THE FIGURATIVE USE OF "SON(S) OF" IN

THE NEW TESTAMENT

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by

Daniel Ferris Born

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**APPROVAL SHEET**


THE FIGURATIVE USE OF "SON(S) OF" IN

THE NEW TESTAMENT


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Date_____

To my beautiful and lovely wife, Jen,

and our four little princesses Dinah, Sophia, Olivia, and Lucy

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB          The Anchor Bible

ANE         Ancient Near East

*Bargylia*  Donald F. McCabe (ed.), *Bargylia Inscriptions. Texts and List*

*BCH*       *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique*

BDAG        Walter Bauer, Frederick William Danker, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed.

BDB         F. Brown, S. Driver, and C. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*

BDF         F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R.W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*

BECNT       Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament

BGU         *Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen*

*CID*       *Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes*

*CBQ*       *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

*CPR*       *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri*

*EBC*       *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*

EGGNT       Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament

*EKM* 1     P. Nigdelis and G. Soures (eds.)*, Epigraphes kato Makedonias,* vol. 1, Epigraphes Beroias

*FD* III    G. Daux and A. Salac (eds.), *Fouilles de Delphes*, vol. III

*HALOT*     Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann Jakob Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*

*I.Kition*  Marguerite Yon et al. (eds.)*, Kition dans les textes, Testimonia littéraires et épigraphiques et Corpus des inscriptions*

*Iasos*     Donald F. McCabe (ed.)*, Iasos Inscriptions. Texts and List*

| | |
|---|---|
| ICC | The International Critical Commentary |
| *IG V,1* | W. Kolbe (ed.), *Inscriptiones Graecae, V,1. Inscriptiones Laconiae et Messeniae* |
| *IG VII* | Wilhelm Dittenberger (ed.), *Inscriptiones Graecae, VII. Inscriptiones Megaridis, Oropiae, Boeotiae* |
| *IG X,2 2* | F. Papazoglu et al (ed.), *Inscriptiones Graecae, X: Inscriptiones Epiri, Macedoniae, Thraciae, Scythiae. Pars II, fasc. 2: Inscriptiones Macedoniae septentrionalis. Sectio prima: Inscriptiones Lyncestidis, Heracleae, Pelagoniae, Derriopi, Lychnidi* |
| *IG XII,3* | Friedrich Hiller von Gaertringen (ed.), *Inscriptiones Graecae, XII. Inscriptiones insularum maris Aegaei praeter Delum, 3, Inscriptiones Symes, Teutlussae, Teli, Nisyri, Astypalaeae, Anaphes, Therae et Therasiae, Pholegandri, Meli, Cimoli* |
| *IG XII,6* | Klaus Hallof (ed.), *Inscriptiones Graecae, XII. Inscriptiones insularum maris Aegaei praeter Delum, 6, Inscriptiones Chii et Sami cum Corassiis Icariaque* |
| *IGBulg.1[2]* | G. Mihailov (ed.), *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae*, vol 1[2] |
| IK Knidos I | Wolfgang Blümel (ed.), *Die Inschriften von Knidos I, Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* |
| *IScM I* | D. M. Pippidi (ed.), *Inscriptiones Daciae et Scythiae Minoris antiquae,* vol. 1 |
| *IScM II* | Iorgu Stoian (ed.), *Inscriptiones Daciae et Scythiae Minoris antiquae,* vol. 2 |
| *Iscr. di Cos* | Mario Segre (ed.), *Iscrizioni di Cos* |
| *JBL* | *Journal of Biblical Literature* |
| *JSNT* | *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* |
| *JTS* | *Journal of Theological Studies* |
| LCL | Loeb Classical Library |
| LEH | Johan Lust, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspin, *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint, Revised Edition* |
| LSJM | Henry Liddell, Robert Scott, Henry Jones, and Roderick McKenzie. *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. |
| LXX | Alfred Rahlfs (ed.), *Septuaginta* |
| MAMA VII | William Moir Calder (ed.), Monuments from Eastern Phrygia, Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua, vol. 7 |

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|---|---|
| MT | Masoretic Text |
| *NA*[27] | Eberhard Nestle and Kurt Aland (eds.), *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27th ed. Copyright (c) 1993 Deutsch Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart. |
| NAC | New American Commentary |
| *NETS* | Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (eds.), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title* |
| NICNT | New International Commentary on the New Testament |
| *NIDOTTE* | Willem A. VanGemeren (ed.), *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* |
| NIGTC | The New International Greek Testament Commentary |
| O.Kellis | K. A. Worp (ed.), *Greek Ostraka from Kellis* |
| P.Adl. | E. N. Adler, J. G. Tait, F. M. Heichelheim (eds.), *The Adler Papyri, Greek texts* |
| P.Cair.Masp. | J. Maspero (ed.), *Papyrus grecs d'époque byzantine, Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire* |
| P.Grenf. II | B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt (eds.), *New Classical Fragments and Other Greek and Latin Papyri* |
| P.Heid. | Veröffentlichungen aus der Heidelberger Papyrussammlung |
| P.Lond. | F.G. Kenyon et al. (eds.), *Greek Papyri in the British Museum* |
| P.Oxy. | *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* |
| P.Sarap. | J. Schwartz (ed.), *Les archives de Sarapion et de ses fils: une exploitation agricole aux environs d'Hermoupolis Magna (de 90 à 133 p.C.)* |
| P.Tebt. II | B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt (eds.), *The Tebtunis Papyri* |
| PKG | Patrilineal Kinship Group |
| PNTC | Pillar New Testament Commentary |
| SB | F. Preisigke et al. (eds.), *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten* |
| SbBerlin | *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen* |
| *SIG*[3] | W. Dittenberger et al. (eds.), *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* |
| *Smyrna* | Donald F. McCabe (ed.), *Smyrna Inscriptions. Texts and List* |

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|---|---|
| *SBJT* | *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* |
| SNTS | Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series |
| *TAM V,2* | Peter Herrmann (ed.), *Tituli Asiae Minoris, V, Tituli Lydiae, linguis Graeca et Latina conscripti*, vol. 2, nos. 826-1414, *Regio septentrionalis, ad occidentem vergens* |
| *TDNT* | Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* |
| *TDOT* | G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* |
| TNTC | Tyndale New Testament Commentaries |
| WBC | Word Biblical Commentary |
| ZECNT | Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament |

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PREFACE

While an endless parade of people have supported my personal, academic, and ministerial development in many different ways, a few individuals and groups stand above the rest.

First, my family deserves the most recognition. Jen, you have been a continual source of encouragement in this work. Your willingness to serve me and our family in the midst of it has enabled me to press on to the end. I love, cherish, and appreciate you more than words can describe. Dinah, Sophia, Olivia, and Lucy, you sweet little girls have been as patient as little girls can be with my spending more time writing than playing. It is done now; let the playing commence. Katie, your encouragement and support have helped me achieve this goal. Dad and Mom, you allowed me to waste so much of your money in the early years of my education. I hope you realize now that it was not a waste, but instead a deferred investment. Thank you for raising me well. It saddens me that one of my greatest encouragers did not get to see the finished product. However, what she now sees is much greater.

Second, Believers Church has been a true extended family for us. There is no other place I would rather be than getting to walk alongside you all in our mutual growth in Christ. Jason, Matt, Sean, and Daniel, it is a privilege to shepherd alongside you. Pastoring is a burden I cannot bear alone, and I am thankful that each of you men has shouldered more than enough of it to give me time and energy to finish this work.

Third, my supervisor has been gracious and merciful towards me. Dr. Cook,

thank you for being patient with me and helping me finish the work. Drs. Hamilton, Hellerman, and Pennington, thank you for reading this work and providing valuable insight and feedback to improve it.

Finally, any shortcomings which remain in this work cannot be attributed to a lack of support and encouragement along the way. I have had more than my share and am truly blessed by our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. It is my deepest hope that this work reflects glory on him and our Father.

Daniel Ferris Born

Hannibal, Missouri

May 2016

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1982, Bruce Malina wrote the article "The Social Sciences and Biblical Interpretation."[1] He argued that "the understanding and interpretation of any sort of text is ultimately rooted in a social world."[2] For him, "biblical interpretation, like the interpretation of any written language, will be based upon and derived from models of how the world of human beings works (social sciences) and models of the nature and function of language (linguistics)."[3] Even though it has been nearly thirty-four years since the publication of Malina's article, there are still many themes, concepts, and repeated phrases in the NT begging for more thorough study in both the social science and linguistic arenas.

The figurative "son(s) of" phrases in the NT are one such example. The noun υἱός occurs 377 times in the Greek NT.[4] In almost eighty percent of those occurrences, the noun is followed by a genitive modifier in a "son(s) of" phrase.[5] Thus, the noun υἱός occurs far more often with a genitive modifier than without one. The only nouns that are

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[1]Bruce J. Malina, "The Social Sciences and Biblical Interpretation," *Interpretation* 36, no. 3 (1982): 229-42.

[2]Ibid., 231.

[3]Ibid., 232.

[4]Throughout this work, *NA²⁷* is version of the Greek New Testament used. Citations from the LXX are from Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart:Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1935).

[5]In 301 occurrences, the noun υἱός has a genitive modifier.

more common in the Greek NT than υἱός are θεός, Ἰησοῦς, κύριος, ἄνθρωπος, Χριστός, πατήρ, ἡμέρα, and πνεῦμα. In addition, υἱός occurs more often than many other nouns related to important NT topics such as disciple, faith, grace, and heaven.[6] Despite the fact that this construction is found with such frequency within the Greek NT, it is paid surprisingly little attention from interpreters. Either it is disregarded altogether where it is found or the focus is primarily upon the Semitic use of בֶּן as the linguistic background for the NT phrase. Rarely is the author's employment of father-son language and its meaning within the NT social world analyzed and utilized with any degree of depth.

When interpreters label NT "son(s) of" phrases as Semitic, Hebraic, or Septuagintal, they likely mean one of two things. Either they mean that the NT author's use of υἱός plus the genitive is based on a similar linguistic construction in the MT or LXX, or they mean that the NT author's use of the phrase "son(s) of" is influenced by a Semitic way of thinking. The former option is insufficient for the interpreter who truly seeks to understand the text because it cannot be denied that a strong connection exists between language and thought and language is inseparable from the social context of its communication.[7] Further, for the NT authors, "their whole view of things was penetrated with Hebrew modes of thought."[8] However, in the case of the "son(s) of" phrases in the NT, the second option, without corresponding explanation, is deficient as well. For,

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[6]While word frequency on its own does not make a compelling argument, these facts do provide helpful perspective on how common this construction is in the NT writings.

[7]See David Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrews Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms,* SNTS 5 (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1967), 9-10.

[8]H. A. A. Kennedy, *Sources of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1895), 164, as cited in Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 63.

to interpret texts (units of meaning) from the past, the interpreter has to imagine how meanings functioned, how they operated, how they related to each other in terms of the persons, things, and events of the past that embodied meanings. Models of such operations and relations are, at bottom, models of society, social science models. The point to be underscored is that if interpretation of written language of any sort takes place some domain of reference will be used by the reader. This domain of reference will be rooted in some model of society and of social interaction.[9]

The deficiency here is seen by considering the domain of reference employed by the reader. Very few, if any, modern readers bring a default domain of reference to the biblical text which is appropriate to its cultural setting: "for all non-Mediterraneans, including all Americans, reading the Bible is *always* an exercise in cross-cultural communication."[10] When the text under consideration includes concepts and institutions which more closely resemble, and yet still differ from, those same concepts and institutions in the reader's own cultural context, the need for an appropriate domain of reference is not as readily apparent.

For example, compare the interpretation of Levirate Marriage texts to the interpretation of the "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. Both commentators and the average reader of Scripture quickly understand that the concept of Levirate Marriage differs significantly from modern, Western culture's understanding of marriage and the importance of raising up an heir. The interpreter has a framework for marriage and even the death of a spouse, but the dead spouse's brother marrying his widow for the purpose of raising up his heir is foreign and peculiar to contemporary Westerners. They recognize their need to understand this practice in light of its historical social context almost instantly. In fact, most, if not all, readers cannot understand it without such study.

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[9]Malina, "Social Sciences," 233.

[10]Richard L. Rohrbaugh, introduction to *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation*, ed. Richard L. Rohrbaugh (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996), 1.

On the other hand, there are the "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. Even in today's culture, many, if not all, commentators and average readers of Scripture will approach these texts with the assumption that their default domain of reference is more than adequate for arriving an appropriate understanding of them. They understand the role of father and the role of son and bring that understanding to bear in their interpretation of the text. The problem is that their default domain of reference, while it possesses a framework for interpreting the father-son relationship, is the wrong domain of reference to employ when interpreting these texts because the father-son relationship in the text is rooted in a social world which differs dramatically from their own. As a result, NT scholars must do more than simply refer to a Semitic domain of reference in cases such as these. In fact, it is more important in these cases than it is in situations where it is readily apparent to the reader that they need a different domain of reference. Scholars must show the reader the proper domain of reference – show a Semitic understanding of these concepts and institutions – and demonstrate how to interpret the text in light of it. Further, in the case of these "son(s) of" phrases, it will be seen that while the NT use of this phrase might be described as a Semitic idiom, "son(s) of" is readily at home not only in Hebrew but also in non-Jewish, non-Christian Greek writings and even in modern English.[11] This reality stresses the importance of employing the proper interpretive background in order to arrive at an accurate understanding of all that the NT authors seek to communicate through their use of the father-son relationship in these texts.

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[11]E.g., "son of a gun." In fact, it could likely be found in any culture where the father-son relationship exists and perhaps even those in which the mother-son relationship is more prominent.

**Thesis**

Because the use of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT has been overlooked,

unhelpfully focused on identifying or disputing a Semitic background, and failed to be

considered against the proper background of the father-son relationship in the ancient

world, this study proposes to consider it in depth. It will be shown below that the

occurrences of the "son(s) of" phrases in the NT fall into one of three groups: (1) Genetic

Identification, (2) Messianic Titles, and (3) Figurative Use.[12] It is this last category of

"son(s) of" phrases which especially needs to be given further consideration. The

figurative use makes up roughly fourteen percent of the total occurrences of the "son(s)

of" phrases constructed using υἱός plus the genitive in the Greek NT.

The thesis is that the figurative use of "son(s) of" represents the NT author

employing the father-son relationship, and what this relationship represents in the ancient

world, as a tool to illustrate and explain various concepts and ideas in NT thought. As a

result, the father-son relationship in the ancient world must be employed in the

interpretation of these figurative "son(s) of" phrases.[13] In some cases, υἱός plus the

genitive is used to describe the intimate relationship that believers share with their

heavenly Father. In other cases, the phrase is used to identify, group, characterize, qualify

or disqualify, and honor or shame an individual by putting them into relationship with a

person, thing, or concept. Failing to understand the importance of genealogical

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[12]For further information on these categories and the occurrences within them, see chap. 3.

[13]In chapter 4, the following interpretive categories are drawn from the father-son relationship in the ancient world: Identification, Participation, Submission, Characterization, Succession, Inheritance, and Motivation. Their use in interpretation is demonstrated in chapter 5. For an explanation of these categories, see p. 121 and following.

identification, kinship, and the social implications of the father-son relationship in the ancient world and bring these concepts to bear in interpretation, will result in a failure to understand what the NT authors seek to communicate by using "son(s) of" phrases. While it may seem like a phrase deserving to be overlooked, a correct valuation and understanding of these "son(s) of" phrases will further our understanding of the thought and theology of NT authors and help us to appreciate more fully the relationship in which individual believers participate as sons of our Father in heaven.

<div align="center">

**History of Research — Grammar and Lexical Works**

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As was noted above, in most works, the figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive is simply overlooked or the focus is primarily upon the MT or the LXX as the proper linguistic background for the phrase. First, this point will be illustrated from research. Second, the few scholars who regard this construction as more than merely Semitic will be examined.[14]

**Interpreted as Semitic**

**Winer.** Winer identifies the phrase as a Hebraism.[15] He explains that it is "a periphrasis (as it is said) for certain concrete adjectives when used as substantives, formed by means of υἱός or τέκνον followed by a genitive of the abstract noun."[16] He

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[14]Again, it is unclear what exactly these scholars mean when they label these phrases as Semitic, Hebraic, or Septuagintal. However, as mentioned above, simple labeling is not enough to assist the interpreter in accurately understanding these phrases.

[15]G. B. Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek: Regarded as a Sure Basis for New Testament Exegesis*, trans. W. F. Moulton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1882), 298.

[16]Ibid.

notes only one similar use of υἱός plus the genitive in Greek literature outside the NT.[17]

**Thackeray.** Thackeray's LXX Grammar makes note of the fact that "υἱός is used to render some idiomatic phrases with בֵּן, but this Hebraism is mainly confined to the literal group: the Hexateuch, Isaiah, and Chronicles generally avoid it."[18] He goes on to break down the occurrences into two categories: (1) "of age" and (2) "of characteristics, qualities, etc."[19] Here, he is simply noticing the usage and not commenting on its significance.

**BDF.** BDF classifies υἱός plus the genitive under the heading "genitive of origin and relationship."[20] Here, they write, without any substantiation, "the use of υἱός in a figurative sense (often) is predominantly a Hebraism."[21]

**TDNT.** In *TDNT*, the figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive seems to fall into two categories: "υἱός as a Term for Student" and "υἱός as a Term of Relationship."[22] Both of these categories are seen to a have a predominantly Semitic background.[23]

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[17]Winer cites Epiphanius as having the phrase οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς ἀληθινῆς πίστεως. See ibid., 299.

[18]Henry St. John Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek: According to the Septuagint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 1:41.

[19]Ibid., 41-42.

[20]Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 89.

[21]Ibid.

[22]W. v. Martitz et al., "υἱός, υἱοθεσία," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 8:365.

[23]See ibid. p. 8:345, 8:358, and 8:365.

**LSJM.** LSJM notes that υἱός plus the genitive occurs often in the LXX and explains the occurrences as "Hebraisms with various meanings."[24] Luke's υἱός εἰρήνης in 10:6 is relegated to this category. While υἱοὶ θεοῦ is given its own sublisting, LSJM seems to see the figurative use of "son(s) of" phrases in the Gospels as specific expressions of the LXX Hebraisms in the NT.[25]

**BDAG.** Bauer lists some figurative usages of υἱός plus the genitive under the heading "υἱός with the genitive of thing."[26] With BDF, he says that it is probably a "Hebraism in the main."[27]

**Zerwick.** Zerwick writes that υἱός plus the genitive indicates "a certain intimate relation to a person or thing" and "is expressed in a manner not indeed exclusively Semitic, but in our literature certainly prevalently so."[28] It is worth noting that while Zerwick clearly points out that this usage is not *exclusively* Semitic, the use of υἱός plus the genitive follows his discussion on what he calls the "Hebrew Genitive."[29] Zerwick does not seem to make a distinction between the uses of υἱός plus the genitive which occur in translations of Semitic originals and those which occur in texts which

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[24]Henry Liddell et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1846.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Walter Bauer et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1026. Here, it is worth noting that υἱός plus the genitive is used figuratively not only with a genitive of thing but also with persons.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Maximilian Zerwick, *Biblical Greek: Illustrated by Examples* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1963), 15.

[29]Ibid., 14.

were originally composed in Greek.

**Moving Beyond a Solely Semitic
Understanding**

  **Deissmann.** Deissmann writes that "circumlocutions by which certain adjectival conceptions are represented by υἱός or τέκνον followed by a genitive" are "very frequent in the early Christian writings."[30] He says that they are "due to the more vivid imagination of the oriental, who looked upon any very intimate relationship—whether of connection, origin or dependence—as a relation of sonship, even in the spiritual sphere."[31] Deissmann goes on to draw a distinction between those examples of υἱός plus the genitive which occur in translations of Semitic originals and those which occur in texts which were originally composed in Greek. He argues that there are examples within the LXX that do not necessarily need to be regarded as simple Hebraisms. Regarding them and other examples pulled from the Epistles of Paul and Peter, Deissmann writes that "in no case whatever are they un-Greek; they might quite well have been coined by a Greek who wished to use impressive language. Since, however, similar turns of expression are found in the Greek Bible, and are in part cited by Paul and others, the theory of analogical formations will be found a sufficient explanation."[32]

  For Deissmann then, the uses of υἱός plus the genitive that are found in NT documents which are dependent upon a Semitic original might be best understood as a

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  [30]Adolf Deissmann, *Bible Studies: Contributions Chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions to the History of the Language, the Literature and the Religion of Hellenistic Judaism and Primitive Christianity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1901), 166.

  [31]Ibid., 161.

  [32]Ibid., 166.

"Hebraism of translation" rather than understanding them as a simple case of a Hebraism or Semitism. Those uses of "son(s) of" phrases found in NT documents which were composed entirely in Greek are not necessarily un-Greek expressions but may arise due to the author's familiarity with such expressions as they are found in the Hebrew Bible, LXX, or, as will be seen below, other Greek writings.

**Robertson.** Initially, Robertson seems to cite Deissmann approvingly when he says under the "Attributive Genitive" category that "even expressions like υἱοὶ φωτός (1 Th. 5:5) are shown by the inscriptions and coins (Deissmann, *Bib. Stud.,* p. 165) to be not mere Hebraisms, though more frequent in the LXX than the NT because of the Hebrew."[33] Later, Robertson again cites Deissmann seemingly favorably but only after he contradicts him by writing that "the use of υἱός or τέκνον with the genitive is exactly like the Hebrew idiom with בֵּן and is extremely common in the LXX and fairly so in the NT."[34]

**Moulton.** Moulton notes that use of υἱός or τέκνον with the genitive in a figurative sense is one of the "most characteristically Semitic idioms."[35] Moulton lists what he believes fall under this category, and it is worth noting that he fails to list all figurative uses of υἱός plus the genitive.[36] In addition, he inexplicably excludes υἱός

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[33]A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1915), 496.

[34]Ibid., 651.

[35]James Hope Moulton and Wilbert Francis Howard, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek: Accidence and Word-Formation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), 2:440.

[36]Ibid., 2:441.

πονηροῦ in Matthew 13:38 and υἱός διαβόλου in Acts 13:10.[37] Later, he cites Deissmann and his argument that these phrases as they occur in writings composed in Greek are not necessarily un-Greek.[38] In *The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament*, Moulton cites multiple examples of υἱός plus the genitive from Greek literature outside the New Testament and concludes that while the construction is typically regarded as Hebraistic, it is not un-Greek.[39]

**Danker.** Danker wrote a short study where he recognizes that "son(s) of" phrases in the NT "are usually explained by commentators as Hebraisms or translation-Greek despite the caution given by A. Deissmann and Moulton-Milligan."[40] Danker also highlights the use of υἱός plus the genitive in Menander's *Dyscolos* as further vindication of Deissmann's work.[41] His conclusion is that "the idiom felt at home in both Hebrew and Greek, and therefore the New Testament writers do not hesitate to employ it along with their best literary phrasing."[42]

### History of Research — Survey of Commentators

Below is a consideration of what various commentators have said about these phrases as they occur in five selected passages taken as examples of how figurative

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[37]Moulton, *Grammar*, 2:441.

[38]Ibid.

[39]James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1930), 649. He cites Deissmann on this point.

[40]Frederick W. Danker, "The υἱός Phrases in the New Testament," *New Testament Studies* 7, no. 1 (1960): 94.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid.

"son(s) of" phrases are used by various authors in the NT.[43] The goal in this introduction

is to explore the major commentaries and their understanding of the background of the

phrase and how that background is used, or not, to assist in interpreting the figurative use

of "son(s) of" in the NT. It will be seen that the insights of Deissmann, Moulton, and

Danker have largely been ignored by scholars. Most commentators focus primarily on the

so-called Semitic nature of the phrases without sufficient explanation and, other than rare

exceptions, those remaining fail to consider with any degree of depth the author's

figurative use of "son(s) of" against the interpretive backdrop of the father-son

relationship in the ancient world.

### οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας (Matt 8:12)

On the phrase οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας in Mathew 8:12, most commentators

identify υἱός plus the genitive as a Semitism.[44] Both Luz and Nolland pay surprisingly

little attention to the "son(s) of" phrase.[45] France correctly interprets the phrase as

referring to "those who should have been included but who are shockingly declared to be

consigned to the place of the ungodly;" other than a footnote, however, which refers the

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[43]As is mentioned in the paragraph above, the five passages below simply represent a sampling of the figurative use of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. Other passages include: Matt 5:9, 45, 9:15, 12:27, 13:38 (twice), 23:15, 31, 27:9; Mark 2:19, 3:17; Luke 5:34, 6:35, 11:19, 16:8 (twice), 20:34, 36 (twice); John 17:12, 19:26; Acts 3:25, 4:36, 13:10, 23:6; Rom 8:14, 19, 9:26; Gal 3:7, 26; Eph 3:5, 5:6; Col 3:6; 2 Thess 2:3; Heb 12:5; 1 Pet 5:13. The interpretation of these phrases will be the focus of chap. 5.

