness of the Son be regarded as sufficient? Or have we not rather evidence of the clearest kind that Jesus both knew and declared Himself to stand in a so altogether unique relation to God, that it can only be explained by the oneness of essence between Himself and God, to which later Apostolic theology points. "It is open to the radical theologian to say," as

<sup>1</sup> "The most distinct and weighty passage in which Jesus declares his filial consciousness." Baur, *Neutest. Theol.*, p. 113. "This sublime utterance of Jesus, into which he threw all his self-consciousness regarding his Messianic work and person." Keim, *Jesus of Nazara*, E. Tr. iv. p. 65.

Dr. Stevens has shown, "that the positing of a metaphysical union with God as the basis of the unique consciousness and character of Jesus is a subsequent explanation which Paul and John have given. But," as he well adds, "it *is* an explanation, and the mere assertion that Jesus' consciousness was 'purely human' *is not*."<sup>1</sup>

We cannot, however, pursue this line of thought further at present, and in closing we would only draw attention to the light which the Apostolic explanation, derived as we believe it is from Jesus' own self-testimony, throws upon a whole chain of well-attested facts which it is otherwise very difficult, if not impossible, to understand—such as the attitude of Jesus to the Old Testament (Matt. v. 21, 22, etc.), His bestowal of the forgiveness of sins (Mark ii. 10, etc.), His own sense of sinlessness (John viii. 46), His demands upon men's consciences and lives (Mark i. 17, x. 29), the reward that He promises for all deeds done in His Name (Mark ix. 41), and the assurance that He will come again to judge the world (Matt. xvi. 27, etc.). It may well be that our very familiarity with such claims as advanced by Jesus may at first blind us to their full significance, but no one can weigh them carefully in connexion with the whole consciousness of Him Who made them without recognizing that He at least must have known Himself to be more than man, or how could He have thus usurped the attributes and functions belonging to God alone, or claimed the right to exercise such authority over men?

Not until we see in Jesus "the Son of God" in the highest sense of the title as well as "the Son of Man," "*in all things . . . made like unto His brethren*" (Heb. ii. 17), do His Person and work appear in a consistent light, or can we understand the truth to which the writer of the Epistle to

<sup>1</sup> *The Theology of the New Testament*, p. 64. The reference is more particularly to Beyschlag, *New Testament Theology*, E. Tr. i. p. 75.

the Hebrews gives such striking expression that, " *though He was a Son, yet learned [He] obedience by the things which He suffered; and having been made perfect, He became unto all them that obey Him the author of eternal salvation*" (Heb. v. 8, 9).

G. MILLIGAN.

### NOTES ON THE TEXT OF THE PSALMS.

[THE following notes are taken from the manuscripts dealing with the Psalms amongst those left by Dr. Weir, formerly Professor of Oriental Languages, Glasgow, and now lying in the University Library. Many of them are conjectural emendations of the text, and, where later critics have made the changes suggested, the fact is noted in square brackets. Similar notes but fuller were occasionally contributed by Dr. Weir to the *Academy*.—T. H. W.]

#### PSALMS.

15. 4c. For להרע ולא read להרע לו ולא.
16. 2-3. For עלי : כל read עליך : ל; and for עלי cf. 2 Samuel 18. 11 and Koran ii. 286.
16. 3. Read : כל קדושים אשר בארצה מה יאדירו כל הפצי במ [כל קדושים, so Wellhausen] בארצה, LXX; מה יאדירו, LXX and Psalm 8. 2.
17. 15. תמונתך; Syr. אמונתך.
20. 10. יעננו; read יעננו as LXX [Baethgen, Wellhausen, Kirkpatrick, etc.].
21. Consists of two parts: 1. What God does for His king; 2. What God (or the king) does to His enemies; each part separated by v. 8.
22. 17. כארי ידי ורגלי; כארי never occurs in Psalms, always אריה. Read אסרו as 2 Samuel 3. 34.