*great division* of our Saviour’s ministry on  
earth, introductory to His sufferings and  
death. Up to this time we have had no  
distinct intimation, like that in ver. 21, of  
these events. This intimation is brought  
in by the solemn question and confession  
now before us. And as the former period  
of His ministry was begun by a declaration  
from the Father of His Sonship, so this  
also, on the Mount of Transfiguration.

**13. Cæsarea Philippi**] A town in  
Gaulonitis at the foot of Mount Libanus,  
not far from the source of the Jordan, a  
day’s journey from Sidon, once called  
Laish (Judg. xviii. 7, 29) and afterwards  
Dan (ibid.), but in later times Paneas, or  
Panias, from the mountain Panium, under  
which it lay. The tetrarch Philip enlarged  
it and gave it the name of Cæsarea. In  
after times King Agrippa further enlarged  
it and called it Neronias in honour of the  
Emperor Nero. This must not be confounded with the Cæsarea of the Acts,  
which was Cæsarea Stratonis, on the Mediterranean. See Acts x. 1, and note. The  
following enquiry took place *by the way*,  
Mark viii. 27. St. Luke gives it without  
note of place, but states it to have been  
asked on the disciples joining our Lord,  
who was praying alone, Luke ix. 18.

The reading of the last words of the verse  
is somewhat uncertain. Some of the  
oldest authorities have, **Who do men say  
that the Son of Man is?** Some would  
render as if our Lord had said, ‘W*ho say  
men that I am? the Son of Man?*’ i.e. *the  
Messiah?* but this is inadmissible, for the  
answer would not then have been expressed  
as it is, but *affirmatively* or *negatively*.  
Equally inadmissible is Olshausen’s rendering, ‘Me, who am, as ye are aware, the Son of Man?’ an expression, Olshausen  
says, by which the disciples would be led  
to the idea of the *Son of God*. But  
then this would destroy the simplicity of  
the following question, **But who say ye  
that I am?** because it would put into  
their mouths the answer intended to be  
given. The A.V. has beyond doubt the  
right rendering of *this reading*: and **the  
Son of Man** is a pregnant expression,  
which we now know to imply the *Messiahship in the root of our human nature*, and  
which even then was taken by the Jews  
as = *the Son of God*, (see Luke xxii. 69,  
70,) which would serve as a test of the  
faith of the disciples, according to their  
understanding of it.

**14.**] It is no  
contradiction to this verdict that some  
called him *the Son of David* (ch. ix. 27;  
xii. 23; xv. 22); for either these were or  
were about to become His disciples, or are  
quoted as examples of rare faith, or as in  
ch. xii, 23, it was the passing doubt on  
the minds of the multitude, not their  
settled opinion. The same may be said of  
John vii. 26, 31; iv. 42. On our Lord’s  
being taken for John the Baptist, see ch.  
xiv. 2, from which this would appear to be  
the opinion of the *Herodians*.

**one of the prophets**] “*that one of the old prophets is risen again,*” Luke ix. 19. It was  
not a metempsychosis, but a bodily resurrection which was believed. On Elias, see note  
at ch. xi. 14. Jeremiah is mentioned first as  
being accounted by the Jews first in the prophetic canon. {15} The confession is not made  
in the terms of the other answer: it is not  
‘we say’ or ‘I say,’ but **Thou art**. It is  
the expression of: an inward conviction  
wrought by God’s Spirit. The excellence  
of this confession is, that it brings out  
both the human and the divine nature of  
the Lord: **the Christ** is the Messiah, the  
Son of David, the anointed King: **the Son  
of the living God** is the Eternal Son,  
begotten of the Eternal Father, not ‘Son  
of God’ in any inferior figurative sense,  
not *one of* the sons of God, of angelic  
nature, but THE SON OF THE LIVING  
GOD, having in Him the Sonship and  
the divine nature *in a sense in which  
they could be in none else*. This was a  
view of the Person of Christ quite distinct  
from the Jewish Messianic idea, which  
appears to have been that he should  
be a man born from men, but selected by  
God for the office on account of his eminent virtues. This distinction accounts  
for the solemn blessing pronounced in the  
next verse.

**16.**] The word **living** must  
not for a moment be taken here as it sometimes is used, (e.g. Acts xiv. 15,) as merely  
distinguishing the true God from dead