[44]See W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew,* vol. 2, ICC (New York: T. & T. Clark, 1991); Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); and David L. Turner, *Matthew*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2008). While Hagner and Osborne do not explicitly identify υἱός plus the genitive as a Semitism here, it certainly seems implicit in their description of the phrase. See Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, WBC, vol. 33A (Dallas: Word Books, 1993); and Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew*, ZECNT, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010).

[45]See Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001); and John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

reader to other "son(s) of" phrases, he makes no mention of the specific language

employed and its significance.[46]

## υἱὸς εἰρήνης (Luke 10:6)

Luke's υἱὸς εἰρήνης in 10:6 is also identified as a Semitism by most

commentators.[47] Marshall, citing Moulton, Danker, and *TDNT*, recognizes that υἱός plus

the genitive is "an idiom found in Classical and Hellenistic Greek but also frequent in

Semitic."[48] Even with this recognition, Marshall does not explore Luke's figurative use of

the father-son relationship here.[49]

## υἱοὶ φωτός (John 12:36)

On the phrase υἱοὶ φωτός in John 12:36, commentators are nearly unanimous

in their identification of υἱός plus the genitive as a Semitism.[50] Bultmann refers to this

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[46]R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 318. In another work, France again comments on this passage, and while he does not explicitly refer to this phrase as a Semitic idiom, he does write that it "would have been readily understood by Jews." R. T. France, "Exegesis in Practice: Two Samples," in *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*, ed. I. Howard Marshall (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 1977), 262.

[47]See Leon Morris, *Luke*, TNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988); John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, WBC, vol. 35B (Dallas: Word Books, 1993); and David E. Garland, *Luke*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011). Fitzmeyer labels the phrase a Septuagintism instead. See Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, *The Gospel according to Luke X-XXIV*, AB, vol. 28a (New York: Doubleday, 1985).

[48]I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 419.

[49]Similarly, Bock understands the son of peace as one who is a "child of the kingdom who responds to the disciples' offer of peace with reception and hospitality." In addition, he mentions that "son(s) of" phrases can be both positive and negative. But again, there is no deeper discussion of Luke's figurative use of the father-son relationship. See Darrell L. Bock. *Luke 9:51-24:53*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996).

[50]See Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971); George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC, vol. 36 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999); D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991); Andreas J.

expression in the DSS and Mandaean literature as further demonstration of the Semitic

origins of this phrase.[51]

## τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας (Eph 2:2)

Even though Ephesians is not a translation of a Semitic original, commentators

are quick to point out the Semitic origins of τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας in Ephesians 2:2.[52]

While he does not draw on Paul's figurative use of the the father-son relationship, O'Brien

rightly understands that the "son(s) of" phrase here describes "men and women whose

lives are characterized by disobedience."[53] Bruce nearly overlooks the use of υἱός plus the

genitive by only mentioning a literal rendering of the phrase.[54]

## υἱοὶ φωτός | υἱοὶ ἡμέρας (1 Thess 5:5)

The two "son(s) of" phrases in 1 Thessalonians 5:5, υἱοὶ φωτός and υἱοὶ

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Köstenberger, *John*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004); and Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to John*, vol. 2 (New York: Crossroad, 1990). While Brown and Keener do not explicitly identify the phrase as a Semitism they emphasize that is was a common phrase among the Qumran community. See Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John 1-XII*, AB, vol. 29 (New York: Doubleday, 1966); and Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary,* vol. 2 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003).

[51]See Bultmann, *Gospel of John*, 357n3.

[52]See Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010); Markus Barth, *Ephesians 1-3*, AB, vol. 34 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974); Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, WBC, vol. 42 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990); and Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010). Hoehner draws on Deissmann, Moulton, Robertson, and Zerwick, and writes that "the use of υἱός or τέκνον (mostly in the plural) followed by a genitive of the abstract noun is like a Hebrew idiom with בֵּן, and it is found frequently in the LXX." See Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 315.

[53]Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 161.

[54]F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 283.

ἡμέρας, are identified as examples of a Semitism by the vast majority of commentators.[55]

Green writes that "'children of *x*' was both a Hebrew and a Greek expression that meant

that a person or group of people participated in something or were in close relationship

with something."[56] Even though Wannamaker identifies these phrases as Semitic idioms,

he notes that "expressions such as 'sons of the day' and 'sons of light' reflect the

patriarchal society in which they emerged (ancient Israel) and the one in which they were

taken up (the Greco-Roman world)."[57] Unfortunately, despite this recognition,

Wanamaker does not explicitly employ their understanding of the father-son relationship

in his interpretation of the phrase in this passage.

**Conclusion of Commentary**
**Survey**

As can been seen from the above survey, despite the warnings of Deissmann,

Moulton, and Danker, the vast majority of major commentaries have for the last fifty-five

years continued to fail to recognize any great significance in the "son(s) of" phrases in the

NT other than them being influenced by the MT and LXX. In addition, those scholars

who attempt to heed their caution fail to explore fully the implications of the NT authors'

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[55]See F. F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, WBC, vol. 45 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982); Paul Ellingworth and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on Paul's Letters to the Thessalonians*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1976); Abraham J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians,* AB, vol. 32B (New York: Doubleday, 2000); Leon Morris, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, TNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984); and Charles A. Wanamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians*, NIGNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990). While he initially attributes these phrases to Semitic language, in his second commentary on 1 Thessalonians, Morris refers readers to Deissmann for "this idiom in Semitic or Greek." Leon Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians,* NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 155.

[56]Gene L. Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians,* PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 236. Green is clearly influenced by Deissmann on this point.

[57]Wannamaker, *Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 182.

figurative use of the father-son relationship and adopt that framework in their interpretation. It is this lack which this present work endeavors to address.

## A Brief Word About Grammar

The purpose of this work is not to consider the grammatical foundation of these "son(s) of" phrases in the NT as they are constructed using υἱός plus the genitive. Instead, this work is focused on the cultural background that should be used in the interpretation of these phrases. Nevertheless, it may be helpful to consider briefly υἱός plus the genitive with respect to its grammatical background. The most frequent grammatical categories suggested for υἱός plus the genitive are the attributive genitive and genitive of relationship.[58] Regarding the attributive genitive, Wallace explains that "the genitive substantive specifies an *attribute* or innate quality of the head substantive."[59] Wallace writes that a genitive of relationship is where "the substantive in the genitive indicates a *familial* relationship, typically the progenitor of the person named by the head noun."[60]

The use of υἱός plus the genitive in the "son(s) of" phrases in the NT represents somewhat of an overlap between these two categories. They are at the base level genitives of relationship. The genitive noun is indicating a familial relationship wherein the genitive noun is the father of the head noun. This explanation stands even in those occurrences where the familial relationship expressed is figurative. However, as will be

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[58]For the attributive genitive, see Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 496; and Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, 14; for genitive of relationship, see BDF § 162.

[59]Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 86. Emphasis original.

[60]Ibid., 83.

seen in the course of this work – especially in chapters 4 and 5 – a familial relationship also specifies attributes or innate qualities about the head noun. As a result, υἱός plus the genitive should be understood as a genitive of relationship although our understanding of this category should be expanded to include its implicit attributive qualities. Further, while not necessary, the figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive could be seen as a more specialized category: genitive of figurative relationship.

## "Son(s) of" Phrases Outside the NT

Chapter 2 will show that the "son(s) of" phrases constructed using υἱός plus the genitive are found both in texts that have a Semitic background and also those which were not directly influenced by the Hebrew language. The figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive is found in Jewish, Christian, and non-Christian documents written by many different authors in both Hebrew and Greek. The survey in chapter 2 and its findings will show that Deissmann, Moulton, and Danker were correct to caution commentators against myopically limiting their interpretation of these phrases to the influence of the Hebrew Bible's בֵּן. Instead, the figurative use of "son(s) of" should be explored using the father-son relationship and its nature, dynamics, and implications in the ancient world as the proper domain of reference for interpretation.

## Method

First, this work follows in the footsteps of Deissmann, Moulton, and Danker by demonstrating that "son(s) of" phrases constructed using υἱός plus the genitive are "at home in both Hebrew and Greek."[61] This task is accomplished in chapter 2 by exploring

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[61]Danker, "The υἱός Phrases," 94.

its use in Greek works which have a Semitic original and also in those which do not have a Semitic original. Second, in chapter 3, all of the occurrences of "son(s) of" phrases constructed using υἱός plus the genitive in the Greek NT are categorized and classified. Third, by drawing from the fields of cultural anthropology and the social sciences as well as social scientific studies specifically related to biblical interpretation, chapter 4 examines the function of genealogy and the nature and dynamics of the father-son relationship in the ancient world in order to develop a framework which can be employed in the interpretation of the figurative use of "son(s) of" in the NT. Fourth, chapter 5 makes use of the framework developed in chapter 4 to interpret the figurative "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. This process yields an interpretation which more fully understands what the NT authors seek to communicate through the figurative use of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. Finally, chapter 6 summarizes and concludes the work as well as drawing out some implications and suggesting areas of further study.

CHAPTER 2

THE USE OF ΥΙΟΣ PLUS THE GENITIVE OUTSIDE
THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

**Introduction**

The "son(s) of" phrases in the NT are constructed using υἱός plus the genitive.

As a result, in order to properly understand how the NT authors use these phrases, it is

necessary to consider how this construction functions outside the Greek NT as well. In

his work on these phrases, Deissmann writes that "in order to understand this 'New

Testament' idiom, it is also necessary to distinguish here between the cases in which this

'periphrastic' υἱός or τέκνον occurs in translations of Semitic originals, and the instances

found in texts which were in Greek from the first."[1] This chapter follows Deissmann's

suggestion and first considers how υἱός plus the genitive is used in the Septuagint and

then how it is used in texts which do not have a Semitic original.

**The Use of בֵּן in the Hebrew Bible**

Since the majority of the occurrences of υἱός in the Septuagint serve to

translate בֵּן where it is found in the Hebrew Bible, before turning to examine the phrase in

the LXX, its origins in the MT must be explored. BDB notes that the vast majority of

uses of בֵּן in the Hebrew Bible refer to the offspring of another.[2] While בֵּן typically refers

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[1]Adolf Deissmann, *Bible Studies: Contributions Chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions to the History of the Language, the Literature and the Religion of Hellenistic Judaism and Primitive Christianity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1901), 161.

[2]BDB, 120.

to male offspring, it can also refer to male and female children,[3] of both human beings

and animals.[4] In addition to its typical usage, Haag notes that "when an intimate

relationship between two persons or some connection between two things continually

exists, this is frequently described in terms of the father-son formula."[5] Thus, outside of

its typical identification of the direct male descendant of a father, בֵּן is used to describe

the relationship between (1) a person to a group of people or tribe, (2) a person to a

geographic location, (3) a person to an academic, professional, or social group, and (4) a

person to a thing or concept in a figurative manner.[6] It is these atypical uses which will be

considered below.

**A Person to a Group of People or**
**Tribe**

Since בֵּן was consistently used to refer to differing levels of male descendants

such as the immediate male descendant of a father, "son," and the subsequent male

descendant of a father's son, "grandson," it is not surprising that it was also used to refer

to male descendants farther down the genealogical line. Though this category might

appear to be an abnormal use of a בֵּן to the modern reader, for the original audience, it

was not. This understanding of sonship across multiple generations is due to their belief

that "kinship is participation in one blood, which passes from parent to child and

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[3]Gen 3:16, 21:7; Exod 21:5, 22:24 as found in BDB, 121.

[4]Lev 22:28; Deut 22:6-7; 1 Sam 6:7, 10; Zech 9:9 as found in BDB, 121. Note that it can also refer to the "offspring" of plants, e.g., Gen 49:22.

[5]H. Haag, "בֵּן," in *TDOT*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans. John T. Willis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 2:149.

[6]These categories have been adapted from ibid., 2:152-53.

circulates in the veins of every member of the family."[7] In fact, "there was a very strong

sense of solidarity which produced a consciousness of continuous extension crossing the

barriers of succeeding generations and uniting the whole group."[8] Expressions such as

"the sons of Esau" (Deut 2:29), "the sons of Lot" (Deut 2:19), and "the sons of Israel"[9] are

representative examples of this use of בֵּן in the Hebrew Bible.

## A Person to a Geographic Location

Genealogy and geography were often intertwined in the ancient world. Levin

writes that "most of the biblical genealogies are not only lists of private people and their

lineage, but rather represent clans and families, their geographic diffusion and their

administrative or economic structure."[10] In addition, Levin writes that individuals are

referred to as both fathers and sons of a particular place depending on their relationship to

the geographic locale.[11] In the MT, see the following examples of this use of בֵּן: "sons of

Bethlehem," "sons of the east," "sons of Egypt," "sons of Jericho," and "sons of Zion."[12]

## A Person to an Academic,
## Professional, or Social Group

While this category is typically not considered a figurative use of בֵּן, it should

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[7]W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites: The Fundamental Institutions* (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), 40.

[8]Russell Phillip Shedd, *Man in Community: A Study of St. Paul's Application of Old Testament and Early Jewish Conceptions of Human Solidarity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 5.

[9]See Deut 23:17; Josh 10:20;  2 Chr 13:12 for examples. This expression is frequent in the MT.

[10]Yigal Levin, "Understanding Biblical Genealogies," *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 9 (2011): 11-46, 21.

[11]Ibid., 28.

[12]See Ezra 2:21; Jdg 6:3; Ezek 16:26; Ezra 2:34; Ps 149:2.

be regarded as such. Those who are described as sons of a particular teacher, job, or class

are not necessarily genetic descendants of those individuals in their group; rather, they

are described as "sons" because they figuratively take after their "fathers" in their various

academic, professional, and social groups. Thus, one sees "sons of the prophets" refers to

those who are their students or disciples.[13] Similar phrases are "son of the nobility," "sons

of the gatekeepers," "sons of the singers," "sons of the poor," and "son of the wise."[14]

According to Caragounis, this expression has its roots in the Semitic thought "that the

teacher-pupil relationship was conceived of as a father-son relationship."[15]

**A Person to a Thing in a**
**Figurative Manner**

This category refers to those uses of בֵּן which identify, characterize, and/or

qualify a person in terms of the thing to which they are figuratively related as a son.

Naturally, it is this category which provides some of the most significant background for

the figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive in the Greek NT. These uses of בֵּן can be better

understood by breaking them down into the following subcategories: sonship as destiny,

sonship as characterization, and idiomatic uses. The subcategories are examined below.

**Sonship as destiny.** Here, בֵּן is used to convey figuratively the "destiny to

which an individual is doomed or may be subject."[16] It would seem that this figurative use

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[13]Chrys C. Caragounis, "בֵּן," in *NIDOTTE*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 1:674. For examples of this phrase, see 1 Kgs 20:35; 2 Kgs 2:3, 5, 7, 15, 4:1, 38, 5:22, 6:1, 9:1. A similar phrase which may refer to those who are not a literal, direct descendant is "sons of the priests" which is found in 1 Chr 9:30, Ezra 2:61, 10:18 and Neh 12:35.

[14]See Eccl 10:17; Ezra 2:42; Neh 12:28; Ps 72:4; and Isa 19:11 respectively.

[15]*NIDOTTE*, 1:674.

[16]Ibid.

of the father-son relationship is drawing on the notion that sons are qualified to share in the rights, privileges, and status of their father in society.[17] For example, in general, describing an individual as a "son of a fisherman" would both qualify that individual to serve as a fisherman and also disqualify them from serving in other positions, such as a priest or political leader. These figurative uses describe a son of a specific thing to communicate that they are qualified to receive a specific fate. In the MT, there are the following examples of this use of בֵּן: "son of a beating," "son(s) of death," "sons of the pledges," "son of my threshing-floor," and, likely, "sons of your childlessness."[18]

**Sonship as characterization.** In the ancient world, a person's lineage served to describe or characterize what kind of person that individual was or would become in society.[19] Thus, being the son of an honorable father would characterize an individual as being honorable himself. Under this category, individuals are linked figuratively as sons to an attribute or quality which characterizes them in either positive or negative terms. In the MT, there are the following examples of negative characterization: "son(s) of wickedness," "son(s) of malice," "sons of rebelliousness," "sons of tumult," "sons of foolishness," "sons of affliction," "son of the murderer," and "sons of the troops."[20]

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[17]See Rodney T. Hood, "The Genealogies of Jesus," in *Early Christian Origins: Studies in Honor of Harold R. Willoughby*, ed. Allen Wikgren (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961), 6.

[18]For "son of a beating" see Deut 25:2. For "son(s) of death" see 1 Sam 20:31, 26:16; 2 Sam 12:5; Ps 79:11, 102:21[20]. For "son of the pledges" see 2 Kgs 14:14. For "son of my threshing-floor" see Isa 21:10. For "sons of your childlessness" see Isa 49:20. These examples are also present in the non-exhaustive lists found in *TDOT* and *NIDOTTE*.

[19]Hood, "Genealogies," 5.

[20]For "son(s) of wickedness" see Deut 13:14; Jdg 19:22, 20:13; 1 Sam 2:12, 10:27; 1 Kgs 21:10, 13; 2 Chr 13:7. For "son(s) of malice" see 2 Sam 3:34, 7:10; Ps 89:23; 1 Chr 17:9. For "sons of rebelliousness" see Num 17:25. For "sons of tumult" see

"Son(s) of strength or power," "sons of delight," and "sons of oil" are examples of

positive characterization.[21]

**Idiomatic uses.** Some expressions reflect a clear idiomatic use of בֵּן: "son of

oil," "son of the dawn," "sons of fire," "sons of the bow," and "sons of the quiver."[22]

Another frequent idiomatic use of בֵּן is to describe the age of an individual. For example,

a person who is one hundred years old would be described as "a son of a hundred

years."[23]

**Summary of the Use of בֵּן in the
Hebrew Bible**

While בֵּן is most often used in the MT to refer to a direct and immediate male

descendant, it is also used in ways which do not fit this strict understanding of the word.

As is shown above, it can also identify an individual as a member of a group, as an

inhabitant of a geographic locale, or as one who is figuratively related to another person

or thing. It is this last group of uses which is of particular interest to the present work and

they will be examined below as they are translated into the LXX.

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Jer 48:45. For "sons of foolishness" see Job 30:8. For "son of affliction" see Pro 31:5. For "son of the murderer" see 2 Kgs 6:32. For "sons of the troops" see 2 Chr. 25:13.

[21]For "sons(s) of strength or power" see Deut 3:18; Judg 18:2, 21:10; 1 Sam 14:52, 18:17; 2 Sam 2:7, 13:28, 17:10; 1 Kgs 1:52; 2 Kgs 2:16; 1 Chr 26:7, 30, 32; 2 Chr 17:7, 26:17. For "sons of delight" see Mic 1:16. For "sons of oil" see Zech 4:14. "Sons of oil" would likely include the notion of qualification as well since being anointed is part of what qualifies Zerubbabel and Joshua to lead God's people.

[22]See Isa 5:1, 14:12; Job 5:7, 41:20; Lam 3:13 respectively. Each of these uses are cited in both *TDOT*, 152 and *NIDOTTE*, 674.

[23]See Isa 65:20 for this example and more occurrences can be found in *TDOT*, 153.

## The Use of Υἱός Plus the Genitive in the LXX

The inclination of NT scholars to limit the scope of their interpretation of the use of υἱός plus the genitive in the Greek NT to discussions related to the influence of Semitic language may be partly due to the tendency of the LXX translators to render literal translations of many of the בֶּן phrases examined above.[24] In order to better understand the phrases as they occur in the NT, their usage in the LXX will be examined. First, the LXX rendering of the previously discussed uses of בֶּן will be considered according to their categories.[25] Second, uses of υἱός plus the genitive which are not the result of a literal rendering of the Hebrew will be evaluated.

### A Person to a Group of People or Tribe

As explained above, kinship in the ANE was understood in strongly collective terms. It was not uncommon to refer to an individual as a son of a patriarchal figure in a previous generation. Thus, in the LXX are found οἱ υἱοὶ Ησαυ, τοῖς υἱοῖς Λωτ, and the more frequent οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ Ισραηλ as literal translations of the MT.[26]

### A Person to an Academic, Professional, or Social Group

Again, this category is typically not identified as a figurative use of υἱός even though it should be considered as such. An individual described in these terms is figuratively identified with his teacher or those whom he follows as if he were a son. For

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[24]As is shown in chap. 1, Fitzmeyer even regards Luke's υἱὸς εἰρήνης as a "Septuagintism." See Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, *The Gospel according to Luke X-XXIV*, AB, vol. 28a (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 848.

[25]This survey will focus only on those categories which are related to the figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive in the NT.

[26]See Deut 2:29; Deut 2:19; and 2 Chr 13:12, respectively.

example, οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν προφητῶν is a literal rendering of the בְּנֵי־הַנְּבִיאִים found in the MT.[27] Similar phrases are found in Ecclesiastes and Isaiah.[28] At first glance, υἱὸς ἐλευθέρων in Ecclesiastes 10:17 seems like a poor translation of בֶּן־חוֹרִים; however, *HALOT* makes it clear that "free" is an acceptable gloss for חֹר.[29] In Ezra 2:42, υἱοὶ τῶν πυλωρῶν renders "sons of the gatekeepers." In Nehemiah 12:28, οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν ᾀδόντων translates "sons of the singers." In Psalm 71[2]:4, τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν πενήτων renders "sons of the poor." Finally, in Isaiah 19:11, υἱοὶ συνετῶν is a literal translation for "sons of the wise."

**A Person to a Thing in a
Figurative Manner**

It is this category which provides some of the most significant background for the figurative use of "son(s) of" in the NT. The translations of the MT examples mentioned above will be discussed below according to their subcategories: sonship as destiny, sonship as characterization, and idiomatic uses.

**Sonship as destiny.** In the Hebrew Bible, בֵּן is used figuratively to communicate the destiny of an individual. In this case, an individual's destiny is what they inherit as a son. "Son of a beating" in Deuteronomy 25:2 is not translated using υἱός.[30] All the occurrences of "sons(s) of death" are rendered by υἱός plus θανατός or one of its cognates in the genitive.[31] In 2 Kings 14:14, "sons of the pledges" is translated by

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[27]1 Kgs 20:35; 2 Kgs 2:3, 5, 7, 15, 4:1, 38, 5:22, 6:1, 9:1.

[28]See Eccl 10:17 and Isa 19:11

[29]See *HALOT,* s.v. "חֹר."

[30]The translator here instead opted for ἔσται ἐὰν ἄξιος ᾖ πληγῶν ὁ ἀσεβῶν.

[31]For "son(s) of death" in the LXX see 1 Sam 20:31, 26:16; 2 Sam 12:5; Ps 78:11, 101:21.

the phrase τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν συμμίξεων. LEH explains that this phrase is best translated as "children of mixed marriages" which represents a significant deviation from the meaning of hostages conveyed by the MT.[32] The phrase "son of my threshing floor" in Isaiah 21:10 is not rendered using υἱός plus the genitive.[33] While it is not definitive that Isaiah's "sons of your childlessness" belongs in this category, it worth noting that the translator elects to render the phrase using the following clause: οἱ υἱοί σου οὓς ἀπολώλεκας.[34] Here, the LXX moves away from the "son(s) of" phrase found in the MT: בֶּן־חוֹרִים.

**Sonship as characterization.** This category represents the most common figurative use of בֵּן in the MT. Under this usage, an individual is figuratively related as a son to an attribute or quality which characterizes them in either positive or negative terms. Examples of negative characterization and their translation into the LXX are shown in table 1. Examples of positive characterization and their translation can be found in table 2. As the tables show, many of these examples are translated using υἱός plus the genitive.[35] In only four of these examples is the "son(s) of" phrase replaced by a single noun or adjective.[36]

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[32]See LEH, 582. While this differing translation is certainly intriguing, it is beyond the scope of the present work. What is of particular importance for this work is that the translator still used υἱός plus the genitive.

[33]Here, the translator provides an interpretive gloss for the phrase using οἱ ὀδυνώμενοι to express the notion that the son of the threshing floor is one who suffers pain.

[34]See *NETS*: "your sons whom you have lost" (Isa 49:20 *NETS*).

[35]Note also the translation of Mic 1:16 using τέκνον plus the genitive instead of υἱός.

[36]If the use of υἱος in this manner is as characteristically un-Greek as some have suggested, then this tendency might be expected to be much more common.

Table 1. Examples of negative characterization in the MT and LXX

| Reference | MT | LXX | NETS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deut 13:13[14] | בְּנֵי־בְלִיַּ֫עַל֙ | παράνομοι | lawless men |
| Jdg[A] 19:22 | בְּנֵי־בְלִיַּ֫עַל | υἱοὶ παρανόμων | sons of transgressors |
| Jdg[B] 19:22 | בְּנֵי־בְלִיַּ֫עַל | υἱοὶ παρανόμων | sons of lawless men |
| Jdg[A] 20:13 | בְּנֵי־בְלִיַּ֫עַל | τοὺς υἱοὺς Βελιαλ | sons of Belial |
| Jdg[B] 20:13 | בְּנֵי־בְלִיַּ֫עַל | υἱοὺς παρανόμων | sons of transgressors |
| 1 Sam 2:12 | בְּנֵי בְלִיָּ֫עַל | υἱοὶ λοιμοὶ | pestilent sons |
| 1 Sam 10:27 | בְּנֵי בְלִיָּ֫עַל | υἱοὶ λοιμοὶ | pestilent sons |
| 1 Kgs 20[21]:10 | בְּנֵי־בְלִיַּ֫עַל | υἱοὺς παρανόμων | sons of transgressors |
| 1 Kgs 20[21]:13 | בְּנֵי־בְלִיַּ֫עַל | υἱοὶ παρανόμων | sons of transgressors |
| 2 Chr 13:7 | בְּנֵי בְלִיַּ֫עַל | υἱοὶ παράνομοι | lawless sons |
| 2 Sam 3:34 | בְּנֵי־עַוְלָה | υἱῶν ἀδικίας | sons of injustice |
| 2 Sam 7:10 | בְּנֵי־עַוְלָה֙ | υἱὸς ἀδικίας | son of injustice |
| Ps 88[89]:23 | בֶּן־עַוְלָ֫ה | υἱὸς ἀνομίας | son of lawlessness |
| 1 Chr 17:9 | בְּנֵי־עַוְלָ֫ה | ἀδικία | injustice |
| Num 17:25 | בְּנֵי־מֶ֫רִי | τοῖς υἱοῖς ἀνηκόων | sons of the disobedient ones |
| Job 30:8 | בְּנֵי־נָבָ֫ל | ἀφρόνων υἱοὶ | sons of fools |
| Prov 31:5 | בְּנֵי־עֹ֫נִי | τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς | the powerless |
| 2 Kgs 6:32 | בֶּן־הַֽמְרַצֵּ֫חַ | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ φονευτοῦ | son of the murderer |
| 2 Chr 25:13 | בְּנֵי הַגְּד֫וּד | οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς δυνάμεως | the sons of the force |

Note:  The translations in the fourth column are from *NETS*

Table 2. Examples of positive characterization in the MT and LXX

| Reference | MT | LXX | NETS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deut 3:18 | בְּנֵי־חַיִל | δυνατός | mighty one |
| Jdg[A] 18:2 | בְּנֵי־חַיִל | υἱοὺς δυνάμεως | sons of power |
| Jdg[B] 18:2 | בְּנֵי־חַיִל | υἱοὺς δυνάμεως | sons of power |
| Jdg[A] 21:10 | בְּנֵי הֶחָיִל | τῶν υἱῶν τῆς δυνάμεως | sons of power |
| Jdg[B] 21:10 | בְּנֵי הֶחָיִל | υἱῶν τῆς δυνάμεως | sons of power |
| 1 Sam 14:52 | בֶּן־חַיִל | υἱὸν δυνάμεως | son of might |
| 2 Sam 2:7 | בְּנֵי־חַיִל | υἱοὺς δυνατούς | mighty sons |
| 2 Sam 13:28 | בְּנֵי־חָיִל | υἱοὺς δυνάμεως | sons of power |
| 2 Sam 17:10 | בֶּן־חַיִל | υἱὸς δυνάμεως | son of power |
| 1 Kgs 1:52 | בֶּן־חַיִל | υἱὸν δυνάμεως | son of power |
| 2 Kgs 2:16 | בְּנֵי־חַיִל | υἱοὶ δυνάμεως | sons of power |
| 1 Chr 5:18 | בְּנֵי־חַיִל | υἱῶν δυνάμεως | sons of power |
| 1 Chr 26:7 | בְּנֵי־חָיִל | υἱοὶ δυνατοί | able sons |
| 1 Chr 26:30 | בְּנֵי־חַיִל | υἱοὶ δυνατοί | able-bodied sons |
| 1 Chr 26:32 | בְּנֵי־חַיִל | υἱοὶ δυνατοί | able-bodied sons |
| 2 Chr 17:7 | בֶּן־חַיִל | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν δυνατῶν | sons of the mighty |
| 2 Chr 26:17 | בְּנֵי־חָיִל | υἱοὶ δυνατοί | mighty sons |
| Mic 1:16 | בְּנֵי תַעֲנוּגָיִךְ | τὰ τέκνα τὰ τρυφερά σου | your pampered children |
| Zech 4:14 | בְּנֵי־הַיִּצְהָר | υἱοὶ τῆς πιότητος | sons of fattiness |

Note:  The translations in the fourth column are from *NETS*

**Idiomatic uses.** In the LXX, υἱός plus the genitive is also used to translate various idiomatic phrases from the MT. In Isaiah 5:1, "son of oil" is rendered using πίονι and υἱός is left untranslated. "Son of the dawn" from Isaiah 14:12 is also translated without υἱός with the phrase ὁ ἑωσφόρος ὁ πρωὶ ἀνατέλλων. The two examples from Job are also rendered without υἱός plus the genitive: "sons of fire" is translated with νεοσσοὶ

γυπὸς and "sons of the bow" with τόξον χάλκειον.[37]

## Uses of Υἱός Plus the Genitive in the LXX Not Dependent upon בֵּן in the MT

The vast majority of the occurrences of υἱός plus the genitive in the LXX are due to a literal translation of בֵּן in the MT, as has been seen above. These uses are what Deissmann has aptly described as a "Hebraism of translation."[38] However, there are also examples of υἱός plus the genitive in the LXX that cannot be explained on the basis of a literal translation of a Semitic original. These will be considered below in the order in which they appear. Of particular note are the first two examples from Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and 1 Chronicles since Thackeray argues that "this Hebraism is mainly confined to the literal group: the Hexateuch, Isaiah, and Chronicles generally avoid it."[39]

**Leviticus 17:8, 22:18 (τῶν υἱῶν Ισραηλ | τῶν υἱῶν τῶν προσηλύτων).** In both of these verses, the phrase "sons of Israel" is supplied for בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. The "sons of the proselytes" renders גֵּר.

**Deuteronomy 32:43 (υἱοὶ θεοῦ).** In the MT, the call to rejoice is given to the nations together with God's people. The LXX translator extends this call: "rejoice, Heavens, with him, and let all the sons of God worship him, let the nations rejoice with his people."[40]

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[37]For "sons of fire" see Job 5:7; for "sons of the bow" see Job 41:20.

[38]Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 165.

[39]Henry St. John Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek: According to the Septuagint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 1:41.

[40]Deut 32:43, LXX (author's translation). Cf. *NETS*.

**1 Samuel 10:26 (υἱοὶ δυνάμεων).** In the MT, Saul is described as going to his home in Gibeah. The reader is told that הַחַ֫יִל go with him. As was seen above, בְּנֵי־חַיִל is quite common in the MT, but here it is absent. However, the LXX translator renders this verse as if it was present by saying that "with Saoul went sons of power whose hearts the Lord had touched."[41]

**1 Kings 21[20]:15 (υἱὸν δυνάμεως).** Here, חַיִל is not even present in the MT, instead it has בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. While υἱὸν Ισραηλ would be the most literal rendering, instead the LXX has "son of power."[42]

**2 Kings 25:18 (υἱὸν τῆς δευτερώσεως).** Here, the MT describes Zephaniah as the "second priest." The LXX similarly describes him as a "son of the second order."[43]

**1 Chronicles 20:4 (τῶν υἱῶν τῶν γιγάντων).** This use υἱός plus the genitive translates מִילִדֵי הָרְפָאִים. "Rephaim" is often translated using γίγας in the LXX. Here, it is worth highlighting the fact that this is the only time in the LXX υἱός is used to translate יָלִיד.[44]

**Psalm 79[80]:16 (υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου).** This verse in the LXX does not represent a significant deviation, but it is worth noting that the LXX translator supplies a phrase using υἱός plus the genitive when the MT includes only בֵּן.[45]

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[41]1 Kgdms 10:26 *NETS*.

[42]1 Kgdms 21:15 *NETS*.

[43]4 Kgdms 25:18 *NETS*.

[44]Elsewhere it is translated using οἰκογενής in Gen 14:14, 17:12, 13, 27; Lev 22:11; Jer 2:14; ἔκγονος in 2 Sam 21:16, 18; and γενέα in Num 13:22, 28.

[45]Cf. "the son whom you made strong for yourself" (Ps 80:15 ESV) and "a son

**Proverbs 16:15 (υἱὸς βασιλέως).** The MT has בְּאוֹר־פְּנֵי־מֶלֶךְ חַיִּים and this phrase

is translated as ἐν φωτὶ ζωῆς υἱὸς βασιλέως.[46] For this occurrence, it is possible, and

perhaps likely, that the presence of υἱός plus the genitive is due to the LXX translator

reading בְּנֵי instead of פְּנֵי.

**Jeremiah 2:6 (υἱός ἀνθρώπου).** Here, the MT simply has אָדָם and the LXX

translator made the shift to "a son of man."

**Ezekiel 17:12, 18:2 (υἱὲ ἀνθρώπου).** Neither בֵּן nor אָדָם are present at the

beginning of either of these verses. These two occurrences of υἱός plus the genitive have

been supplied by the translator.

## Uses of Υἱός Plus the Genitive in
## the LXX Without a Hebrew Text

Finally, there are those examples of υἱός plus the genitive in the LXX which do

not have a Hebrew text either due to that manuscript being lost or the document being

composed in Greek from the start. These will be considered below in the order in which

they occur.

**Judith 16:6 (υἱοὶ τιτάνων).** The author of Judith here is emphasizing the fact

that God defeated the enemy of his people "with the hand of a female."[47] After stating this

reality positively, Judith uses a negative statement to explain that he did not use "sons of

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of man whom you made strong for yourself" (Ps 79:15 *NETS*).

[46]*NETS* provides the following translation: "the son of a king is the light of
life."

[47]Jdt 16:5 *NETS*.

the Titans" to overthrow "their mighty one."[48]

**Judith 16:12 (υἱοὶ κορασίων).** While "sons of girls" seems like it could be a literal, genealogical phrase rather than figurative, it is important to recognize that the manner in which the "sons of girls pierced them through" is described as being ὡς παῖδας αὐτομολούντων ἐτίτρωσκον αὐτούς.[49] Thus, it would seem that the author is using both υἱός and παῖς plus the genitive in a figurative sense.

**Tobit 4:12 (υἱοὶ προφητῶν).** "Sons of the prophets" here provides an example of υἱός plus the genitive being used figuratively to identify these individuals as members of an academic, professional, or social group. This phrase was likely well-established because of its presence in the MT as well as its consistent translation into the LXX.

**Proverbs 24:22a (υἱὸς ἀπωλείας).** For Proverbs 24:22a, the LXX reads λόγον φυλασσόμενος υἱος ἀπωλείας ἐκτὸς ἔσται δεχόμενος δὲ ἐδέξατο αὐτόν. *NETS* translates as follows: "A son who keeps the word will be far removed from destruction, for he received it willingly."[50] It seems that instead of taking ἀπωλείας as a genitive modifying υἱός, the *NETS* translators understand it as being part of a prepositional phrase with ἐκτός.[51] This translation is highly improbable considering that when ἐκτος is used as a preposition, it always precedes the genitive in both the LXX and the NT.[52] Thus, it is

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[48]Jdt 16:6 *NETS*.

[49]Jdt 16:12 *NETS*.

[50]Prov 24:22a *NETS*.

[51]Thus, the son is "far removed from destruction" (Prov 24:22a *NETS*).

[52]See Exod 9:33; Jdg[A] 3:31; Jdg[B] 5:28, 8:26, 20:15, 17; 3 Kgdms 2:46, 5:3, 10:13; 1 Chr 29:3; 2 Chr 9:12, 17:19, 23:14, 31:16; 1 Macc 15:30; 2 Macc 11:25; *Odes Sol.* 5:13; Song 4:1, 3, 6:7; Isa 26:13; Dan[Th] 11:4; Bel 1:14; Bel[Th] 1:9; Matt

more likely that ἐκτός is functioning as a noun here and that ἀπωλείας should be understood as a genitive modifying υἱός: "a son of destruction."[53]

**Sirach 45:9 (υἱοῖς λαοῦ αὐτοῦ).** "Sons of his people" here is likely formed on the basis of its somewhat frequent usage in the remainder of the LXX.[54] There, it is formed in the translation of a fairly common construction like בְּנֵי־עַמֹּו as found in Numbers 22:5.

*Psalms of Solomon* **13:9 (υἱὸν ἀγαπήσεως).** This Psalm promises that the Lord will "admonish the righteous as a beloved son."[55] This figurative son of the Lord's will be so characterized by the Lord's love that has been bestowed upon him that he will be considered a son of it.

**Repeated Υἱός Phrases.** There are two phrases which occur with more frequency in LXX writings which are not translations of works found in the MT. "Son(s) of man" occurs in both the singular and plural and in multiple cases. It is found in Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, and the *Psalms of Solomon*.[56] "Son(s) of man" is a common phrase in both the LXX and the MT so its usage in these writings is not surprising. The second phrase which is repeated in these writings is "son(s) of God." It too occurs in both the singular and plural and in multiple cases. It is found in both the Wisdom of Solomon

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23:26; Acts 26:22; 1 Cor 6:18, 15:27; 2 Cor 12:2.

[53]Cf. John 17:12; 2 Thes 2:3.

[54]See Num 22:5; Lev 19:18; Jdg 14:16, 17; 2 Kgs 23:6; 2 Chr 35:5, 7, 12, 13; Jer 17:19, 33:23; Ezek 3:11, 33:2, 12, 17, 30, 37:18; Dan 8:19, 12:1.

[55]*Pss. Sol.* 13:9 *NETS*.

[56]See Jdt 8:12, 16; Wis 9:6; Sir 17:30, 36:23; *Pss. Sol.* 9:4.

and the *Psalms of Solomon*.[57] This latter use of υἱός plus the genitive is not exceedingly frequent in the LXX.[58]

## Summary of the Use of Υἱός Plus the Genitive in the LXX

As has been shown above υἱός plus the genitive is used in the LXX primarily to provide a literal translation of בֵּן as it is used in the Hebrew Bible. The translation is generally consistent regardless of the category in which a particular usage might fall. However, the use of υἱός plus the genitive in the LXX is not limited to what Deissmann calls "Hebraisms of translation."[59] Instead, examples where the figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive is not due to a literal translation of בֵּן can be found in both writings which have a Hebrew original and also those which do not. These usages confirm with Deissmann and others that the use of υἱός plus the genitive is not necessarily un-Greek and "it is not at all necessary, in this matter, to have recourse to a Hebraism in every case."[60]

## The Use of Υἱός Plus the Genitive in Other Greek Writings

In this section, the use of υἱός plus the genitive as it occurs outside of biblical writings will be considered. The focus here will not be on uses of υἱός plus the genitive which are examples of mere genetic identification, instead, the figurative uses of "son(s) of" which are relevant to the present work will be the focus. These uses will be discussed

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[57]See Wis 2:18, 5:5; *Pss. Sol.* 17:27.

[58]See Gen 6:2, 4; Deut 32:43; Ps 28:1, 88:7; Hos 2:1.

[59]Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 165.

[60]Ibid., 165.

below and grouped according to the body of literature to which they belong.

**OT Pseudepigrapha**

*1 Enoch.* Enoch uses υἱός 33 times.[61] In every occurrence except 2, υἱός is followed by the genitive. Fifteen of these uses of υἱός are used to identify an individual as a genetic descendant of another individual. The remaining 16 occurrences are found in 5 different phrases: "sons of men," "sons of the earth," "sons of the Watchers," "sons of heaven," and "sons of sexual immorality."[62]

*Sibylline Oracles.* In *SibOr.* 3:702, the author refers to the "sons of the great God." In *SibOr.* 8:217, Jesus is identified as θεοῦ υἱός.

*Apocryphon of Ezekiel.* In *ApocEzek.* 2:1, the author uses a familiar LXX phrase: τοῖς υἱοῖς τοῦ λαοῦ.

*Greek Apocalypse of Ezra.* In *GkApEzra.* 4:27, there is a reference to ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.

*Apocalypse of Sedrach.* In *ApSedr.* 1:20, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ is used. A similar construction is found in *ApSedr.* 1:20 where θεὸς is the antecedent to the pronoun in the phrase τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ.

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[61]Those works which are in this category and are also included in the LXX were covered in the discussion of the use of υἱός plus the genitive in the LXX and will not be included here as well.

[62]For "sons of men," see *1 En.* 6:1, 10:7, 11:1, 15:12, 97:3, 101:1. For "sons of the earth," see *1 En.* 12:4, 15:3, 100:6, 102:3. For "sons of the Watchers," see *1 En.* 10:9, 10:15. For "sons of heaven," see *1 En.* 6:2, 13:8, 14:3. For "sons of sexual immorality," see *1 En.* 10:9.

***3 Baruch.*** The somewhat common phrase "sons of men" is found in *3Bar.* 2:4, 15:3, and 16:1.

***Apocalypse of Elijah.*** In this author's depiction of the apocalypse, Elijah and Enoch descend and pursue the "son of lawlessness."[63]

***Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs.*** "Sons of men" occurs with some frequency in these writings. It is found in the *Testaments* of Reuben, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Asher, and Joseph.[64] Also, in *TJos.* 15:2, Joseph is identified as a "son of a mighty man."[65]

***Testament of Abraham.*** This writing uses both "sons of men" and "son of God."[66]

***Testament of Solomon.*** The most frequent use of υἱός plus the genitive in this writing is the phrase "sons of Israel."[67] This author uses a less common singular υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου in *TSol.* A 5:3. In *TSol.* A 15:10, there is a reference to the "son of God." Finally, the author uses a seemingly unique version of the phrase "sons of God" in *TSol.* A 18:16: υἱοὶ Σαβαώθ.

***Martyrdom of Isaiah.*** *MartIs.* 1:3 employs a use of υἱός plus the genitive to

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[63]The phrase τὸν υἱὸν τῆς ἀνομίας occurs in *ApEl.* B 1:2.

[64]For the phrase "sons of men," see *TReu.* 4:7; *TLevi.* 2:4, 3:10, 4:1; *TJud.* 24:1; *TZeb.* 9:7, 8; *TAsh.* 1:3; and *TJos.* 2:5, 5:4.

[65]υἱὸς ἀνδρὸς μεγάλου.

[66]For "sons of men," see *TestAb.* A 2:4, 4:3, 16:6. For "son of God," see *TestAb.* A 12:5.

[67]For "sons of Israel," see *TSol.* A 13:7, 15:14, 25:5, 6, 7.

describe the relationship of individuals to a professional or social group with the phrase υἱοὺς προφητῶν.

*Joseph and Aseneth.* Multiple times in this work, Joseph is described as the "son of God."[68]

*Apocalypse of Moses.* In *ApMos.* 3:2, Cain is characterized as being ὀργῆς υἱός.

*4 Baruch.* Throughout *4 Baruch*, the people are referred to as the "sons of Israel."[69] In *4Bar.* 9:14, Jesus is identified as τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ.[70]

*History of the Rechabites.* In *HistRech.* 5:4, the speaker is afraid because he perceives that he is speaking to a υἱὸς θεοῦ.[71] Later, elders among a crowd are described as being like "sons of God."[72] The author also refers to the "sons of men" on three occasions.[73]

*Prayer of Joseph.* In *PrJos.* 1, the author twice makes reference to the "sons of God."[74]

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[68]See *JosAsen.* 6:2, 6, 21:3.

[69]See *4Bar.* 1:1, 6:16, 9:30.

[70]See also *4Bar.* 9:21 (twice).

[71]See also *HistRech.* 16:2.

[72]*HistRech.* 6:3.

[73]*HistRech.* 8:1, 11:1, 5.

[74]See *PrJos.* 1:6, 7.

**Philo and Josephus**

**Philo.** Philo's works include numerous occurrences of υἱός plus the genitive. The LXX phrase "the sons of Israel" is found throughout his works.[75] He also refers to humanity as both the sons of Adam and also the sons of men.[76] Philo has multiple uses of υἱός with the genitive of θεός.[77] Finally, Philo seems to include two uses of υἱός plus the genitive similar to those which are found in the LXX and NT. In *Her.* 1.52, Philo has the phrase "son of life."[78] In addition, it is possible *Congr.* 1.42 has a figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive. There, the Greek is τῆς δὲ παλλακίδος ταύτης, ἀναμνήσεως, υἱός ἐστι Μαχείρ. Yonge translates Philo here as saying "the son of the concubine recollection is Machir."[79]

**Josephus.** In *Ant.* 8.374, Josephus has the phrase τοὺς τῶν ἡγεμόνων υἱούς. It is unclear whether this phrase should be understood as referring to the literal direct male descendants of τῶν ἡγεμόνων or if it should be taken as a use of υἱός plus the genitive to associate an individual with a particular social group. In *Ant.* 9.68, Joram is characterized as ὁ τοῦ φονέως υἱός. Josephus' phrase is quite similar to Joram's characterization in 2 Kings 6:32 as ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ φονευτοῦ. It is intriguing that Josephus does not include any of the more common "son(s) of" phrases such as "sons of the people," "son(s) of men," or

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[75]See Philo's *Leg.* 2.77, 3.133, 3.212, 3.214; *Sacr.* 1.118 (twice); *Det.* 1.94, *Post.* 1.158; *Deus* 1.145; *Plant.* 1.63; *Conf.* 1.93, 1.148; *Migr.* 1.15, 1.54; *Her.* 1.113, 1.117, 1.124; *Congr.* 1.86; *Mut.* 1.207; *Somn* 1.117; *QE* 2.47.

[76]For "sons of Adam," see *Post.* 1.89, 91; *Plant.* 1.59; *Congr.* 1.58. For "son(s) of man/men," see *Conf.* 1.1, 1.142; *Mos.* 1.283.

[77]See *Deus.* 1.31; *Conf.* 1.145; *Spec.* 1.318.

[78]C. D. Yonge, *The Works of Philo Judaeus* (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854), 2:104. The Greek behind this phrase is ζωῆς υἱὸς however there are intervening words.

[79]Ibid., 2:165.

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"son(s) of God."

## Apostolic Fathers

**Clement of Rome.** In *1 Clem.* 8:3, the author introduces an apparent quotation which includes the phrase τοῖς υἱοῖς τοῦ λαοῦ. Holmes notes that the quotation is "possibly a loose paraphrase of Ezekiel 33, or from an apocryphal work attributed to Ezekiel."[80] Clement also refers to the "sons of men."[81]

*Epistle of Barnabas.* The author instructs his readers to withstand the wicked times as υἱοῖς θεοῦ.[82] Also, as are common uses of υἱός plus the genitive in the NT, he refers to Jesus as both the son of God and the son of man.[83]

*Epistle to Diognetus.* In *Diogn.* 9:4, the author calls Jesus μόνῳ τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ θεοῦ.

**Ignatius.** In his letter to the Ephesians, he refers to Jesus as both the son of God and son of man.[84] Similarly, in his letter to the Romans, Jesus is described as υἱοῦ πατρός.[85]

**Hermas.** In *HermVis.* 3 6.1, Hermas has οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς ἀνομίας. This phrase is

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[80]Michael W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 55n8.3.  Cf. discussion of *ApocEzek.* 2:1 on p. 36 above.

[81]See *1 Clem.* 61:2.

[82]See *Barn.* 4:9.

[83]For "son of God," see *Barn.* 5:9, 11, 7:2 (twice), 9, 12:9. For "son of man," see *Barn.* 12:10.

[84]See *IgnEph.* 20:2. See also "son of God" in *IgnSmyrn.* 1:1.

[85]See *IgnRom.* 1:1.

unique to him among the Apostolic Fathers; however, in its singular form it is present in

both Psalm 88:23 and *ApEl.* B 1:2. Hermas also uses the phrase "son of God" throughout

his writings.[86]

**Polycarp.** Polycarp only uses υἱός plus the genitive once. It is to refer to Jesus

as the son of God.[87]

***Didache.*** Like Polycarp, the author's only significant use of υἱός plus the

genitive is to call Jesus υἱὸς θεοῦ in *Did.* 16:4.

**NT Apocrypha and
Pseudepigrapha**

***Gospel of Thomas.*** A Greek fragment of the *Gospel of Thomas* found in P.Oxy.

1.11-21 describes Jesus having compassion ΤΟΙΣ ŸΟΙΣ ΤΩΝ Α͞Ν͞Ω͞Ν.

***Gospel of Peter.*** The Akhmîm Fragment provides a Greek text of the *Gospel of*

*Peter* which refers to Jesus as υἱὸς θεοῦ four times.[88]

***Protoevangelium of James.*** Throughout the Gospel, the author has the phrase

"the sons of Israel."[89] In *ProtJas.* 11:3, this work includes υἱὸς ὑψίστου in the midst of a

sentence similar to Luke 1:32.

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[86]For "son of God" see *HermSim.* 5 5:2, 5, 6:1; *HermSim.* 8 3:2; *HermSim.* 9 1:1, 12:1, 2, 6, 8, 13:2, 3, 7, 14:5, 15:2, 4, 16:3, 5, 7, 17:1, 4, 18:4, 24:4, 28:2, 3.

[87]*MartPol.* 17:3.

[88]In the text published by Swete, there are two such usages in III and another two in X. See Henry Barclay Swete, *The Akhmîm Fragment of the Apocryphal Gospel of St. Peter* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893).

[89]See *ProtJas.* 1:2, 3:1, 7:2, 9:2, 12:3, 14:1, 15:2, 4, 17:1, 20:2, 23:1.

***Gospel of Nicodemus.*** Multiple times in the course of the work, the author identifies Jesus as the Son of God.[90] In *GNic.* 20:4, the author has the phrase υἱὲ τῆς ἀπωλείας.[91] While it is not a use of υἱός plus the genitive, it is worth noting that the author has the phrase τὰ τέκνα τῶν προφητῶν in *GNic.* 15:1.[92]

***Martyrdom of Peter and Paul.*** The phrase "son of God" is used throughout this work and is composed of a variety of forms.[93]

***Acts of Peter and Paul.*** As is common in these writings, "son of God" is found in multiple passages.[94] In *ActsPetPaul.* 30.1, certain individuals are identified as τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ.

***Acts of Paul and Thecla.*** In *ActsPaulThec.* 6:2, those who receive the wisdom of Jesus Christ are promised that they will be called υἱοὶ ὑψίστου.[95] The same title is applied to Jesus later in *ActsPaulThec.* 29:2. The much more common ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ is used in reference to Jesus in *ActsPaulThec.* 42:2.

***Acts of Andrew.*** In *ActsAndr.* 12:1, as in other writings of this kind, υἱός plus the genitive is used to identify Jesus as the Son of God.[96] The figurative description "son

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[90]See *GNic.* 1:1, 2:5, 4:5, 9:1, 10:1, 18:1 (thrice), 19:1, 20:1.

[91]Cf. Prov 24:22a (LXX); John 17:12; 2 Thes 2:3; *ApPet.* I.2.; *EH* 5.1.48

[92]Deissmann makes note of the similar function of these nouns with genitive modifiers. See Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 161.

[93]See *MarPetPaul.* 14.2, 15.2, 20.1, 26.2, 51.3.

[94]See *ActsPetPaul.* 35.2, 41.1, 47.2, 52.1, 72.3.

[95]*ActsPaulThec.* 6:2.

[96]See *ActsAndr.*

of death" is used in *ActAndr.* 8.6 using the phrase υἱὲ θανάτου.

**Acts of Andrew and Matthew.** This work uses both the phrase "son of God' and "sons of Israel."[97]

**Martyrdom of Bartholomew.** While this work uses the customary phrase "son of God," it also includes two uses of υἱός plus the genitive which occur with much less frequency.[98] Understandably, Jesus is identified as ὁ υἱὸς τῆς παρθένου.[99] To refer to Adam, the author uses the much more original, yet still comprehensible, τὸν υἱὸν τῆς παρθένου γῆς.[100]

**Acts of John.** Jesus is identified with his most frequent NT self-appellation υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου.[101] In addition, the author refers to Jesus as the "son of God."[102]

**Acts of Philip.** As well as employing the common "Son of God," Jesus is also described in this work as ὁ τοῦ ἐπουρανίου θεοῦ υἱός.[103] In *ActsPhil.* 14.5, Philip is said to have been named a son of thunder by the Lord. Later, in *ActsPhil.* 22.2, a contrast is made between Philip who was a υἱὲ βροντῆς but is now a υἱὲ πραότητος.[104] In *ActsPhil.*

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[97]For "Son of God," see *ActsAndrMatt.* 12.1. For "sons of Israel," see *ActsAndrMatt.* 14.1

[98]For "son of God" in *MarBarth.,* see 4.3, 10, 13, 5.14, 6.2.

[99]For "son of the virgin" in *MarBarth.,* see 4.16, 5.5, 6, 7, 17, 6.8.

[100]For "son of the virgin earth" in *MarBarth.,* see 4.16, 5.5, 5.17.

[101]*ActsJohn,* 109.7.

[102]See *ActsJohn* 3.3, 8.3, 9.3, 6.

[103]For "Son of God," see *ActsPhil.* 4.2, 20.2, 35.1, 63.1. For "Son of the heavenly God," see *ActsPhil.* 43.1.

[104]The second υἱὲ is implicit in the text and intervening words have been

109.2, the brothers are described as υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. An individual is described as a τοῦ πονηροῦ υἱός in *ActsPhil.* 110.2. In *ActsPhil.* 123.3, snakes are identified as "the sons of our goddess."[105]

**Acts of Thomas.** The phrase "son of God" is used by the author throughout this work.[106] Uncommon titles for Jesus found in this work are τὸν τῆς ἀληθείας υἱόν in *ActsThom.* 34.7, ὁ τῆς εὐσπλαγχνίας υἱὸς in *ActsThom.* 10.3, and υἱὸς βάθους μονογενής in *ActThom.* 143.4.[107] In *ActsThom.* 66.5, the speaker describes himself as a υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου. Later, the speaker describes his relative as a son of princes and recognizes that he himself is a son of kings.[108] Similarly, Ouzanes is spoken to as a υἱὲ τοῦ κατὰ τὴν γῆν βασιλέως in *ActThom.* 167.1.

**Apocalypse of Paul.** The author of this work uses the common "Son of God" as well as the less common υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος in *ApPaul.* 44.[109] Throughout the work, the author refers to human beings as the "sons of men."[110] He also uses τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ twice in *ApPaul.* 48.

**Apocalypse of John the Theologian.** In *ApJohn.* 16, υἱός plus the genitive is used in the phrase "the sign of the Son of man."

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removed for clarity.

[105]The Greek behind this phrase is τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς θεᾶς ἡμῶν.

[106]See *ActsThom.* 10.3, 32.5, 39.1, 45.9, 60.2, 66.10, 121.3, 136.6, 160.3.

[107]"Son of compassion" is also found in *ActsThom.* 156.5

[108]For "son of princes," see *ActThom.* 109.5. For "son of king(s)," see *ActThom.* 109.10, 110.4, 111.3.

[109]For "son of God," see *ApPaul.* 44 (twice), 48.

[110]For "sons of men," see *ApPaul.* 3, 6 (twice), 7, 10, 14, 43, 51.

***Apocalypse of John Chrysostom.*** In this work, there is an almost exact quotation of the phrase including υἱοὶ Θεοῦ from Matthew 5:9.[111]

***Apocalypse of Peter.*** In the Akhmîm fragment of *ApPet.*, 1.2 has υἱοὶ τῆς ἀπωλείας.[112] There are similar versions of this phrase present in Proverbs 24:22a (LXX), John 17:12, and 2 Thessalonians 2:3. In *ApPet.* 1.3, the phrase τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀνομίας is found.[113]

**Other Early Christian Writings**

**Eusebius.** Eusebius includes a few LXX quotations which contain uses of υἱός plus the genitive. Each of these usages have the phrase "son(s) of man."[114] Eusebius also uses "son of man" in reference to Jesus.[115] He identifies Jesus as the Son of God seven times.[116] In *EH* 4.22.7, he refers to the people as the υἱοῖς Ἰσραηλιτῶν. Finally, he negatively characterizes those who blaspheme the Way and commit apostasy in *EH* 5.1.48 as οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς ἀπωλείας.[117]

**Clement of Alexandria.** In *Protrep.* 8.1, Clement quotes Paul's use of υἱός

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[111]See *Apocalypse of John Chrysostom* 51. For more information on this work see John M. Court, *The Book of Revelation and the Johannine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000).

[112]A transcription of the Akhmîm Fragment of this text can be seen here: Mark Goodacre, "*The Apocalypse of Peter* (Akhmîm Fragment)," NT Blog, accessed February 9, 2016, http://markgoodacre.org/ApocPet.pdf.

[113]See also Ps 88:23; *ApEl.* B 1:2; and *HermVis.* 3 6.1.

[114]*EH* 1.2.25 is a quotation from Dan 7:13, *EH* 9.11.8 is a quotation from Ps 145:3, and *EH* 10.4.8 is a quotation from Ps 44:3.

[115]See *EH* 1.2.26, 2.23.13.

[116]See *EH* 1.13.7, 1.13.15, 2.23.2, 4.15.42, 5.7.3, 7.30.11, 10.4.23.

[117]Cf. Prov 24:22a (LXX); John 17:12; 2 Thes 2:3; and *ApPet.* I.2.

plus the genitive from Ephesians 2.2. In *Protrep.* 27.3, he juxtaposes οἱ τῆς ἀνομίας υἱοί with υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ. Clement also identifies people as "sons of God" in *Protrep.* 92.3 and *What Rich Man is Saved?* 29.1.[118] In both *What Rich Man is Saved?* and *To the Newly Baptized*, he identifies Jesus as the Son of God using υἱός plus the genitive.[119] In *Protrep.* 98.4, Clement describes Jesus in a seemingly unique manner using the phrase υἱὸς τοῦ νοῦ γνήσιος. Wilson translates this construction as "the genuine Son of Mind."[120] It would seem that Clement is here using υἱός plus the genitive to provide a positive characterization of Jesus. Finally, in *Strom.* 5.10.63, Clement attributes a quote to an unknown Gospel which has the phrase τοῖς υἱοῖς τοῦ οἴκου μου. The attributed speaker in this text is Jesus and he would seem to be figuratively characterizing his followers as sons of his house.

**Justin Martyr.** Justin has constructions using υἱός plus the genitive both that appear to be original to his work and also from biblical quotations. With many other Christian writers, he identifies Jesus as the Son of God.[121] Similarly, he refers to the "son(s) of Jupiter" using various forms of υἱός plus Διός.[122] Justin ascribes to Jesus four additional descriptions using υἱός plus the genitive. In *Dial. Trypho* 48.2, Jesus is called

[118]See also *Protrep.* 123.1 where Clement has υἱοὶ ὑψίστου in a LXX quotation from Ps 81:6.

[119]See *What Rich Man is Saved?* 12.1 and *To the Newly Baptized* 1.6.

[120]Clement of Alexandria, "Exhortation to the Heathen," trans. William Wilson, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* ed. A. Cleveland Coxe, Alexander Roberts, and James Donaldson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 2:199.

[121]See *Apol.* 12.9, 22.1 (twice), 30.1, 31.7, 54.7 (twice), 60.1, 63.10, 14, *Dial. Trypho* 23.2, 43.1, 45.4, 85.2, 100.4, 5, 101.3, 102.7, 103.8, 108.2, 113.4, 116.2, 117.3, 118.2, 126.1, 128.1, 132.1, 137.2.

[122]See *Apol.* 21.1, 4, 22.3, 53.1, 54.6, 55.1, 64.6, *Dial. Trypho* 69.2.

υἱὸς τοῦ ποιητοῦ τῶν ὅλων. In a similar construction in *Dial. Trypho* 115.4, he refers to

him as υἱοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν ὅλων. Jesus is called the Son of the patriarchs in *Dial.*

*Trypho* 100.2. Finally, in *Dial. Trypho* 126.2, the phrase τοῦ μόνου καὶ ἀγεννήτου καὶ

ἀρρήτου θεοῦ υἱόν is applied to Jesus. Dods and Reith offer the following translation of

this last phrase: "Son of the only, unbegotten, unutterable God."[123] In addition to these

phrases, Justin includes twenty-six uses of υἱός plus the genitive which are quotations

from biblical texts. These occurrences are shown in table 3.

As table 3 shows, Justin almost always mirrors the text of the LXX or Greek

NT. In only three instances does he deviate from the LXX. In *Dial. Trypho* 131.1, he

quotes Deuteronomy 32.8 where the LXX translator opted for ἀγγέλων θεοῦ, even though

the MT has בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. Thus, he seems to correct what may be an avoidance of υἱός plus

the genitive by the LXX translator.[124] In *Dial. Trypho* 13.4, Justin quotes Isaiah 53.3. He

supplies a construction using υἱός plus the genitive when neither the MT has בֵּן nor the

LXX has υἱός. The same phenomenon occurs at *Dial. Trypho* 87.6 where he quotes Psalm

67.19. Again, neither the MT nor the LXX have a corresponding "son(s) of" construction.

**Epiphanius.** Winer notes that Epiphanius uses the phrase οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς ἀληθινῆς

πίστεως.[125] However, Epiphanius employs a host of various uses of υἱός plus the genitive:

sons of Israel, sons of truth, sons of men, sons of the Father, sons of the holy church of

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[123]Justin Martyr, "Dialogue with Trypho, A Jew," trans. Marcus Dods and George Reith, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* ed. A. Cleveland Coxe, Alexander Roberts, and James Donaldson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 1:199.

[124]See Thackeray, *Grammar*, 41. He notes that the Hexateuch generally avoids υἱός plus the genitive.

[125]G. B. Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek: Regarded as a Sure Basis for New Testament Exegesis*, trans. W. F. Moulton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1882), 299.

Table 3. Justin's quotations of biblical uses of υἱός plus the genitive

| Reference | Phrase | Reference | Phrase |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Apol.* 33.5 | υἱὸς ὑψίστου | Luke 1:32 | υἱὸς ὑψίστου |
| *Apol.* 35.11 | υἱὸν ὑποζυγίου | Matt 21.5 | υἱὸν ὑποζυγίου |
| *Apol.* 51.9 | υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου | Dan 7:13 | υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου |
| *Dial. Trypho* 13.4 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων | Is 53:3 | πάντας ἀνθρώπους |
| *Dial. Trypho* 31.1, 3 | υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου | Dan 7:13 | υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου |
| *Dial. Trypho* 34.3 | τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ βασιλέως | Ps 71:1 | τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ βασιλέως |
| *Dial. Trypho* 34.3 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν πενήτων | Ps 71:4 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν πενήτων |
| *Dial. Trypho* 38.3 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων | Ps 44:3 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων |
| *Dial. Trypho* 59.2 | οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ | Exod 2:23 | οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ |
| *Dial. Trypho* 61.4 | υἱοῖς ἀνθρώπων | Prov 8:31 | υἱοῖς ἀνθρώπων |
| *Dial. Trypho* 64.6 | τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ βασιλέως | Ps 71:1 | τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ βασιλέως |
| *Dial. Trypho* 64.6 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν πενήτων | Ps 71:4 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν πενήτων |
| *Dial. Trypho* 76.4 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας | Matt 8:12 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας |
| *Dial. Trypho* 76.7 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | Mark 8:31 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου |
| *Dial. Trypho* 79.2 | υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου | Dan 7:13 | υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου |
| *Dial. Trypho* 81.1 | ὁ νέος υἱὸς ἑκατὸν ἐτῶν | Is 65:20 | ὁ νέος υἱὸς ἑκατὸν ἐτῶν |
| *Dial. Trypho* 86.6 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν προφητῶν | 4 Kgs 6:1 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν προφητῶν |
| *Dial. Trypho* 87.6 | τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων | Ps 67.19 | ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ |
| *Dial. Trypho* 100.3 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | Mark 8:31 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου |
| *Dial. Trypho* 120.6 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας | Matt 8:12 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας |
| *Dial. Trypho* 122.1 | υἱοὶ γεέννης | Matt 23:15 | υἱὸν γεέννης |
| *Dial. Trypho* 124.1-3 | υἱοὶ ὑψίστου | Ps 81:6 | υἱοὶ ὑψίστου |
| *Dial. Trypho* 127.1 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων | Gen 11:5 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων |
| *Dial. Trypho* 131.1 | υἱοὺς Ἀδάμ | Deut 32:8 | υἱοὺς Ἀδάμ |
| *Dial. Trypho* 131.1 | υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ | Deut 32:8 | ἀγγέλων θεοῦ |
| *Dial. Trypho* 140.4 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας | Matt 8:12 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας |

God, sons of the devil, sons of God, sons of the day, and sons of the Most High.[126]

**Classical Greek Writings**

**Apollonius Rhodius.** In *Argon.* 4.1383, the author uses the phrase υἷες ἀνάκτων. Seaton translates this phrase as "sons of kings."[127]

**Aristophanes.** In *Peace* 1.1291, Trygaeus says the following to the son of Lamachus: "Oh! oh! I could indeed have sworn, when I was listening to you, that you were the son of some warrior, who dreams of nothing but wounds and bruises, of some Bulomachus of Clausimachus."[128] In the Greek, the explicit "son of" phrase is κλαυσιμάχου τινὸς υἱός.[129] LSJM explains that there is a word play here: the word κλαυσιμάχου means "rue-the-fight" and is a parody of the name Lamachus which means "ready-for-fight."[130] Thus, it would seem that Aristophanes is using this wordplay featuring υἱός plus the genitive to characterize negatively the son of Lamachus. Similarly, in *Frogs* 1.22, he characterizes an individual as a drunkard by calling him "son of Wine-

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[126]These are all found in Epiphanius, *Panarion*, Thesaurus Linguae Graecae, accessed December 9, 2014, http://www.tlg.uci.edu/. For sons of Israel, see 1.190.14, 2.247.24, 2.396.8, 2.397.3, 3.430.28. For sons of truth, see 1.365.23, 2.299.2, 2.349.9, 3.105.13, 3.377.6, 3.411.3. For sons of men, see 1.375.13. For sons of the Father, see 2.66.31, 2.67.26. For sons of the holy church of God, see 2.378.9, 3.97.28, 3.211.22, 3.497.12. For sons of the devil, see 3.101.18, 3.101.22, 3.103.5. For sons of God see 3.167.21, 3.167.23, 3.263.26, 3.274.11, 3.285.10. For sons of the day, see 3.192.2. For sons of the Most High, see 3.324.20

[127]Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*, LCL 001, trans. R. C. Seaton (London: William Heinemann, 1912), 389.

[128]Aristophanes, *Peace*, trans. Eugene O'Neill, Jr., Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0019.tlg005.perseus-eng1:1270-1297.

[129]For the Greek text, see Aristophanes, *Peace*, ed. F. W. Hall and W. M. Geldart, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0019.tlg005.perseus-grc1:1270-1297.

[130]See LSJM, s.v. "κλαυσίμαχος."

jar" using υἱὸς Σταμνίου.[131]

**Aristotle.** He uses the phrase οἱ τῶν βασιλέων υἱεῖς in *Pol.* 3.1227a and οἱ τῶν ἀρχόντων υἱοὶ in *Pol.* 5.1310a.[132] These uses of υἱός plus the genitive do not necessarily refer to the literal genetic descendants of kings and rulers. Instead, they may figuratively identify these individuals as members of a specific social group.

**Athenaeus.** Athenaeus has two uses of υἱός plus the genitive worth highlighting here. First, in *Deipnosophistae* 3.4, he has the phrase γαίης ἐρικυδέος υἱόν.[133] This phrase is also found in Homer's *Odyssey* 11.576. Yonge translates this phrase as "son of the all-glorious Earth."[134] In *Deipnosophistae* 3.77, Athenaeus quotes a poem written by the epicure Archestratus about flour and rolls. In it, he uses the phrase σεμιδάλεος υἱὸν. Yonge glosses this phrase as "son of finest flour."[135]

**Demosthenes.** While Demosthenes' use of υἱός in *Against Boeotus 2* 27 appears to be merely an example of genetic identification, it is conveyed using υἱός plus

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[131]For the Greek text, see Aristophanes, *Frogs*, ed. F. W. Hall and W. M. Geldart, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0019.tlg009.perseus-grc1:1-37. This example is cited in *NIDOTTE* as well.

[132]For the Greek text, see Aristotle, *Politics*, ed. W. D. Ross, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0086.tlg035.perseus-grc1:3.1277a.

[133]For the Greek text, Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae,* ed. Georg Kaibel, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0008.tlg001.perseus-grc2:3.4.

[134]Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists*, trans. C. D. Yonge, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0008.tlg001.perseus-eng1:3.4.

[135]See ibid., 3.77

the genitive in an apparently stylistic manner: τὸν τῆς τεθνεώσης υἱὸν.[136]

**Diodorus Siculus.** In *Library* 17.93, the qualification and characterization aspects of genealogy in the ancient world are clearly seen when a certain king is said to be "an utterly common and undistinguished character."[137] This description is ascribed to him because he was thought to be a son of a barber. The Greek phrase is κουρέως υἱὸν.[138]

**Dionysius of Halicarnassus.** In *AntRom.* 4.64, it seems that he uses υἱός plus the genitive to describe figuratively the relationship between a student and his teacher or to identify this individual as a member of a professional or social group. The Greek phrase is ὁ τοῦ μάντεως υἱός.[139] Cary translates this phrase as "the soothsayer's son" but in the same passage there is a reference to the "prodigy to the soothsayer."[140] In *AntRom.* 13.1, he identifies members of a higher social class using the phrase τοὺς υἱεῖς τῶν εὐγενεστάτων. Cary provides "the sons of the most prominent families" as a translation.[141]

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[136]Demosthenes, *Private Orations 27-40*, LCL 318, trans. A. T. Murray (London: William Heinemann, 1936), 500.

[137]Diodorus Siculus, *Library*, trans. C. H. Oldfather, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0060.tlg001.perseus-eng1:17.93.

[138]For the Greek text, see Diodorus Siculus, *Library*, ed. C. H. Oldfather, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0060.tlg001.perseus-grc3:17.93.

[139]For the Greek text, see Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Antiquities Romanae Books I-XX*, ed. Karl Jacoby, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0081.tlg001.perseus-grc1:4.61.1.

[140]Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *The Roman Antiquities*, LCL, trans. Earnest Cary (London: William Heinemann, 1939), 2:461.

[141]Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *The Roman Antiquities*, LCL, trans. Earnest Cary (London: William Heinemann, 1950), 7:239.

**Euripides.** Both in Danker's article and in BDAG, attention is drawn to the similarity between the use of υἱός plus the genitive and the use of θυγάτηρ plus the genitive in *Hec.* 425.[142] There the phrase is ὦ τῆς ἀώρου θύγατερ ἀθλίας τύχης.[143] Buckley translates this phrase as "O daughter of an untimely and unhappy fate."[144]

**Herodotus.** In *Hist.* 8.77.1, Herodotus has the phrase ὕβριος υἱόν.[145] Godley translates the phrase as "son of insolence."[146]

**Homer.** *The Iliad* 16.449 has the following use of υἱός plus the genitive: υἱέες ἀθανάτων.[147] This construction is quite similar, albeit opposite in meaning, to υἱὸς θανάτου which is found in the LXX.[148] *The Odyssey* 11.576 has the phrase Γαίης ἐρικυδέος υἱόν which is also found in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*.[149]

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[142]Deissmann also says "W. Schulze has also directed the author's attention to the υἱὸς τύχης in the Tragedians, and *filius fortunae* in Horace." Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 166.

[143]For the Greek text, see Euripides, *Hecuba*, ed. Gilbert Murray, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0006.tlg007.perseus-grc1:402-443.

[144]Euripides, *The Tragedies*, trans. Theodore A. Buckley (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853), 10.

[145]For the Greek text, see Herodotus, *The Histories*, ed. A. D. Godley, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0016.tlg001.perseus-grc1:8.77.1.

[146]Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. A. D. Godley, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0016.tlg001.perseus-eng1:8.77.1.

[147]For the Greek text, see Homer, *The Iliad*, ed. T. W. Allen, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0012.tlg001.perseus-grc1:16.439-16.476.

[148]For "son(s) of death" in the LXX see 1 Sam 20:31, 26:16; 2 Sam 12:5; Ps 78:11, 101:21.

[149]For the Greek text, see Homer, *The Odyssey*, ed. A. T. Murray, Perseus Digital Library, accessed April 4, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0012.tlg002.perseus-grc1:11.567-11.600.

**Julian the Emperor.** In *Contra Galilaeos*, Julian has the following phrases using υἱός plus the genitive: "sons of men," "sons of Israel," "son(s) of God," and "sons of Adam."[150] However, these phrases are clearly dependent upon biblical texts.

**Maximus of Tyre.** In his *Dissertationes* 2.5.17, he has the phrase τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θανάτου.[151]

**Menander.** Danker highlights Menander's use of υἱός plus the genitive in his article on these phrases.[152] Danker provides the following phrase from Menander's *Dyscolos* as recovered in P Bodmer IV: υἱὸς ὀδύνης. Danker correctly assesses that this phrase represents a significant parallel to the phrases in John 17:12, 2 Thessalonians 2:3, and Ephesians 5:6.[153]

**Plato.** While Plato does not have any significant constructions using υἱός plus the genitive, Deissmann highlights his similar use of ἔκγονος. He cites ἔκγονα τῆς ζωγραφίας from *Phaedr.* and ἔκγονος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ from *Rep.*[154] Similar examples from Plato are πολλῶν ἑτέρων τεχνῶν ἔκγονον in *Statesmen* 288d, ἔκγονον ὕβρεως in *Laws* 3.691c, and ἐκγόνοις μὲν θεῶν in *Timaeus* 40d.

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[150]For the Greek text see Julian the Emperor, *Contra Galilaeos*, ed. Wilmer Cave Wright, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg2003.tlg017.perseus-grc1:39a. For "sons of men," see *CG* 134d, 134e. For "sons of Israel," see *CG* 160e, 171e, 299c. For "son(s) of God," see *CG* 262d, 290c, 290d, 290e. For "sons of Adam," see *CG* 346e.

[151]For the Greek text, see Maximus Soph., *Dissertationes*, Thesaurus Linguae Graecae, accessed December 8, 2014, http://www.tlg.uci.edu/.

[152]Frederick W. Danker, "The υἱός Phrases in the New Testament," *New Testament Studies* 7, no. 1 (1960), 94.

[153]Ibid.

[154]Deissmann, *Bible Studies,* 165.

**Plutarch.** In Plutarch's *Regum.* 82, he identifies Pompey as the son of a flute player using υἱὸς αὐλητοῦ.[155]

**Polybius.** In *Hist.* 36.4, Polybius uses υἱός plus the genitive to identify certain individuals as members of a professional or social group. He uses the phrase τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἐκ τῆς συγκλήτου καὶ τῆς γερουσίας.[156] Shuckburgh translates this construction as "sons of members of the Hundred or the Senate."[157]

**Procopius.** In *de Bellis* 4.10, he uses the phrase γῆς υἱὸν which would appear to be translated as "son of earth."[158]

## Inscriptions and Coins

Deissmann writes that "in the impressive style of speech on inscriptions and coins we find υἱός in a number of formal titles of honour such as υἱὸς τῆς γερουσίας, υἱὸς τῆς πόλεως, υἱὸς τοῦ δήμου, υἱὸς Ἀφροδισιέων."[159]

**υἱοῦ πόλεως.** Sterrett found this inscription on a large round pedestal in a cemetery. He writes that "Waddington places this inscription in the last years of Nero's

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[155]For the Greek text, see Plutarch, *Regum et Imperatorum Apophthegmata*, ed. Frank Cole Babbitt, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0007.tlg081.perseus-grc1:82.

[156]For the Greek text, see Polybius, *Histories*, ed. Theodorus Büttner-Wobst and L. Dindorf, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0543.tlg001.perseus-grc1:36.4.

[157]Polybius, *Histories*, trans. Evelyn S. Shuckburgh, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0543.tlg001.perseus-eng1:36.4.

[158]For the Greek text, see Procopius, *de Bellis*, ed. Henry Bronson Dewing, Perseus Digital Library, accessed February 9, 2016, http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg4029.tlg001.perseus-grc1:4.10.

[159]Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 166.

reign, about 54 AD."[160] Moulton-Milligan notes that this inscription was also found at Magnesia.[161] Moulton-Milligan lists this occurrence of the inscription as υἱὸς τῆς πόλεως; however, it is missing the definite article as in the occurrence found by Sterrett and Waddington.[162] Waddington makes note of this phrase on a coin honoring Emperor Trajan. He writes that it can mean that an individual has been adopted by a city, is a distinguished citizen worthy of honor, or perhaps refer to the children of those who died in service to their country.[163] A very similar expression is found in a reconstruction suggested by Bosch: υἱὸν τῆς μητροπόλεως.[164] This phrase is quite common in inscriptions.[165]

**υἱὸς δήμου.** This inscription is also quite common. It has been found at Bargylia, Cos, Iasos, Smyrna, and other locations.[166]

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[160]J. R. Sitlington Sterret, *An Epigraphical Journey in Asia Minor,* Papers of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, vol. 2 (Boston: Damrell and Upham, 1888), 6.

[161]James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1930), 649.

[162]See Otto Kern, *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Mäander* (Berlin: W. Spemann, 1900), 122.

[163]W. H. Waddington, *Voyage en Asie-Mineure au Point de Vue Numismatique* (Paris: Au Bureau de la Revue Numismatique, 1853), 44.

[164]See no. 263, Emin Bosch, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Ankara im Altertum* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1967), 325.

[165]See *IG V,1* 65, *IG V,1* 551, *IG VII* 106, *CID* 4:139, *CID* 4:140, *FD* III 3:181, *SIG³* 813B, *EKM* 1 119, *IG X,2 2* 53, *IGBulg.1[2]* 114, *IScM I* 207, *IScM II* 103, *I.Kition* 2039. This list is not exhaustive.

[166]See *Bargylia* 1, SbBerlin (1901.1) 483.4, *Iscr. di Cos* EV 219, *Iasos* 226, *Smyrna* 99.

**υἱὸν βουλῆς δήμου γερουσίας.** This was found at Pamphylia.[167] A very similar

inscription was found in the Aegean Islands: υἱοῦ τῆς βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ δήμου.[168]

**υἱὸς τῆς πατρίδος.** Kern provides an example of this phrase from an

inscription found in Magnesia from the time of Vespasian.[169]

**υἱοῦ πόλεως καὶ γερουσίας, ευεργέτα τᾶς πατρίδος.** Paton and Hicks

highlight three inscriptions that contain this identical phrase which employs υἱός plus the

genitive.[170]

**υἱος θεοῦ.** In *IG XII,3*.174.2, the Emperor uses this phrase to refer to

himself.[171] The phrase is also present in the inscriptions found at Knidos.[172] An analogous

phrase is found in MAMA VII, no. 579: υἱὸς Δίου διακόνου.[173] Similarly, in *TAM V,2*,

Caesar is referred to as Ἀρτέμωνος υἱός.[174]

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[167]*BCH* 7 (1883) 263,5.

[168]*IG XII*,6 1:310.

[169]Kern, *Die Inschriften*, 125. This inscription is also cited in Moulton-Milligan and BDAG.

[170]W. R. Paton and E. L. Hicks, *The Inscriptions of Cos* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), 132-33. This work is cited is Deissmann as well.

[171]*IG XII*,3 174, The Packard Humanities Institute: Searchable Greek Inscriptions, accessed December 8, 2014, http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions/main?url=oi%3Fikey%3D75685. This inscription is also referenced in both LSJM and Moulton-Milligan.

[172]IK Knidos I 42, IK Knidos I 44.

[173]MAMA VII, no. 579, The Packard Humanities Institute: Searchable Greek Inscriptions, accessed December 8, 2014, http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions/main?url=oi%3Fikey%3D266939.

[174]*TAM V,2*, 902, The Packard Humanities Institute: Searchable Greek Inscriptions, accessed December 8, 2014, http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions/main?url=oi%3Fikey%3D264332.

τοὺς υἱοὺς τοῦ θεοῦ. This phrase is used to refer to the students of

Asclepius.[175]

υἱοὶ λαοῦ. Keil and von Premerstein's journeys yielded this phrase on an

inscription found near modern Ideli.[176]

υἱὸν Ἑλλάδος. Dittenberg writes that this term has a similar meaning and

function to υἱὸς τοῦ δήμου.[177]

**Papyri and Ostraca**

υἱὸς θεοῦ. Moulton-Milligan notes that this phrase is used in the papyri to

refer to the Emperor.[178] BGU II 543.3 is dated around 27 BC and has the phrase Θεοῦ

υἱὸν.[179] The phrase in this same word order is found in P.Tebt. II 382.21.[180] P.Grenf. II

40.4, from AD 9, has θεοῦ υἱοῦ.[181]

**Miscellaneous phrases.** P.Lond. 6.1915 has the phrase υἱοὶ τοῦ οὐρανίου

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[175]*SIG³* 1169, 12. It is also cited in BDAG, s.v. υἱός.

[176]See J. Keil and A. von Premerstein, *Bericht über eine dritte Reise*, DenkschrWien 57.1 (Vienna: A. Hölder, 1914), no. 78.

[177]*SIG³* 854, 2. Cf. ibid., n. 8. This phrase is also cited in *NIDOTTE*, 671.

[178]In addition to the examples discussed below, see P.Heid. 7.396, BGU I 174.2, P.Oxy. 22.2338.45, P.Adl. 7.3,

[179]For the Greek text, see BGU II 543.3, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/bgu;2;543. This example was also cited in Moulton-Milligan.

[180]For the Greek text, see P.Tebt. II 382.21, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.tebt;2;382. This example was also cited in Moulton-Milligan.

[181]For the Greek text, see P.Grenf. II 40.4, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.grenf;2;40. This example was also cited in Moulton-Milligan.

πατρὸς ἡμῶν which is likely dependent upon the similar saying from Matthew 5:45.[182] O.

Kellis 179 has only the following phrase: υἱὸς τῆς τρόφου.[183] It seems that this phrase is

identifying an individual as a son of the nurse. P.Cair.Masp. 2.67147 has the phrase τῶν

υἱῶν τοῦ μελισσέως.[184] Here, a group of individuals are being identified as sons of the

beekeeper. It is unclear whether they are actual genetic descendants or are instead being

figuratively identified as members of this group. P.Cair.Masp. 1.67058 Kol. 8 seems to

have a reference to the son of the keeper of records with the phrase υἱὸς τοῦ ἀκτοαρίου.[185]

The phrase ὡς υἱὸς τῶν ληστόρων in SB 1.4309 appears to be referring to a son of

plundering.[186] P.Oxy. 49.3471 has the phrase υἱοὶ ἱερέων καὶ ἱεροεθνῶν which refers to

the sons of priests and priestly stock.[187] There is a reference to τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ βασιλικοῦ in

P.Sarap. 80.[188] Finally, due to the degradation of the text, it is unclear whether the phrase

υἱῷ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας in CPR 8.22 represents a use of υἱός plus the genitive which

would closely parallel similar uses in the NT.[189]

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[182]For the Greek text, see P.Lond. 6.191, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.lond;6;1915.

[183]O.Kellis 179, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/o.kell;;179.

[184]P.Cair.Masp. 2.67147, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.cair.masp;2;67147.

[185]P.Cair.Masp. 1.67058 Kol. 8, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.cair.masp;1;67058.

[186]SB 1.4309, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/sb;1;4309. LSJM has this occurrence listed under λῃΐς.

[187]P.Oxy. 49.3471, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.oxy;49;3471.

[188]P.Sarap. 80, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/p.sarap;;80. LSJM glosses as royal or kingly, s.v. βασιλεύς.

[189]CPR 8.22, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/cpr;8;22.

## Conclusion

This survey shows that υἱός plus the genitive is used in a variety of "son(s) of" phrases, some more common than others, in both documents with clear Semitic influence and also documents which do not have direct Semitic influence. Moulton, Deissmann, and Danker were correct to recognize that this construction is by no means "un-Greek" because their examples represent merely a small fraction of this phrase's usage outside the biblical texts. In the next chapter, the use of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT will be examined and categorized.

CHAPTER 3

A SURVEY OF THE USE OF ΥΙΟΣ IN THE GREEK NT

**Introduction**

The figurative use "son(s) of" in the NT is found in phrases which are

constructed using υἱός plus the genitive. As a result, this chapter will seek to provide an

exhaustive survey of how the noun υἱός is used in the NT. As was mentioned in chapter 1,

υἱός is used 377 times in the Greek NT. In nearly 80 percent of these occurrences, υἱός is

found with a genitive modifier.[1] In order to understand the figurative use of υἱός plus the

genitive, it will be helpful to consider these uses against the more typical usage of the

word by the NT authors. The occurrences of υἱός will be considered below and grouped

according to the author and then categorized further for clarity.

**Matthew–Introduction**

The Gospel of Matthew contains 89 uses of υἱός. This number accounts for just

under 24 percent of all the occurrences of υἱός in the Greek NT. Matthew has the highest

number of uses of υἱός in the Greek NT.[2] Seventy-eight of Matthew's 89 uses of υἱός

include a genitive modifier. Thus, his Gospel employs υἱός plus the genitive at a

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[1]In 301 out of 377 occurrences, υἱός is found with a genitive modifier.

[2]While Matthew does have the highest number of uses of υἱός, 1 John, 2 John, and Galatians have a higher frequency of occurrences of υἱός with respect to their overall word counts. First John has 22 occurrences of υἱός out of 2141 words, 2 John has 2 occurrences of υἱός out of 245 words, Galatians has 13 occurrences of υἱός out of 2230, while Matthew has 89 occurrences of υἱός out of 18346 words.

relatively high frequency. These uses will be discussed below and grouped according to whether they occur with or without a genitive modifier. Then, the occurrences of υἱός with a genitive modifier will be further subdivided into the following three groups: (1) genetic identification, (2) messianic, (3) and figurative uses.[3]

## Matthew–Υἱός without the Genitive

As mentioned above, there are only 11 occurrences of υἱός without a genitive modifier in Matthew's Gospel. In Matthew 1:21, 1:23, and 1:25, υἱός is used to refer to the male child to which Mary will give birth. While this occasion certainly represents atypical circumstances, it is safe to assume that υἱός is being used here according to its normal usage of referring to a direct male descendant. In Matthew 10:37, Jesus uses υἱός to refer to the male children in a family. It is used alongside of θυγάτηρ here. Similarly, in Matthew 21:38, Jesus uses υἱός in a parable to refer to the direct male descendant and heir of a vineyard owner. Matthew 17:26 contains a use of υἱός which might be best categorized as υἱός plus an implicit genitive since it is referring back to the sons of kings in 17:25. Finally, there are the uses of υἱός in Matthew 11:27 (3), 24:36, and 28:19, where it is used to refer to Jesus as the Son. Like Matthew 17:26, in these cases it would seem that τοῦ θεοῦ is an implicit genitive modifier.

## Matthew–Υἱός with the Genitive

### Genetic Identification.

Fifteen of the 78 uses of υἱός plus the genitive in Matthew fall into this category. Here, the focus of the writer is on identifying individuals on the basis of

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[3]These categories will be explained in the course of this chapter. In addition, the figurative use will be the focus of chap. 5.

genealogy. Many of these uses contain subtle nuances informed from the ancient world's understanding of the father-son relationship. These nuances will be discussed in chapter 4.

**Using proper nouns.** In Matthew 1:20, Joseph is identified as a genetic descendant of David. In Matthew 20:20, 26:37, 27:56, James and John are distinguished from any other James and any other John by being genetically linked with their father, Zebedee. Finally, in Matthew 23:35, Zechariah is genetically identified as the υἱοῦ Βαραχίου.[4]

**Using pronouns.** Most often, pronouns in the genitive case modify υἱός simply to provide a more specific form of genetic identification. Thus, the mother of James and John refers to υἱοί μου in Matthew 20:21 and Matthew describes them as τῶν υἱῶν αὐτῆς in Matthew 20:20. Jesus directs people to consider how any father would treat his own son in Matthew 7:9. A father beseeches Jesus to have mercy on μου τὸν υἱόν in Matthew 17:15. Similar uses are found in Matthew 17:25, 21:37, and 22:2.

**Other uses.** In Matthew 13:55, Jesus is relationally identified not with his adoptive father by name, but instead with his adoptive father by his profession. There he is called ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός. In Matthew 21:5, there is a case of non-human genetic identification. The phrase υἱὸν ὑποζυγίου is used to refer to the foal of a donkey.

**Messianic**

As would be expected from a Gospel, 53 of the 78 uses of υἱός plus the

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[4]For the interpretive issues related to this name, see W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew,* ICC (New York: T. & T. Clark, 1997), 3:318.

genitive in Matthew are found in this category. Under this category of uses, Jesus is identified with various titles and attributions which uniquely relate to him as God's Messiah.

**Son of Abraham.** In the first verse of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is identified as one who is qualified to inherit God's promises to Abraham. Matthew does this by calling him a υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ.

**Son of David**. Not only is Jesus identified as one who is qualified to inherit God's promises to Abraham, but Matthew also identifies him as υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ in Matthew 1:1. Jesus is identified as the Son of David 8 times in Matthew. The phrase is always applied to him by others.[5]

**Son of God.** Jesus is identified as the Son of God 9 times in Matthew's Gospel. Like the phrase υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ, θεοῦ υἱός is always a title that is attributed to Jesus by others. It is particularly intriguing that it is more often on the lips of those opposed to him than those of his followers.[6]

**Son of Man.** This title is, by far, the most common phrase in this category. It occurs 30 times in Matthew's Gospel which make up about one third of all the occurrences of υἱός in his Gospel. While the phrases υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ and θεοῦ υἱός are always ascribed to Jesus by others, this phrase is only used by Jesus to refer to himself.[7] This

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[5] See Matt. 1:1, 9:27, 12:23, 15:22, 20:30, 31, 21:9, 15.

[6] See Matt 4:3, 6, 8:29, 14:33, 16:16, 26:63, 27:40, 43, 54.

[7] See Matt 8:20, 9:6, 10:23, 11:19, 12:8, 32, 40, 13:37, 41, 16:13, 27, 28, 17:9, 12, 22, 19:28, 20:18, 28, 24:27, 30 (twice), 37, 39, 44, 25:31, 26:2, 24 (twice), 45, 64.

tendency in the interchanges between Jesus and the disciples in 16:13-16 and Jesus and the high priest in 26:63-64 is particularly interesting. In the first case, Jesus asks the disciples a question regarding himself with τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου and Peter answers with ὁ υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ. In the second case, the high priest asks Jesus a question using ὁ υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ and Jesus answers using τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

**Using pronouns.** The most common use in this category is when God the Father refers to Jesus using ὁ υἱός μου and similar phrases in Matthew 2:15, 3:17, and 17:5. In Matthew 22:42 and 22:45, the phrases τίνος υἱός and υἱός αὐτοῦ are used by Jesus to refer to the Son of David in his dialogue with the Pharisees.[8]

## Figurative Uses

Finally, there are those uses of υἱός in Matthew which are of a figurative nature and have prompted the present work. These occurrences account for 10 of the 78 uses of υἱός plus the genitive in Matthew's Gospel. It is these uses which are the focus of later chapters.

**Sons of God.** In Matthew 5.9, those who are peacemakers are promised that they will be called υἱοὶ θεοῦ. The peacemakers are not being promised that they become literal genetic descendants of God but rather they are figuratively promised that they will enjoy a relationship with him similar to that of a father with a son.[9] Similarly, in Matthew 5:45, Jesus exhorts his followers to love their enemies and pray for their persecutors so that they may be υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν ἐν οὐρανοῖς.

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[8]These usages are the closest Jesus comes to identifying himself as the Son of David in Matthew's Gospel.

[9]Naturally, there may be a hint or glimpse of adoption present in the text.

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**Sons of the kingdom.** This phrase is used in both Matthew 8:12 and 13:38; however, it refers to two distinct groups. In Matthew 8:12, Jesus applies it ironically to refer to those who should have been included in the kingdom of God but who are in fact excluded. In Matthew 13:38, Jesus, in explaining a parable, uses this phrase to refer to those who belong to God's kingdom. In both cases, οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας is used figuratively to identify those individuals that are, or should be, in a relationship with God's kingdom that is similar to the father-son relationship.

**Sons of the bridal chamber.** In Matthew 9:15, Jesus uses the phrase οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος to identify the wedding guests. Clearly, these individuals are not the literal descendants of the bridegroom. Instead, they are figuratively described as the sons of the bridal chamber.[10]

**Sons of the Pharisees.** The phrase "sons of the Pharisees" does not occur in Matthew's Gospel. However, by referring to οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν in his dialogue with the Pharisees in Matthew 12:27, the phrase has this meaning. While it is certainly possible, that Jesus is referring to the literal, direct male descendants of those to whom he is speaking who also happen to cast out demons, it seems much more likely that Matthew is conveying Jesus' words to the reader using a common figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive to describe the relationship between students and their teachers, to identify an individual as a member of an academic, professional, or social group, or to refer generally to their kinsmen as the sons of Israel.[11]

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[10]See the discussion of this phrase in chap. 5.

[11]For an argument that "your sons" refers to the disciples, see Robert Shirock "Whose Exorcists Are They? The Referents of οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν at Matthew 12.27/Luke 11.19," *JSNT* 46 (1992): 41-51. See p. 128n2.

**Sons of the evil one.** In Matthew 13:38, in the same parable where Jesus identifies the good seed as οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας, he identifies the weeds as οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ. It is particularly interesting that it is human beings who are being figuratively identified as sons of the evil one rather than demons or fallen angels who are also mentioned in this passage.

**Son of hell.** A similar phrase to οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ is υἱὸν γεέννης in Matthew 23:15. Here, Jesus identifies the converts of the scribes and Pharisees as children of hell. In addition, he forms a comparative statement which also identifies the scribes and Pharisees as children of hell themselves. This figurative identification highlights the relationship the scribes and Pharisees have with γέεννα.

**Sons of those who murdered the prophets.** While Jesus could certainly know whether or not those to whom he was speaking were literal descendants of ancestors who murdered prophets, it is much more likely that he is figuratively identifying the scribes and Pharisees with the phrase υἱοὶ τῶν φονεθσάντων τοὺς προφήτας in Matthew 23:31. The fact that Jesus says they are testifying against themselves makes this point clear. What they say and what they do reveals their true, albeit figurative, lineage.

**Sons of Israel.** The last figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive in Matthew is found in Matthew 27:9. In this verse, Matthew cites Zechariah in reference to the thirty pieces of silver Judas was paid for the betrayal and later returned. However, the phrase υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ is not found in Zechariah 11:13. Matthew here is using the phrase to identify the individuals who financed the betrayal. This phrase could be understood as functioning within the normal semantic range of υἱός. It is often used to describe the

relationship of a person to a group of people or tribe. However, it also possible that this phrase is an intentional figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive whereby he is figuratively linking the individuals who paid for the betrayal with the literal υἱοὶ Ἰσραήλ who sold their own brother into slavery.

## Mark–Introduction

Mark uses υἱός 35 times in his Gospel. Of those 35 occurrences of υἱός, all but 2 are found with a genitive modifier. Thus, compared to the rest of the NT, Mark employs υἱός plus the genitive with great frequency. Below, the 2 uses of υἱός without the genitive will be considered. Then, the occurrences of υἱός with a genitive modifier will be discussed according to the following three subdivisions: (1) genetic identification, (2) Messianic, (3) figurative uses.

## Mark–Υἱός without the Genitive

As mentioned above, Mark has only 2 uses of υἱός without the genitive. While there are far fewer uses in this category in Mark, they are similar to the occurrences of this category in Matthew's Gospel. In a parable in Mark 12:6, the direct male descendant of a vineyard owner is aptly identified as a υἱὸν ἀγαπητόν. In Mark 13:32, Jesus identifies himself as ὁ υἱός. Here, as in Matthew, τοῦ θεοῦ is likely implicit.

## Mark–Υἱός with the Genitive

### Genetic Identification

Six out of Mark's 33 uses of υἱός plus the genitive are found in this category. As in other writings, these are examples of Mark identifying an individual on the basis of his genetic lineage.

**Using proper nouns.** In Mark 6:3, Jesus is identified according to his genetic relationship to his mother: υἱὸς τῆς Μαρίας. As in Matthew, Mark 10:35 distinguishes οἱ υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου from any other James or John on the basis of their genetic lineage. As is implicit in his transliterated name, Bartimaeus is genetically identified with the phrase υἱός Τιμαίου in Mark 10:46.

**Using pronouns.** In both Mark 9:17 and 12:6, a father identifies his male descendant using the phrase τὸν υἱόν μου.

**Using other phrases.** In Mark 3:28, the common genetic lineage that all men and women share with one another as fellow human beings is highlighted using the phrase τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων.[12]

## Messianic

Seventy-five percent of Mark's 33 uses of υἱός plus the genitive fall into this category. These represent various titles and attributions which uniquely apply to Jesus as God's Messiah.

**Son of David.** As was common in Matthew's Gospel, υἱὲ Δαυὶδ is twice found on the lips of Bartimaeus calling out for healing in Mark 10:47 and 10:48. While Son of David was not a title Jesus used in reference to himself in Matthew, in Mark 12:35, he does so, albeit in a veiled saying, when he asks how the scribes can say that the Messiah is the υἱὸς Δαυίδ.

**Son of God.** Again, as was the practice in Matthew, Jesus never refers to

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[12]It is possible that this "son(s) of" phrase is used figuratively to establish a link between each human referent and Adam. However, here, it is not understood as such.

himself with this title. In some manuscripts of Mark 1:1, Mark refers to his work as the

Gospel of Jesus Christ the υἱοῦ θεοῦ.[13] This phrase is on the lips of demons in Mark 3:11

and 5:7. Finally, Jesus is referred to as υἱὸς θεοῦ in Mark 15:39 by the centurion at his

cross.

**Son of Man.** Fourteen out of the 25 messianic uses of υἱός plus the genitive

are comprised of Jesus' favorite self-appellation. As in Matthew, this phrase is only found

in Mark's Gospel on the lips of Jesus.[14]

**Son of the Blessed One.** In Mark 14:61, during his interrogation of Jesus, the

high priest, employing circumlocution, asks Jesus if he is the ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ.

While this title in reference to Jesus seems to be unique to Mark's Gospel, there are

similar constructions using μακάριος found in the papyri in reference to earthly fathers

who are also mentioned by name. There, the expression is quite common. For example,

BGU 1.255 has the following four phrases: υἱὸς τοῦ μακαρίου Ἠλία, υἱὸς τοῦ μακαρίου

Σαλαμίνου, υἱὸς τοῦ μακαρίου Πέτρου, and υἱὸν τοῦ μακαρίου Μηνᾶ.[15]

**Using pronouns.** These uses make up 3 of the 25 messianic uses of υἱός plus

the genitive. Two of the occurrences are found in Mark 1:11 and 9:7 where God the

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[13]Metzger notes that their committee had difficulty making a decision regarding this variant. He says that "the combination of B D W *al* in support of υἱοῦ θεοῦ is extremely strong, it was not thought advisable to omit the words altogether, yet because of the antiquity of the shorter reading and the possibility of scribal expansion, it was decided to enclose the words within square brackets." See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament,* 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 62.

[14]See Mark 2:10, 28, 8:31, 38, 9:9, 12, 31, 10:33, 45, 13:26, 14:21 (twice), 41, 62.

[15]BGU 1.255, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ ddbdp/bgu;1;255.

Father uses the pronoun μου to identify Jesus as "my son." The last use is found in Mark 12:37 where the Messiah's relationship to David is expressed using the phrase αὐτοῦ υἱός.

**Figurative Uses**

Mark's Gospel contains only 2 figurative uses of υἱός plus the genitive. He employs these phrases much less than Matthew in his Gospel–both in overall total and frequency.[16]

**Sons of the bridal chamber.** As in Matthew, this same idiomatic phrase is found on the lips of Jesus in Mark 2:19. Again, the phrase οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος is not referring to the literal genetic descendants of the bridegroom. Instead, it is figuratively describing them as sons of the bridal chamber.

**Sons of thunder.** The phrase υἱοὶ Βροντῆς in Mark 3:17 represents a translation and, perhaps, interpretation of the name βοανηργές which Jesus gave to the sons of Zebedee. It would seem here that Jesus is employing a figurative use of "son(s) of" to characterize these two brothers and describe potential behavioral tendencies which were evidently reminiscent of a thunderstorm.

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**Luke-Acts–Introduction**

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The related documents of Luke and Acts will be considered together since they demonstrate collectively Luke's typical usage of υἱός. The word υἱός in its various forms is found in Luke-Acts 98 times. His works make up approximately 25 percent of the overall occurrences of υἱός in the NT. He uses υἱός plus the genitive 81 times in Luke-

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[16]Matthew has 10 figurative uses out of 78 overall uses. Mark has only 2 out of 33. Matthew uses υἱός in a figurative manner roughly twice as often.

Acts. These account for roughly 83 percent of the 98 occurrences of the word in Luke-Acts. In Luke, υἱός plus the genitive is used 62 times while in Acts it is used only 19 times. First, Luke's use of υἱός without the genitive in Luke-Acts will be discussed. Second, his use of υἱός with a genitive modifier will be considered according to the following three categories: (1) genetic identification, (2) messianic, (3) figurative uses.

### Luke-Acts–Υἱός without the Genitive

In Luke-Acts, υἱός is found without a genitive modifier in 17 occurrences. As expected, the majority of these uses align with the typical usage of υἱός to refer to the direct male child of an individual.[17] This typical usage becomes clear when Luke relates the details of Moses' sonship to Pharaoh's daughter. In Acts 7:21, Luke records Stephen as saying that she ἀνεθρέψατο αὐτὸν ἑαυτῇ εἰς υἱόν. Specifically, he says that "she brought him up for herself *as* a son."[18] As is evident in the biblical narrative, Moses was not her direct male descendant, but she brought him up as if he was in fact her υἱόν. The remaining 3 uses of υἱός without the genitive are used in reference to Jesus as the Son and they are all found in Luke 10:22. As in Matthew and Mark, the genitive θεοῦ seems implicit here.

### Luke-Acts–Υἱός with the Genitive

**Genetic Identification**

This category accounts for 27 of the 81 uses of υἱός plus the genitive in Luke-Acts. Here, Luke is primarily concerned with identifying an individual on the basis of his

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[17]See Luke 1:13, 31, 36, 57, 7:12, 11:11, 12:53 (twice), 14:5, 15:11, 13, 21; Acts 7:21, 29.

[18]BDAG explains that εἰς with the accusative case can replace the predicate accusative. He lists this occurrence as an example. See BDAG, s.v. "εἰς."

genetic lineage and possibly distinguishing him from other individuals with a common name.

**Using proper nouns.** Luke's most common use of υἱός plus the genitive for genetic identification is the phrase "sons of Israel." He uses the phrase 6 times in Luke-Acts.[19] Similarly, he uses the phrases υἱὸς Ἀβραάμ in Luke 19:9 and υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραὰμ in Acts 13:26. Elsewhere, he identifies individuals on the basis of their more immediate genetic lineage. He refers to the "son of Zechariah," "sons of Zebedee," "sons of Hamor," "son of Kish," "son of a Jewish woman," "sons of Sceva," and "son of Paul's sister."[20] He also refers to Jesus twice as the υἱός Ἰωσὴφ.[21]

**Using pronouns.** Not only are individuals genetically identified using proper nouns in the genitive case in Luke-Acts, they are also connected to their genetic lineage using pronouns. There are 10 such occurrences in Luke-Acts. Nine of these simply identify an individual as "my son," "your son(s)," or "his son."[22] In addition, Luke genetically identifies Mary's relationship to Jesus by referring to him as τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον in Luke 2:7.

## Messianic

Forty-one, or over half, of the 81 occurrences of υἱός plus the genitive in Luke-Acts are found within this category. These phrases are comprised of various titles and

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[19]See Luke 1:16; Acts 5:21, 7:23, 37, 9:15, 10:36.

[20]See Luke 3:2, 5:10; Acts 7:16, 13:21, 16:1, 19:14, 23:16.

[21]See Luke 3:23, 4:22.

[22]For "my son" see Luke 9:38, 15:24, 20:13. For "your son(s)" see Luke 9:41, 15:19, 21, 30; Acts 2:17. For "his son" see Luke 15:25.

attributions that are applied to Jesus by himself and others. They serve to identify him as God's promised Messiah.

**Son of David.** As in the parallels in Matthew and Mark, the blind man calls out to Jesus as υἱὲ Δαυίδ in both Luke 18:38 and 18:39. While "son of David" is usually a title applied to Jesus by others, in Luke 20:41, as in Mark, Jesus refers to himself as the Δαυὶδ υἱόν in a cryptic manner.

**Son of God.** Jesus is referred to as the Son of God 6 times in Luke-Acts. As has been the established pattern from Matthew and Mark, this title is always on the lips of others in reference to Jesus. In Luke 1:35, the angel promises Mary that he will be called the Son of God. Often, the phrase is applied to Jesus by demonic opposition.[23] Jesus' accusers ask him at his trial if he is ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ in Luke 22:70. Finally, in Acts 9:20, Paul preaches that Jesus is the Son of God.

**Son of Man.** This phrase accounts for 26 of the 41 total messianic uses of υἱός plus the genitive in Luke-Acts. Son of Man is the title which has thus far only been applied to Jesus by himself. In Luke's Gospel, that tendency remains the same. The phrase is used twenty-five times and all but one of those occurrences are on the lips of Jesus.[24] A possible exception is found in Luke 24:7 where Jesus is quoted to the women at the tomb by the two men in dazzling clothing. While this usage of Son of Man does not seem to be a true exception since it is in a quotation of Jesus' own use of the phrase, there is an exception to the typical pattern of its usage in Acts. In Acts 7:56, Stephen declares

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[23]See Luke 4:3, 9, 41.

[24]See Luke 5:24, 6:5, 22, 7:24, 9:22, 26, 44, 58, 11:30, 12:8, 10, 40, 17:22, 24, 26, 30, 18:8, 31, 19:10, 21:27, 36, 22:22, 48, 69, 24:7.

that he sees the heavens opened and τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου standing at the right hand of God.

**Son of the Most High.** There are 2 such phrases in Luke's Gospel. In Luke 1:32, the angel promises that Jesus will be called υἱὸς ὑψίστου. Similarly, in Luke 8:28, a man under extreme demonic influence recognizes Jesus' divinity and refers to him as υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου.

**Using pronouns.** There are 4 occasions in which Jesus is identified using υἱός plus a genitive pronoun that carries with it messianic implications. In Luke 20:44, Jesus makes reference to the Messiah in his dialogue with the scribes as David's son using the phrase αὐτοῦ υἱός. Jesus is identified as the Son of God using some variation of the phrase ὁ υἱός μου 3 times in Luke-Acts. In Luke 3:22 and 9:35, God the Father identifies Jesus as "my son" at his baptism and transfiguration. In Acts 13:33, Paul uses the phrase υἱός μου εἶ σύ from Psalm 2:7.

## Figurative Uses

There are 13 figurative uses of υἱός plus the genitive in Luke-Acts. Nine are found in Luke and 4 are found in Acts. These figurative uses make up approximately 16 percent of the overall occurrences of υἱός plus the genitive in Luke-Acts.

**Sons of the Bridal Chamber.** In Luke 5:34, Jesus explains to the disciples of John that his own disciples do not fast because they are sons of the bridal chamber. As a result, they are closely connected to the joy associated with a newly established marriage and fasting would not be appropriate.

**Sons of the Most High.** In Luke 6:35, Jesus calls his followers to love their enemies, do good, and lend generously. He promises them reward and that they will be called υἱοὶ ὑψίστου. Thus, Jesus' followers are promised a similar relationship with his Father since he too is a υἱὸς ὑψίστου.[25]

**Son of peace.** When Jesus sends out seventy of his followers in Luke 10, he instructs them to pronounce peace upon the houses they enter. The response in that house is contingent upon whether a υἱὸς εἰρήνης is there. It would seem that Jesus is using υἱός plus the genitive to characterize positively those who show hospitality to his followers as peaceful individuals.

**Your sons.** While there is debate about the proper referent of the phrase οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν, it does seem likely that this is figurative "sons of" phrase.[26] It is not referring to the literal male descendants of the people to whom Jesus is speaking. Instead, he is figuratively identifying the pupils or group members of the scribes and Pharisees as their "sons."

**Sons of this age.** The phrase οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου is used in both Luke 16:8 and 20:34. In both cases, it seems to refer to those who are defined or characterized by the present age apart from the influence of the kingdom of God in it. In each occurrence, it stands in contrast to those who would be characterized by their discipleship to Christ.

**Sons of light.** A similar juxtaposition is constructed using a contrasting "son(s)

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[25]See Luke 1:32, 8:28.

[26]See Shirock, "Whose Exorcists Are They?" See p. 128n2.

of" phrase. In Luke 16:8, the phrase τοὺς υἱοὺς τοῦ φωτὸς is contrasted with "sons of this age." Here, the "sons of light" would seem to be those who are characterized by their adherence to the kind of life God requires of them. A similar phrase is found in John 12:36.

**Sons of God.** In Luke 20:36, Jesus is recorded as using υἱός plus the genitive in two separate phrases to describe the kind of life people would participate in by virtue of the resurrection. The first phrase is υἱοὶ θεοῦ. With this phrase individuals are being figuratively described as God's sons in order to illustrate the relationship that God's people will have with him because of the resurrection.

**Sons of the resurrection.** The second use of υἱός plus the genitive in Luke 20:36 is in the phrase τῆς ἀναστάσεως υἱοὶ. The people partaking of the resurrection can be described as sons of God because they are sons of the resurrection. Their relationship with God results from their figurative sonship to the resurrection.

**Sons of the prophets and the covenant.** In Acts 3:25, Peter addresses the people as οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ τῆς διαθήκης. Here, Peter seems to be figuratively linking them as sons to the history of God's interactions with them as a people. While it might be possible that they are in fact literal descendants of the prophets, these individuals are certainly not literal descendants of the covenant itself. However, they have inherited God's history of redemption of his people and are, figuratively, sons of it.

**Son of encouragement.** In Acts 4:36, Barnabas' nickname is translated and possibly interpreted by the phrase υἱὸς παρακλήσεως. As is evident from what can be seen of Barnabas' lifestyle in the book of Acts, he was one who was characterized by

encouragement. Thus, he is figuratively described as a son of encouragement.

**Son of the devil.** Luke records a figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive in a conversation Paul has with Elymas in Acts 13:10. Elymas had been opposing them and seeking to turn people away from the faith. Paul responds by rebuking him and in his rebuke, he figuratively calls Elymas υἱὲ διαβόλου.

**Son of the Pharisees.** The last figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive in Luke-Acts is found on the lips of Paul at his trial before the council in Acts 23. In 23:6, he describes himself as a Pharisee and a υἱὸς Φαρισαίων. This does not have to be understood as Paul stating that his literal father was a Pharisee but could instead be referring to his tutelage in the Pharisaic tradition.[27] Thus, this usage would be similar to other uses where the student-teacher relationship is figuratively described in father-son or parent-child terminology.

### Johannine Literature–Introduction

In John's writings, υἱός is used 87 times.[28] Of these 87 occurrences, 60 are found with a genitive modifier. The breakdown of these occurrences into his various writings is as follows: 37 in his Gospel, 16 in 1 John, 1 in 2 John, and 6 in Revelation. There are not any uses of υἱός in 3 John. First, the uses of υἱός without a genitive modifier in the Johannine writings will be considered. Then, John's use of υἱός with the genitive will be discussed according to the categories employed thus far.

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[27]Cf. David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 616.

[28]Under this heading, all the writings traditionally understood to have been written by John the son of Zebedee will be included: the Gospel of John, the Epistles of John, and the Revelation of John.

## Johannine Literature–Υἱός without the Genitive

On 27 occasions in the Johannine Literature, υἱός is used without a genitive modifier. John uses υἱός without a genitive modifier at a higher frequency than the rest of the NT.[29] In the Synoptic Gospels, υἱός is used 30 times without a genitive modifier. Of these 30 occurrences, 70 percent have been to denote a male child. There have only been 9 cases where Jesus is identified using υἱός without the genitive. John's use of υἱός without the genitive represents a reversal of this Synoptic tendency. He uses υἱός without the genitive to refer to Jesus 24 times.[30] He only uses υἱός alone with its typical meaning 3 other times across all the Johannine literature.[31] However, it is worth noting that when υἱός is used in reference to Jesus, especially in John's writing, there is almost always an implicit "son(s) of" phrase: θεοῦ or τοῦ πατρός.

## Johannine Literature–Υἱός with the Genitive

**Genetic Identification**

This category accounts for 14 of John's 60 uses of υἱός plus the genitive. Here, he is seeking to identify specific individuals on the basis of their genetic heritage and possibly distinguish them from others.

**Using proper nouns.** In John 1:42, Jesus refers to Simon Peter as ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου. In John 1:45 and 6:42, Jesus is identified as being the one who is ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ.

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[29]There are only eleven in Matthew, two in Mark, seventeen in Luke-Acts, seven in the Pauline Epistles, and twelve in Hebrews.

[30]For υἱός used with reference to Jesus see John 3:16, 17, 35, 36 (twice), 5:19 (twice), 20, 21, 22, 23 (twice), 26, 6:40, 8:36, 14:13, 17:1; 1 John 2:22, 23 (twice), 24, 4:14, 5:12; 2 John 1:9.

[31]For the use of υἱός with reference to a male child see John 8:35; Rev 12:5, 21:7.

The remaining three occurrences in this category are references to the sons of Israel. In Revelation 7:4 and 21:12, υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ seems to be referring to the actual twelve sons of Jacob. In Revelation 2:14, the phrase τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ is a broader reference to all the descendants of Jacob.

**Using pronouns.** Pronouns are used in John's Gospel to identify various individuals as the genetic descendants of others using phrases such as "his son(s)," "your son," and "our son."[32]

## Messianic

As might be expected from his use of υἱός without the genitive, approximately 68 percent of John's uses of υἱός plus the genitive are focused on identifying Jesus as the Messiah. This percentage decreases to approximately 62 percent in the Synoptic Gospels. In another contrast with the Synoptic Gospels, the phrase Son of David is not applied to Jesus in the Johannine Literature. It was applied to him 14 times in the Synoptic Gospels.

**Son of God.** This use of υἱός plus the genitive accounts for 17 of the occurrences in this category. While this phrase is most often applied to Jesus by others in the Johannine Literature, it is also, in contrast to the Synoptics, applied to Jesus by himself in John's Gospel. Four times he makes references to himself as the Son of God using υἱός plus the genitive.[33] He is also referred to as the Son of God by John the Baptist, Nathaniel, Martha, the Jewish religious leaders, an angel in Revelation, and John

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[32]For these uses see John 4:5, 12, 46, 47, 50, 53, 9:19, 20.

[33]See John 3:18, 5:25, 10:36, 11:4.

himself.[34] In the case of the Jewish religious leaders in John 19:7, they are merely acknowledging that υἱὸν θεοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησεν.

**Son of Man.** This phrase represents one-third of the 43 messianic uses of υἱὸς plus the genitive. As has been the pattern, the usage of this phrase in the Johannine Literature stands in contrast to how the phrase is used in the Synoptic Gospels. In the Synoptic Gospels, the phrase is only used by Jesus to refer to himself.[35] In John's writings, however, it is attributed to him by others. In John 12:34, the crowd uses the phrase twice in their response to Jesus. While the phrase is not directly applied to Jesus, they ask τίς ἐστιν οὗτος ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. In Revelation 1:13 and 14:14, John describes Jesus in his vision as one who has the appearance ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου. The remaining 11 occurrences of the phrase Son of Man in John's writing are used by Jesus for self-identification.[36]

**Son of the Father.** In the greeting of 2 John 1:3, Jesus is referred to as Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς.

**Using Pronouns.** In John 17:1, Jesus refers to himself in a prayer to the Father as σου τὸν υἱόν. John refers to Jesus as the Son of God 9 times in 1 John using the pronoun αὐτός in the genitive case.[37]

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[34]See John 1:34, 49, 11:27, 19:7, 20:31; 1 John 3:8, 4:15, 5:5, 10, 12, 13, 20; Rev 2:18.

[35]As was noted above, it is found on the lips of Stephen in Acts 7:56.

[36]See John 1:51, 3:13, 14, 5:27, 6:27, 53, 62, 8:28, 9:35, 12:23, 13:31.

[37]See 1 John 1:3, 7, 3:23, 4:9, 10, 5:9, 10, 11, 20.

**Figurative Uses**

There are only 3 figurative uses of υἱός plus the genitive in the Johannine writings. These occurrences account for only 5 percent of John's 60 uses of υἱός plus the genitive. The figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive in the Synoptic Gospels accounts for 13 percent of their overall use of the construction. While John employs υἱός plus the genitive figuratively with less frequency, his use of it still remains significant for the present discussion.

**Sons of light.** In John 12:36, Jesus exhorts his listeners to believe in the light that they may become υἱοὶ φωτὸς. Here, these individuals, due to their belief, will become so characterized by τὸ φῶς that they will be related to it as a son is to his own father. A similar phrase is found on the lips of Jesus in Luke's Gospel.[38]

**Son of destruction.** In John 17:12, Jesus refers to Judas Iscariot as ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας. Here, the "son of" phrase is used to characterize the kind of destiny Judas is qualified to inherit. The noun ἀπώλεια is also found in υἱός plus the genitive phrases in Proverbs 24:22a (LXX), *GNic.* 20:4, *ApPet.* 1:2, *EH* 5.1.48, and 1 Thessalonians 5:5.

**Your son.** In John 19:26, Jesus tells Mary that, following his impending death, she is to consider the Beloved Disciple as her son. While this occurrence could be an example of genetic identification where Jesus is telling her to view him as if he were her own male child, there do also seem to be some figurative elements at work within Jesus' redefinition of their relationship.

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[38]See Luke 16:8.

**Pauline Epistles–Introduction**

In his Epistles, Paul uses υἱός 41 times.[39] It is found in Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, and 2 Thessalonians. Of these 41 occurrences in Paul's Epistles, 34 are examples of υἱός plus the genitive. Below, the 7 uses of υἱός without the genitive will be discussed and followed by a consideration of how υἱός with the genitive is used in Paul's writings.

**Pauline Epistles–Υἱός without the Genitive**

As mentioned above, υἱός is only found without the genitive 7 times in the Pauline Epistles. In 1 Corinthians 15:28, Paul refers to Jesus as ὁ υἱὸς. Here, as in the Gospels and Acts, the genitive θεοῦ seems implicit. In Romans 9:9, Paul quotes Genesis regarding God's promise that Sarah would give birth to a son. Paul also refers to Abraham's δύο υἱοὺς in Galatians 4:22. However, Paul's most frequent use of υἱός without the genitive is to refer to believers as the sons of God. He uses various constructions to express implicitly the phrase υἱοὶ θεοῦ. Three of these occurrences are found in Galatians 4 while the other is in 2 Corinthians.[40]

**Pauline Epistles–Υἱός with the Genitive**

**Genetic Identification**

Six of Paul's 34 uses of υἱός plus the genitive belong to this category. Here, Paul is using υἱός plus the genitive to identify an individual on the basis of his lineage.

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[39]Under this heading, all uses of υἱός in all the writings traditionally understood to have been written by Paul the Apostle will be included: Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, 1-2 Thessalonians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

[40]See 2 Cor 6:18; Gal 4:6, 7 (twice).

**Using proper nouns.** In Romans 9:27, 2 Corinthians 3:7, and 2 Corinthians 3:13, Paul uses some variation of the phrase sons of Israel. In each case, he does not seem to be referring to the immediate twelve male children of Jacob. Instead, he is using the phrase, as was common, to refer to Jacob's descendants–the people of Israel.

**Using pronouns.** The remaining 3 uses of υἱός plus the genitive for genetic identification are all found in Galatians 4:30. The first occurrence in this verse is in the phrase τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς. Here, Paul is quoting Genesis 21:10, and the reference to "her son" is to Hagar's son Ishmael.

**Using other phrases.** While the last 2 occurrences of υἱός plus the genitive in Galatians 4:30 could be considered figurative uses, it seems as if genetic identification is what both the author of Genesis and Paul have in mind. Sarah is expressing her opinion that the ὁ υἱὸς τῆς παιδίσκης is not qualified to share in the inheritance with τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἐλευθέρας. This phrase, "the son of the free woman," is not present in Genesis 21:10 in either the MT or the LXX. In both cases, Sarah declares that the son of Hagar will not partake in the inheritance "with my son Isaac." Thus, τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἐλευθέρας may be Paul's own creation.

## Messianic

As has been the case in the rest of the NT thus far, Paul uses υἱός plus the genitive to identify Jesus in messianic terms. Sixteen of Paul's 34 uses of υἱός plus the genitive are found in this category. These amount to 47 percent of the overall occurrences of υἱός plus the genitive in the Pauline Epistles. This percentage is much lower than both the 62 percent in the Synoptic Gospels and the 68 percent in the Johannine Literature.

**Son of God.** The Apostle Paul refers to Jesus as ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ υἱός 4 times in his Epistles.[41]

**Using pronouns.** In addition to being identified as the Messiah using the phrase, Son of God, Jesus is referred to by Paul in messianic terms 10 times using υἱός plus the pronoun αὐτός in the genitive case. Nine of these 10 cases are simple references to Jesus as "his Son" with θεός being the antecedent of the pronoun.[42] The remaining occurrence, in Colossians 1:13, has an additional modifier and will be discussed below. In Romans 8:3, Paul identifies Jesus as God's own Son with the reflexive pronoun in the phrase τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν.

**Using other phrases.** In Romans 8:32, Paul uses the phrase τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ to emphasize the reality that God did not spare his own Son on the cross but instead freely gave him up. In Colossians 1:13, Paul identifies Jesus as God's Son using υἱός and the pronoun αὐτός in the genitive case. However, on this occasion, he includes another modifier in the phrase in order to specify the nature of the relationship that Jesus enjoys with his Father: τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ.

**Figurative Uses.**

There are 12 uses of υἱός plus the genitive in a figurative manner in the Pauline Epistles. These occurrences represent approximately 35 percent of the overall uses of υἱός plus the genitive in Paul's writings. This percentage is significantly higher than both the 13 percent found in the Synoptic Gospels and also the 5 percent found in the Johannine

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[41]Rom 1:4; 2 Cor 1:19; Gal 2:20; Eph 4:13.

[42]For "his son" see Rom 1:3, 1:9, 5:10, 8:29; 1 Cor 1:9; Gal 1:16, 4:4, 4:6; and 1 Thes 1:10.

Literature.

**Sons of God.** Paul uses the phrase υἱοὶ θεοῦ or some variation of it 3 times in his Epistles.[43] In each case it is a description of the relationship that those who have placed their faith in Christ enjoy with his Father. Similarly, in Romans 9:26, Paul draws from Hosea 1:10 and includes its phrase υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος. The LXX here represents a literal translation of the MT which has בְּנֵי אֵל־חָי.

**Sons of Abraham.** In Galatians 3:7, Paul argues that those who believe are υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ. Here, he seems to be figuratively identifying the new people of God as those who are now qualified to share in the inheritance of God's promises to Abraham. It is no longer simple genetic identification but is instead faith in Christ that makes an individual a υἱὸς Ἀβραάμ.

**Sons of disobedience.** In Ephesians, Paul twice refers to the "sons of disobedience."[44] It is likely that he uses the same phrase in Colossians as well.[45] The genitive noun in each of these occurrences is ἀπειθείας. Here, Paul characterizes those

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[43]Rom 8:14, 19; Gal 3:26

[44]See Eph 2:2, 5:6.

[45]On the variant in Col 3:6, Metzger explains that "it is exceedingly difficult to decide whether the words ἐπὶ . . . ἀπειθείας were added in most witnesses by copyists who recollected Eph 5:6 (where no manuscript omits the words), or whether they are absent from 𝔓46 B cop^sa eth^ro and several Fathers (Clement Cyprian Macrobius Ambrosiaster Ephraem Jerome) because of an accident in transmission. In view of (*a*) the very widespread testimony supporting the longer reading (א A C D^vid F G H K L P almost all minuscules it vg syr^p, h cop^bo goth arm eth^pp Clement Chrysostom *al*) and (*b*) the inconcinnity produced by the shorter reading with the following ἐν οἷς, as well as (*c*) the impression that καὶ ὑμεῖς in ver. 7 assumes a previous mention of unbelieving Gentiles, a majority of the Committee decided to retain the words in the text but to enclose them within square brackets in order to indicate a measure of doubt as to their genuineness in Colossians." Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 557.

who reject God and live in disobedience toward him by using the father-son relationship in a figurative manner.

**Sons of men.** When Paul explains that the mystery of Christ has been revealed to the apostles and prophets by the Spirit in Ephesians 3:5, he also states that this mystery was not made known in former generations to the "sons of men." The phrase Paul uses here is τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Rather than highlighting their common genetic ancestry with this phrase, Paul seems to be emphasizing the collective ignorance they share as the heirs of humanity.[46]

**Sons of light and sons of day.** While John's Gospel contains a phrase similar to υἱοὶ φωτός, Paul's use of the phrase continues with καὶ υἱοὶ ἡμέρας in 1 Thessalonians 5:5. Here, Paul is arguing that God's people should be so characterized by the light and the day that it is fitting to describe them as if they were sons of light and sons of day. The final phrase likely should be understood as containing υἱός as the implicit noun linked with νυκτὸς and σκότους. There are possible similarities between this verse and a corrupted line in CPR 8.22 that contains the phrase υἱῷ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας.[47]

**Son of destruction.** In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, Paul refers to an individual who will be revealed before the day of the Lord. This individual is identified as ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας. The phrase "son of destruction" was used by Jesus to refer to Judas Iscariot in John 17:12. It is attested outside the NT as well.[48] Similar to the

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[46]It is also possible that this phrase simply represents genetic identification.

[47]CPR 8.22, Papyri.info, accessed December 9, 2014, http://papyri.info/ddbdp/cpr;8;22.

[48]See Prov 24:22a (LXX); *GNic.* 20:4; *ApPet.* 1:2; *EH* 5.1.48.

case of Judas, Paul seems to use this "son(s) of" phrase figuratively to describe this eschatological man of lawlessness and communicate to the reader that his relationship to destruction will be like that of father to son.

### Hebrews–Introduction

The author of Hebrews uses υἱός 24 times. These occurrence are equally divided into 12 which have a genitive modifier and 12 which do not. The uses of υἱός without a genitive modifier will be discussed initially. Then, the uses of υἱός plus the genitive will considered according to their categories.

### Hebrews–Υἱός without the Genitive

As mentioned above, the author of Hebrews uses υἱός without the genitive in 12 verses. Six of these occurrences are made with reference to Jesus as Son. As has been the case in other writings, it seems that there is a implicit θεοῦ in these uses as well.[49] In 5 of the remaining 6 occurrences, υἱός is used to describe the relationship of God's people to him as sons.[50] These occurrences also seem to carry an implicit θεοῦ. The final use of υἱός without the genitive is found in the second half of Hebrews 12:7. While the first half of Hebrews 12:7 contains a use of υἱός in the preceding group, the latter half of the verse has υἱός referring simply to a hypothetical son of a hypothetical father. The point of the verse is that just as any father would discipline a son, so also does God discipline his sons.

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[49]See Heb 1:2, 5, 8, 3:6, 5:8, 7:28.

[50]See Heb 2:10, 12:5, 6, 7, 8.

## Hebrews–Υἱός with the Genitive

### Genetic Identification

This category is home to 5 of the 12 occurrences of υἱός plus the genitive in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In Hebrews 2:6, the author cites Psalm 8:5 and includes the genetic use of "son(s) of" found in both the MT and the LXX. Here, the phrase υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου simply represents the genetic solidarity of all human beings in an idiomatic form. In Hebrews 7:5, the author refers to τῶν υἱῶν Λευὶ. Here, the genetic identification also includes aspects of qualification as it is referring to Levi's descendants who were those that were qualified to serve in the priestly office. In Hebrews 11:21, the author genetically identifies Ephraim and Manasseh as τῶν υἱῶν Ἰωσὴφ. In the next verse, Hebrews 11:22, the author refers to Joseph's prophecy regarding the Exodus in Genesis 50:24. The author of Hebrews calls it the Exodus of τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ.  Finally, the author uses υἱός plus the genitive in Hebrews 11:24 to explain that Moses refused to be genetically identified as the son of the daughter of Pharaoh.

### Messianic

There are 6 uses of υἱός plus the genitive to identify Jesus in messianic terms. These occurrences account for 50 percent of the author's use of υἱός plus the genitive. As in other writings, these messianic identifications using υἱός plus the genitive are construed using both common phrases and also pronouns.

**Son of God.** Jesus is referred to as the Son of God 4 times by the author of Hebrews. Three of these occurrences simply identify him as the Son of God.[51] In the remaining occurrence in Hebrews 7:3, Melchizedek is said to be like τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ θεοῦ in

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[51]See Heb 4:14, 6:6, 10:29.

that "he is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (Heb 7:3, ESV).

**Using pronouns.** The 2 occurrences in the Epistle to the Hebrews which identify Jesus as the Messiah using pronouns are found in the midst of OT quotes. Both in Hebrews 1:5 and Hebrews 5:5, the author quotes Psalm 2:7 which has the phrase υἱός μου.

## Figurative Uses

There is only 1 figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In Hebrews 12:5, the author has a quotation from Proverbs 3:11. There the LXX simply has υἱέ while the MT has בְּנִי. The author of Hebrews has the phrase υἱέ μου. This use of υἱός plus the genitive is figurative because while the author of the Proverb is referring to his own male child, or possibly to a student, the author of Hebrews seems to be placing this quotation on the lips of the Lord and figuratively identifying the individual who has faith as a υἱός θεοῦ.

## James

The Epistle of James only has 1 use of υἱός. In James 2:21, James constructs a phrase using υἱός plus the genitive for the purpose of genetic identification. Here, Isaac is identified as being the direct genetic descendant of Abraham using the phrase τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ.

## Petrine Epistles

The Epistles of Peter contain 2 uses of υἱός and both of them possess a genitive modifier. In 1 Peter 5:13, in his final greetings to his audience, Peter relays greetings

from the church and from Mark. In his reference to Mark, he calls him ὁ υἱός μου. Since it does not seem that Mark was Peter's genetic descendant, this is likely a figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive akin to those examples where a student is figuratively described as the son of his teacher.[52] The other use of υἱός plus the genitive in the Petrine Epistles is found in 2 Peter 1:17 in what appears to be a reference to the transfiguration. In the verse, Peter repeats what was said by the Father regarding Jesus at the event: ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός μου οὗτός ἐστιν εἰς ὃν ἐγὼ εὐδόκησα.

**Conclusion**

Throughout the NT, υἱός without a genitive modifier is used with some frequency in four major categories: (1) to refer to a child, typically male, (2) to refer to a non-direct descendant, typically male, (3) to refer to Jesus as the Son with θεοῦ implicit in the text, and (4) to refer to God's people as sons with θεοῦ implicit in the text. When υἱός is used with a genitive modifier, these occurrences fall into one of three categories: (1) genetic identification, (2) messianic identification, and (3) figurative uses. It is the figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive that will be the major focus of remaining chapters. All the uses of υἱός plus the genitive as categorized in this chapter's survey are shown in table A1 in appendix 1.

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[52]This would be similar to passages where Paul refers to Timothy and Titus as "my child." See 1 Cor 4:17; 1 Tim 1:2, 18; 2 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4

CHAPTER 4

THE FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIP
IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

**Introduction**

This chapter seeks to illustrate the background behind the figurative use of

"son(s) of" phrases in the NT as well as propose a framework for their interpretation. In

order to interpret properly the figurative use of the father-son relationship by the NT

authors, the nature and dynamics of the typical father-son relationship in the social world

of these authors must be explored. Naturally, this relationship must be examined as it is

situated within the larger kinship system of the ancient world. First, major concepts such

as kinship, descent groups, family, and the function and significance of genealogy will be

defined and discussed. Second, the dominant kinship system of the NT's social world will

be explained. Third, those aspects of the kinship system and familial life which are

specific to the father-son relationship itself will be noted. Finally, a framework for

interpreting the figurative use of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT will be constructed from

this background and presented.

**Defining Terminology and Key Concepts**

Hellerman notes that "the universality of family – consisting of highly valued

relationships with those to whom we are related by birth or marriage – ironically hinders,

rather than enhances, our ability to appreciate some of the most important values

obtaining in kinship constructs that differ from our own."[1] Similarly, Hanson writes,

> While families are a universal phenomenon, they are configured in a multitude of ways, are controlled by different mechanisms, and serve different functions. Even though humans universally construct relationships with those to whom they are related by birth or marriage, "family" is a notion constructed differently in different cultures. Therefore it is perhaps the easiest set of relationships to misconstrue when observing another culture. If we look at the family ethnocentrically it is easy to confuse a cultural pattern with a biological one.[2]

As of result of this potential for misconstrual and misunderstanding, in order to have a coherent discussion of concepts such as kinship, family, and genealogy within the context of distinct cultures which each utilize different linguistic terms, it will be helpful to define the terminology that will be used in the course of this exploration of these concepts in the NT world.[3]

## Kinship

**Basic concept.** Kinship is a universal feature of all societies. A primary reason for this universality is biological. Howard explains that this biological factor results from the fact that "human infants are helpless and depend on the care of others for a prolonged period, and bonds arise among people in relation to these conditions."[4] However, even though kinship arises due to biological factors, "the ways kinship is used and defined are determined by sociocultural considerations."[5] According to Malina, "kinship refers to the

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[1]Joseph H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 27.

[2]K. C. Hanson, "Kinship," in *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation*, ed. Richard L. Rohrbaugh (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996), 63.

[3]In this section, the goal is simply to define terminology. Defining a social reality, such as polygyny, is not the same as condoning it.

[4]Michael C. Howard, *Contemporary Cultural Anthropology* (New York: Longman, 1996), 167.

[5]Ibid., 187.

patterns of such social norms that regulate human relationships which are based directly upon the experiences of birth and the birth cycle, from the womb, through developmental stages, to death."[6] Hanson expands upon Malina's explanation by saying that it is "an abstraction relating to the network of relationships based upon birth (either real or fictive) and marriage, and it forms one of the four foundational social domains which social scientists analyze."[7] It is important to recognize that kinship refers to both the network of relationships and the social norms which regulate them. In addition, the concept of kinship extends to cover both real, such as consanguineal or affinal, kinship and fictive or pseudo-kinship. Kinship is the broader category which governs all manner of relationships and practices such as family, marriage, genealogy, descent, inheritance, and adoption. As expressed by Hanson, kinship is one of the four foundational social domains along with politics, economics, and religion.[8] These four domains do not function in isolation from the others; rather, there is interaction between them and even embedding. As such, any consideration of kinship in a society should explore its interaction with the other three domains. Finally, the kinship systems of various societies are evaluated on the basis of the following characteristics: (1) the extent of recognition of consanguineal and affinal relationships for social purposes, (2) the classification and grouping of relatives in social groups, (3) the customs and norms which govern behavior within the context of familial relationships in daily life, (4) the rights and obligations which are brought about

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[6]Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, rev. ed. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 117.

[7]K. C. Hanson, "BTB Readers Guide: Kinship," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 24, no. 4 (1994): 183-94, 183.

[8]See Hanson, "BTB Readers Guide: Kinship," 183 and K. C. Hanson, "The Herodians and Mediterranean Kinship Part I: Genealogy and Descent," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 19, no. 3 (1989): 75-84, 75.

through kinship, and (5) the linguistic forms which are used to communicate the various

levels and/or categories of kin.[9]

**Descent groups.** The study of descent groups is a sub-discipline of the field of

kinship studies. Goody writes,

> In the majority of preindustrial societies, kinsfolk are more than a narrow category
> of persons linked to an individual actor by filiation and siblinghood. They constitute
> a series of social groups that dominate the domestic organization and the process of
> socialization, the use and transfer of property, the settlement of disputes, religious
> activities such as ancestor worship, and certain political relationships.[10]

Due to the widespread influence of kinship on social life, the structure and enlistment of

kin groups is a highly important aspect of the kinship system of a society. According to

Goody, most comparative sociologists have accepted Rivers' distinction between

inheritance, succession, and descent.[11] Inheritance is focused on the transmission of

property, succession relates to the transmission of an office, and descent is concerned

with the transmission of membership in the kin group.[12] These rights can be transmitted

to the younger generation in the following ways: (1) agnatic transmission, received

exclusively from paternal kin, (2) uterine transmission, received exclusively from

maternal kin, (3) bilateral inclusive or ambilateral transmission, received from both

paternal and maternal kin sources, and (4) bilateral exclusive or utrolateral transmission,

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[9]Fred Eggan, "Kinship: Introduction," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David. L. Sills (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 390.

[10]Jack Goody, "Kinship: Descent Groups," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David. L. Sills (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 401.

[11]For Rivers on these concepts, see William H. R. Rivers, *Kinship and Social Organization*, London School of Economics and Political Science Studies no. 36 (London: Constable, 1914).

[12]Goody, "Kinship: Descent Groups," 401.

received from either the paternal or maternal kin.[13] In general, the rights of inheritance, succession, and descent are all transmitted in the same manner within a particular kinship group.

**Unilineal descent groups.** In order to be a unilineal descent group, a kin group must recruit through either the paternal or maternal kin, either through agnatic or uterine transmission, and all the members of the kin group must be related to one another through a common unilineal ancestor. Under this category, kin groups are identified as being either patrilineal or matrilineal depending on whether descent is traced through the father or the mother.[14] It is important to note that kin groups can adhere to agnatic or uterine transmission and not be a unilineal descent group if they do not all trace their lineage to a common ancestor.

**Cognatic kin groups.** These kin groups are found in societies which do not have unilineal descent groups. Cognatic kin groups are "based upon ties traced unrestrictedly, through *both* males and females at one time, or restrictedly through one parent or the other, with the particular selection depending upon nonkinship factors."[15] Keesing notes that cognatic kin groups trace descent "from an ancestor or ancestress through a series of links that can be male or female, or any combination of the two."[16] This last category is quite broad including descent that is traced through both unilineal

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[13]Goody, "Kinship: Descent Groups," 402. Howard also refers to parallel descent in which men trace descent through male lines and women trace descent through female lines. See Howard, *Cultural Anthropology*, 171.

[14]Goody, "Kinship: Descent Groups," 402.

[15]Ibid., 406.

[16]Roger M. Keesing, *Kin Groups and Social Structure* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), 17.

and nonunilineal ancestors.[17]

Keesing helpfully draws four distinctions between the concepts of kinship and descent. The conceptual differences between these two cultural principles serve to clarify and set apart seemingly overlapping terms. They are laid out in table 4.

Table 4: Four clarifications regarding kinship and descent

| *Kinship* | *Descent* |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Defined with reference to an individual (ego) or pairs of individuals. | 1. Defined with reference to an ancestor (or ancestress). |
| 2. Universally important. | 2. Culturally recognized only in some societies. |
| 3. Normally bilateral, from the standpoint of an ego. | 3. Connects (through relatedness to a common ancestor) only a limited class of ego's relatives. |
| 4. Kinship relationships are relative; you are a son or a nephew only in relation to some particular person. | 4. Descent status is, in a sense, absolute. You are, or are not, a member of a particular descent group. |

Note: See Keesing, *Kin Groups*, 21

**Pseudo kinship.** Pseudo-kinship is comprised of relationships "in which persons are described or addressed by kin terms (or terms derived from the idiom of kin) but do not stand in such a relationship by virtue of the principles, however they happen to be conceptualized, of descent or marriage."[18] While kinship status is typically restricted in

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[17]Keesing, *Kin Groups*, 17.

[18]Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Kinship: Pseudo-Kinship," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David L. Sills (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 408. While Pitt-Rivers makes a clear line of demarcation between pseudo-kinship as a broad category and fictive kinship as a rather specific subset, other authors seem to use these two terms as near synonyms. For example, see Dennis C. Duling, "Matthew 18: 15-17: Conflict,

a society to relationships of a consanguineal or affinal nature, "these do not determine a

relation of pseudo-kinship, which depends always upon the individual will of, at least, the

initiator."[19] Pitt-Rivers recognizes three distinct types of pseudo-kinship:

> (1) There is, first of all, the figurative use of kin terms, which may be little more than a convention of speech or which may, on the other hand, designate a status within the society or within a specific context. (2) There are also customs whereby a person is given the status of kin by attribution rather than by birth – and this is commonly called "fictive" or "artificial" kinship. (3) There are also institutions which, in some ways, resemble kinship and are named by analogy with it, yet which possess a separate nature and accord a distinct status.[20]

Under the first category falls any use of a kin term such as "father" or "son" to describe

the relationship that exists between two persons or to stress a certain aspect of the

particular kin term which is figuratively utilized.[21] Pitt-Rivers notes that these figurative

usages of kinship terms "are mere expressions of attitude, part of the common currency of

personal relations. They imply a quality of behavior rather than a status, fraternity rather

than the relationships of sibling."[22] For Pitt-Rivers, the second category – fictive

kinship – does convey actual kinship status. In Western civilizations, adoption falls into

this category. While not a member of the kinship group based on genealogical or genetic

lines, an adopted child becomes kin through legal means and enjoys the same social

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Confrontation, and Conflict Resolution in a 'Fictive Kin' Association," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 29, no. 1 (1999): 4-22; Marianne Blickenstaff, *'While the Bridegroom Is with Them': Marriage, Family, Gender and Violence in the Gospel of Matthew*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 292, ed. Mark Goodacre (New York: T&T Clark, 2005); and Malina, *New Testament World.*

[19]Pitt-Rivers, "Kinship: Pseudo-Kinship," 408.

[20]Ibid.

[21]It is important to note that this particular aspect of pseudo-kinship is typically focused on figuratively describing the relationships between two or more persons using kinship terminology. As such, pseudo-kinship or fictive kinship does not exactly correspond to the figurative "son(s) of" phrases which describe the relationship between a person and a thing or concept using father-son kinship terms.

[22]Ibid.

status in the kinship group as biological children.The last category is focused on the various forms of ritualized pseudo-kinship such as blood brotherhood and ritual coparenthood.[23]

**Hsu's hypothesis.** Hsu recognized that because "kinship plays such a basic part in the upbringing of the human individual, and has such a universal place in every human society," it will not be found to be irrelevant to developments in society and culture.[24] Hsu found that one relationship within a kinship system can be influential to the degree that it extends to all other relationships and shapes the entire kinship system.[25] There are several terms which are vital to understanding Hsu's work: "dyad," "attribute," "dominant dyad," and "dominant attribute." "A dyad consists of two linked persons."[26] In the typical nuclear family, there are eight basic dyads present: husband-wife, father-son, mother-son, father-daughter, mother-daughter, brother-brother, brother-sister, and sister-sister.[27] "The term 'attribute' refers to the logical or typical mode of behavior and attitude intrinsic to each dyad."[28] Further, "the intrinsic attributes of each dyad are the basic ingredients and determinants of the interactional patterns between parties of that dyad."[29] However, it is with the notion of dominance that Hsu's work on kinship and culture

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[23]Pitt-Rivers, "Kinship: Pseudo-Kinship," 409-13.

[24]Francis L. K. Hsu, "A Hypothesis on Kinship and Culture," in *Kinship and Culture*, ed. Francis L. K. Hsu (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transaction, 1971), 5.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid., 8.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid., 9.

stands out from that of others:

> No nuclear family would seem to give equal prominence to all its basic dyads. What actually occurs is that in each type of nuclear family one (or more) takes precedence over all the others. When a dyad is thus elevated above others, it tends to modify, magnify, reduce, or even eliminate other dyads in the kinship group. Such a dyad is designated in our hypothesis as the dominant dyad while others in the system are non-dominant dyads.[30]

Thus, the attributes of the dominant dyad are represented by the term "dominant attributes" and the attributes of the non-dominant dyads are "non-dominant attributes." "In each form of nuclear family, the dominant attributes so influence the non-dominant attributes that the latter tend to converge in the direction of the dominant attributes. The dominant attributes prevail over and give shape to all the non-dominant attributes."[31] Hsu's hypothesis is as follows: "The dominant attributes of the dominant dyad in a given kinship system tend to determine the attitudes and action patterns that the individual in such a system develops toward other dyads in this system as well as towards his relationships outside of the system."[32]

**Family**

The family is an institution that is found in all human societies. While there is a conflict and debate regarding what exactly constitutes a family, the reality of its widespread nature in varying societies is almost universally accepted.[33] In addition to the controversy regarding what comprises a family, there are two additional complications

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[30]Hsu, "Hypothesis," 9.

[31]Ibid., 10.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Raymond T. Smith, "Family: Comparative Structure," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David L. Sills (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 301.

associated with a discussion of the concept of family in the biblical world. First, there is

the reality of social and cultural changes across the timeline of the biblical narrative. In

addition, the nature of the family in both the Israelite and Greco-Roman worlds must be

considered. Second, there are the various linguistic terms that are used by each group to

describe familial relationships. Moreover, these terms often are not consistently and

accurately translated into English versions of the Bible.[34] In order to prepare for the

exploration of the family in both the Israelite and also the Greco-Roman cultures, it will

be helpful to precisely define the most common of the various groups and categories

which are commonly identified using the English word "family" with or without

modifiers.

**Domestic groups.** A domestic group is a "group of people who habitually

share a common dwelling and a common food supply."[35] These groups often vary in size

and stability. While it is possible to describe such groups as "family," this attribution is

unhelpful because of the reality that "domestic groups may be made up of individuals

between whom no kinship ties exist, and, conversely, members of one family may be

distributed over two or more domestic groups."[36] Smith asserts that these groups can be

referred to using the term "household."[37]

**Biological family.** Smith explains that "in Euro-American societies the basic

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[34]Christopher J. H. Wright, "Family," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. N. Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 2:761.

[35]Smith, "Family," 302.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid.

model of kinship and family ties is that of biological relatedness and sexual intercourse, so that kin and familial relations are thought of in terms of physical descent or sexual relations."[38] Certainly, this basic model varies in other societies and it does not exclude the development of concepts such as adoption or fictive kinship, but it does express the notion that "family" at perhaps its most basic level is formed on the basis on biological descent. However, the concept of family cannot be restricted merely to biological relation.

**Nuclear family.** This term is "most frequently used to refer to a group consisting of a man, a woman, and their socially recognized children."[39] It is also termed the "elementary," "simple," or "basic" family. The term is used to identify specific groups and the qualifying word "nuclear" implies that "this is the unit out of which more extensive family groups are built or grow."[40] While the nuclear family is typically its own domestic group in contemporary American society, it is not necessary for it to exist in isolation. Instead, it "may be contained within more extensive groups provided it is given some recognition."[41]

While it was previously accepted in general that the nuclear family was a universal human social group, either as the sole familial form or as the foundational unit upon which more complex forms of the family are constructed, this consensus is not conclusive. Instead, Levy and Fallers "have suggested that a distinction should be made

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[38]Smith, "Family," 302.

[39]Ibid., 303.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid.

between the nuclear family as a concrete group and the 'nuclear-family relationship complex.'"[42] The nuclear-family relationship complex would be comprised of the following relationships: husband-wife, father-son, father-daughter, mother-son, mother-daughter, brother-sister, brother-brother, and sister-sister.[43] Smith argues that "if one asserts that the nuclear-family relationship complex is institutionalized in all human societies–instead of speaking of the universal occurrence of nuclear family *groups*–then it is possible to account for the normal development of children brought up in groups that are not nuclear families in the restricted sense."[44] Thus, a working definition which aims at understanding the nuclear family in terms of the relationship complex of which it is comprised can be expressed as follows: the social group composed of those exercising the traditional roles of father, mother, and child(ren) typically, though not necessarily, within the same domestic group.[45]

**Compound family.** Smith defines the compound family as a "concrete group formed through the amalgamation of nuclear-family units or parts of them."[46] Thus, in

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[42]Smith, "Family," 303.

[43]Here, there is a correlation to Hsu's notion of dominant and non-dominant dyads.

[44]Smith, "Family," 303. On this issue, not a few scholars point to Malinowski's work among the Australian and Trobriand Islands which demonstrated that the typical nuclear-family father role is often taken up by the mother's brother in matrilineal societies. See Bronislaw Malinowski, *The Family among the Australian Aborigines* (New York: Shocken Books, 1963).

[45]Father and mother in this definition are to be understood in terms of the social role these individuals exercise and these identifiers do not necessarily indicate that these individuals fill these same roles in the biological family. As mentioned above, in some matrilineal societies which do not acknowledge a genetic father role, the mother's brother would fill the social role of father even though he is not the biological father.

[46]Smith, "Family," 304. Howard separates compound families into two separate categories: polygynous family groups and polyandrous family groups. While this distinction is helpful, it restricted the understanding of compound families in such a way

some societies, compound families result from polygyny. In these societies, the compound family is composed of the man, his multiple wives, and the children of his multiple wives. Compound families can also be formed by the marriage of a man and a woman who both have previously dissolved marriages and the children resulting from them. The dissolution of marriage in these cases could be the result of either divorce or death.[47]

**Joint families.** Here, Smith cites the handbook *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* for the explanation that "a joint family exists when 'two or more lineally related kinsfolk of the same sex, their spouses and offspring, occupy a single homestead and are jointly subject to the same authority or single head.'"[48] While it may seem as if joint families are simply a combination of multiple nuclear families, "joint families generally arise, exist, and persist because they carry out activities more extensive than would be possible for a nuclear-family group."[49] These joint families grow by their younger members bringing their spouse in instead of setting up a separate, independent domestic group. Smith notes that in the joint families of some societies nuclear-family groups are readily discernible inside the joint family, while in others the entire joint family blends together as one.

**Extended family.** Extended families are simply dispersed iterations of the joint

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as to exclude the second formation opportunity mentioned above. See Howard, *Cultural Anthropology*, 225-26.

[47]Smith, "Family," 304.

[48]Ibid. See also British Association for the Advancement of Science, *Notes and Queries on Anthropology,* 6th ed. (London: Routledge, 1954).

[49]Ibid.

family. While extended families do not live together in the same dwelling, they often live in close proximity and regularly participate in common activities.[50] Smith writes that "the concept of extended family really exhausts the usefulness of the word 'family' for this kind of empirical classification, since an extended family is already a short lineage and can be discussed in terms of lineage theory, or it is a kindred and may be analyzed as such."[51]

**Family development cycle.** Howard delineates three main phases on family development. The first phase is expansion. This phase begins with marriage and ends when the last child is raised to the reproductive age. There is a high level of dependency of the children on their parents during expansion.[52] The second phase is dispersion and fission. This phase begins with the first marriage of a child and ends when the last child is married.[53] The final phase is replacement. In the phase, the parents die and are replaced by the children and their families in the social structure.[54] The manner in which the parents are replaced depends on whether the society prefers primogeniture or ultimogeniture. Primogeniture refers to the practice of societies in which the oldest child, or oldest male child, inherits most or all of the property. Ultimogeniture refers to the practice of societies in which the youngest child, or youngest male child, remains in the parental household and inherits their property.[55]

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[50]Smith, "Family," 304.

[51]Ibid.

[52]Howard, *Cultural Anthropology*, 227.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ibid.

[55]Ibid.

**Todd's typology of family forms.** Hanson highlights the typology of family forms developed by Emmanuel Todd as a tool which is useful for studying family forms cross-culturally.[56] Todd identified seven family forms based on permutations of the following variables: spousal choice (determined by customs, parents, or individual choice), spousal relationship (exogamy or endogamy), division of inheritance (equality or unequal shares), and cohabitation of married sons with their parents. These seven forms can been seen in table 5.

## Genealogy

**Form.** Hanson sees genealogy as "a particular subgenre of the genre 'list.'"[57] Whether this list of kin relationships is oral or written, it may either be transmitted in a simple list form or embedded in a larger narrative.[58] For Israel especially, "kinship was a major organization principle, and for this reason genealogies, which use the idiom of kinship, became an important means of expressing all sorts of social, political, and religious relationships."[59] Genealogies are segmented, linear, or a combination of both. Segmented genealogies identify more than one member of the kinship group per generation. As a result, these "seldom extend beyond four or five generations, even in written form."[60] Linear genealogies are typically longer as they "are simply lists of names connecting an individual to an earlier ancestor by indicating the kinship relationships that

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[56]Hanson, "Kinship," 67.

[57]Hanson, "Kinship," 67.

[58]See Robert R. Wilson, "Genealogy," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. N. Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 2:930.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Hanson, "Kinship,"68.

Table 5: Seven family forms identified by Emmanuel Todd

| *Family Form* | *Spousal Choice* | *Spousal Relationship* | *Inheritance Division* | *Sons living with parents* | *Examples* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Exogamous Community Family | Parents | Exogamous | Equal | Yes | ancient Rome, China,  Russia |
| Authoritarian Family | Parents | Exogamous | Unequal–one son inherits | Yes, heir only | Germany, Japan, Korea |
| Egalitarian Nuclear Family | Free | Exogamous | Equal, delineated by rules | No | northern France and Italy, Greece |
| Absolute Nuclear Family | Free | Exogamous | No definite rules | No | US, UK, Netherlands |
| Endogamous Community Family | Custom | Endogamous | Equal, delineated by rules | Yes | ancient Israel, Muslim countries |
| Asymmetrical Community Family | Parents or Custom | Restricted Endogamous | Equal | Yes | southern India |
| Anomic Family | Free | Endogamous possible | Equality in theory, flexible in practice | Rejected in theory, accepted in practice | Indonesia, Philippines, native South Americans |

Note: the data in this table is found in Hanson, "Kinship."

tie all of the names together."[61] These genealogies only identify one member of the kinship group per generation.

**Function.** The obvious primary function of a genealogy, especially a segmented genealogy, is to communicate and describe the relationships between individual members of a kinship group:

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[61]Wilson, "Genealogy," 930.

At the level of the family, both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of the genealogy are important. Horizontally, people on the same genealogical level are related to each other as equals, while vertically people are ranked hierarchically according to the level of the genealogy which they occupy. Segmented genealogies are thus both statements of equality and statements of inequality.[62]

However, according to Wilson, linear genealogies only serve "to ground a claim to power, status, rank, office, or inheritance in a earlier ancestor."[63]

They are used to preserve tribal homogeneity or cohesion, interrelate diverse traditions, acknowledge marriage contracts between extended families, legitimate fictive kinship, maintain ethic identity and so on. But above all else, genealogies are honour claims. They seek to establish social status (ascribed honour) and thereby provide the all-important map for proper social interaction.[64]

Hood's work on genealogies includes a helpful delineation of "six basically representative functions of genealogy in antiquity."[65] These six functions are (1) identification, (2) organization, (3) magnification, (4) characterization, (5) qualification, and (6) motivation and inspiration.[66] Identification serves to identify one individual by his relationship, whether literal or fictive, to another individual. Organization is concerned with the use of genealogical data to classify individuals based upon familial or tribal lines.[67]

Magnification focuses on the use of genetic lineage as a source of family honor or pride.[68]

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[62]Wilson, "Genealogy," 931.

[63]Ibid.

[64]Richard L. Rohrbaugh, "Legitimating Sonship – A Test of Honour: A social-scientific study of Luke 4:1-30," in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context*, ed. Philip F. Esler (London: Routledge, 1995), 187.

[65]Rodney T. Hood, "The Genealogies of Jesus," in *Early Christian Origins: Studies in Honor of Harold R. Willoughby,* ed. Allen Wikgren (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961), 1.

[66]Ibid., 1-9.

[67]Ibid., 2.

[68]While Hood discusses magnification as its own category, it is best to see it as a subset of characterization. Neyrey, Malina, and others have shown the close relationship in the ancient world between the character an individual possessed and the honor and shame he experienced in society. See Jerome H. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in*

Characterization, which leads to the increase or decrease of one's status in society, highlights the fact that an individual's lineage describes, based upon that lineage, what type of person he will become in society.[69] Indeed, genealogy "tells us not only *who* the genealogical subject is, but *what kind of person* we should expect him to be."[70] Qualification is the aspect of genealogy which means that based upon an individual's birth, he attains various rights and privileges in society.[71] Finally, the function of motivation and inspiration is to describe the tendency of genetic lineage to motivate or inspire an individual in the ancient world to imitate or follow the lives of those who have preceded him in his lineage.[72]

**Metaphor.** Wilson notes that "in societies such as early Israel, where kinship is a basis for organizing the society, the language of genealogy, which has its origins in the need to represent actual kinship ties, is used metaphorically to express other social relationships where real kinship is not involved."[73] Further, he writes that "if a genealogy can be used to relate members of an actual family, then it can also be used to express the political relationships between families that are not actually related to each other."[74] The same is true for other social and religious relationships as well. Thus, the metaphorical

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*the Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998); Malina, *The New Testament World*; and Rohrbaugh, "Legitimating Sonship."

[69]Hood, "Genealogies," 5.

[70]Rohrbaugh, "Legitimating Sonship," 188. Emphasis original.

[71]Hood, "Genealogies," 6.

[72]Ibid., 8.

[73]Wilson, "Genealogy," 930.

[74]Ibid., 931.

use of genealogical idiom would seem to overlap with the first category of pseudo-kinship outlined by Pitt-Rivers – "the figurative use of kin terms, which may be little more than a convention of speech or which may, on the other hand, designate a status within the society or within a specific context."[75]

## Kinship and Family in the NT World

As noted above, kinship in the ancient world is a broad category that is comprised of "a series of social groups that dominate the domestic organization and the process of socialization, the use and transfer of property, the settlement of disputes, religious activities such as ancestor worship, and certain political relationships."[76] Indeed, the kin group "is the most significant in-group. Kin share common qualities and make enemies because of these qualities."[77] Kinship is the focal point of Mediterranean society.[78] Further, Malina writes that:

> Persons are so embedded in groups that the group and the individual are in large measure co-extensive, both psychologically and in every other way. Collectivistic cultures may be defined as cultures in which persons understand themselves as parts of groups or collectivities such as family, tribe, or nation. Individuals are defined by the groups to which they belong and do not understand themselves as having a separate identity. They are motivated by group norms rather than individual needs or aspirations, and strenuously avoid articulating personal goals or giving them priority over the goals of the group.[79]

This collectivistic identity stands in stark contrast to the individualism of most modern

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[75]Pitt-Rivers, "Kinship: Pseudo-Kinship," 408.

[76]Goody, "Descent Groups," 401.

[77]Bruce J. Malina, "Understanding New Testament Persons," in *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation*, ed. Richard L. Rohrbaugh (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996), 49. These common qualities are characteristics such as "honor, strength, reliability, and beauty." See ibid., 49.

[78]Ibid., 50.

[79]Bruce J. Malina, "Who Are We? Who Are They? Who Am I? Who Are You (Sing.)? Explaining Identity, Social and Individual," *Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi* 24, no. 1 (2007): 103-9, 106.

Western societies. As a result, the kinship system in the ancient Mediterranean world is considerably different than the American kindred system of family relationships.[80] Table 6 illustrates the major distinctions between kinship in the ancient world and modern American society.

Table 6: Kinship in first-century Judea and twentieth-century U.S. contrasted

| Variable | First-century Judea | Twentieth-century U.S. |
|---|---|---|
| Family form | Endogamous community (multigenerational) | Absolute nuclear (dual generational) |
| Spousal choice | Controlled by custom and parents | Free choice by couple |
| Marriage strategy | Endogamous (ideal) | Exogamous (required by law) |
| Wedding endowment | Formal: dowry, indirect dowry, and bridewealth | Informal: family gifts |
| Married couple lives with groom's parents | Yes | No |
| Inheritance distribution | Oldest son: double Other sons: single Daughters: dowries | No inheritance rules |

Note: The data in this table is found in Hanson, "Kinship," 64

Finally, in recent history there have been numerous works on the family in its Jewish, Greek, and Roman social contexts.[81] Nonetheless, while there are undoubtedly

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[80]Hellerman, *Ancient Church as Family*, 27.

[81]On the Jewish family, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Jewish Family in Antiquity,* Brown Judaic Studies 289 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993); James S. Jeffers, "Jewish and Christian Families in First-Century Rome," in *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome*, ed. Karl P. Donfried and Peter Richardson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); Raphael Patai, *Sex and Family in the Bible and the Middle East* (New York: Macmillan, 1959); James A. Sanders, "The Family in the Bible," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 32, no. 3 (2002): 117-28; and J. Andrew Dearman, "The Family in the Old Testament,"

aspects which are unique to the social norms and kinship descent group structures of each culture, it seems best to conclude with Blickenstaff that "as a social construct, the definition of 'family' varies across geographical, class, and economic lines but not (at least in the first century) across 'ethnic' lines. Differences between Jewish and Gentile families of a similar class apparently did not exist."[82] Cohen consistently shares a similar report from the essays in his volume:

> The Jewish family in antiquity seems not to have been distinctive by the power of its Jewishness; rather, its structure, ideals, and dynamics, seem to have been virtually identical with those of its ambient culture(s)...The Jewish values and expectations governing parent-child relationships were entirely consonant with, and almost indistinguishable from, those of Greco-Roman society... Philo's fundamental conception of the parent-child relationship is consonant with, and almost indistinguishable from, that of Greco-Roman society.[83]

As a result, the major components of the predominant kinship system in the Mediterranean world will be discussed below.

**Descent Group Structure**

The main kinship system in the Mediterranean world is a unilineal descent

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*Interpretation* 52, no. 2 (1998): 117-29. On the Greek family, see W. K. Lacey, *The Family in Classical Greece*, Aspects of Greek and Roman Life (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968); J. K. Campbell, *Honour, Family, and Patronage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); and Ernestine Friedl, *Vasilika: A Village in Modern Greece*, Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1962). On the Roman family, see Suzanne Dixon, *The Roman Family* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Beryl Rawson, *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986); Beryl Rawson, *Marriage, Divorce, and Children in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); and Beryl Rawson, "'The Roman Family' in Recent Research: State of the Question," *Biblical Interpretation* 11, no. 2 (2003): 119-38.

[82]Blickenstaff, *While the Bridegroom Is with Them*, 114. She makes note of Dixon's caveat that the source literature on this subject "is predominantly a record of the norms of the upper class." See Dixon, *The Roman Family*, 17. Cf. also Jeffers, "Jewish and Christian Families," 129: "Family life among the Jews and Christians in first-century Rome did not differ much from family life among pagan Romans among the lower classes at the time. The key differences probably were a stronger emphasis on religious education along with heightened ethical demands."

[83]Cohen, *Jewish Family in Antiquity*, 2-3.

group. Specifically, it is patrilineal. Hellerman identifies this kinship system as a

patrilineal kinship group or PKG.[84] Simply put, "an individual must possess the

patriarch's blood to be part of the family."[85] Within the PKG, the rights of inheritance,

succession, and descent are all agnatically transmitted.[86] A strict agnatic or patrilineal

recruitment strategy means that it is only those individuals who can trace their lineage to

the patriarch through direct male heirs who can claim to be a true member of the kinship

group.[87] It is through this agnatic line of male descent that property, office, and group

membership pass from one generation to the next. The collectivist culture of the PKG

extended even to these rights – they were viewed as belonging to the patriline as a whole

and needed to be preserved as such.[88]

**Marriage Strategy**

The marriage strategy within the PKG is where there is some distinction

between Jewish, Greek, and Roman families.  As was shown in Tables 6 and 7 above, in

Ancient Israel, the preferred marriage strategy was endogamy.[89] However, in the Greek

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[84]Hellerman, *Ancient Church as Family*, 30. Hellerman explains in a footnote what Hanson describes in his articles on the Herodians – unilineal descent groups periodically supplement their family honor by the means of cognatic descent. See ibid., 237n2, and K. C. Hanson, "The Herodians and Mediterranean Kinship Part I: Genealogy and Descent," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 19, no. 3 (1989): 75-84, K. C. Hanson, "The Herodians and Mediterranean Kinship Part II: Marriage and Divorce," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 19, no. 4 (1989): 142-51, and K. C. Hanson, "The Herodians and Mediterranean Kinship Part III: Economics," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 20, no. 1 (1990): 10-21.

[85]Hellerman, *Ancient Church as Family*, 30.

[86]See above, p. 94, for Rivers' differentiation of these three rights.

[87]Hellerman has two helpful diagrams outlining the recruitment strategies of both the American kindred group system and the PKG. See Hellerman, *Ancient Church as Family*, 28-29.

[88]Ibid., 57.

[89]Endogamous marriage here does not mean that they married within the same

and Roman family, exogamy was the norm. Hellerman explains the reasons behind either choice: "for descent group societies, a good marriage is one that enhances the honor and position of the extended family. Endogamous marriages strengthen the kin group from within by keeping resources within the group. Exogamous marriages serve to build alliances with other families."[90]

**Residential Configuration**

The residences of the PKG were patrilocal – "sons are generally kept as close to their father's house as possible."[91] "Members of the patrilineal kinship group live together (patrilocal residence): fathers, sons, and unmarried daughters – along with the father's wife and the wives of his sons."[92] Malina writes that typically, only the eldest son remained in the father's home: "in the first-century world, adult male children normally remained within or close by the parental household, while females were married out. Usually the firstborn male will inherit his father's house; hence he remains in the household, with his married brothers living nearby."[93]

**PKG Family Structure**

The most common PKG domestic group was a joint family. This joint family shared a common dwelling and a common food supply. They would have been both a

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nuclear or even extended family. Rather, it was endogamous marriage to the "closest kin allowable by law or custom." See Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches*, The Family, Religion, and Culture, ed. Don S. Browning and Ian S. Evison (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 42.

[90]Hellerman, *Ancient Church as Family*, 31.

[91]Ibid., 32.

[92]Ibid., 57.

[93]Malina, *New Testament World*, 126.

producing and a consuming unit.[94] As expressed above, "a joint family exists when 'two or more lineally related kinsfolk of the same sex, their spouses and offspring, occupy a single homestead and are jointly subject to the same authority or single head.'"[95] Thus, it is a combination of nuclear families. These nuclear families band together because they can be more productive together than apart. While in some societies, nuclear families have clearly defined lines within the joint family, in the PKG the joint family blended as one unit under the authority of the patriarch. The extended family would live nearby and likely share some common activities within the domestic group. Malina describes the typical household:

> In the Mediterranean world, the household might include father, mother, the firstborn son and his family, along with other unmarried children. These would live in close proximity, perhaps even sharing the same courtyard with other married sons and their family. This sort of family tends to be the effective social, residence, consumption, and production unit.[96]

With respect to Todd's family types as outlined by Hanson in table 5 above, the typical PKG family was either an Endogamous or Exogamous Community Family. The Jewish PKG would have been typically endogamous while the Greco-Roman PKG would have been typically exogamous. However, in either of these cultures, there may be some variance from these typical social norms for the elevation of the honor and status of the family in their society.

**Fathers and Sons in the PKG**

As would be expected from a *patrilineal* kinship group, the father-son relationship is the dominant dyad. In fact, Frederik Barth writes that "one could make a

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[94]Hellerman, *Ancient Church as Family*, 57.

[95]Smith, "Family," 304.

[96]Malina, *New Testament World,* 122.

very good case for the father-son relationship as the dominant relationship in most

Middle Eastern kinship systems."[97] The father-son relationship as the dominant dyad is

especially the case "where political life is structured by patrilineal descent groups and

productive resources are held collectively by patrilineal groups."[98] Here, "the importance

of the father-son relationship is overwhelming" and "the family system can be

characterized as patrilocal and patriarchal."[99] Malina notes "in the first-century

Mediterranean, nearly the entire emphasis is on the male line of descent."[100] Father-son

dominance is also evident in the NT: "the relationship that is most spoken of in the New

Testament texts is that between father and son."[101]

Hsu explains that the "basic attributes of the father-son dyad are continuity,

inclusiveness, asexuality, and authority."[102] Continuity simply means that "the relationship

is continuous because every father is a son, and every son, in the normal course of events,

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[97]Fredrik Barth, "Role Dilemmas and Father-Son Dominance in Middle Eastern Kinship Systems," in *Kinship and Culture*, ed. Francis L. K. Hsu (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transaction, 1971), 90. Obviously, the PKG under discussion is not a contemporary Middle Eastern Kinship system. However, it is certainly a precursor and Hanson notes that Barth's work in this essay is especially relevant to biblical kinship issues. See Hanson, "BTB Readers Guide: Kinship," 186. Cf. Moxnes commenting on the father-son relationship in John's Gospel: "The place of the father-son relationship within the total family structure may be interpreted in light of a study by Frederik Barth." See Halvor Moxnes, "What Is Family? Problems in Constructing Early Christian Families," in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor*, ed. Halvor Moxnes (New York: Routledge, 1997), 34.

[98]Barth, "Role Dilemmas," 90.

[99]Ibid.

[100]Malina, *New Testament World*, 121. Cf. Eva Marie Lassen, "The Roman Family: Ideal and Metaphor," in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor*, ed. Halvor Moxnes (New York: Routledge, 1997), 111: "The Romans did not view themselves as a society of mothers, daughters, and brothers, but rather as a society of fathers and sons."

[101]Moxnes, "What Is Family?," 34.

[102]Hsu, "Hypothesis," 13.

is a father. Therefore every father-son dyad is but a link in an everlasting chain of father-son dyads."[103] The father-son relationship is inclusive because fathers often have more than one son and, as a result, the dyad is tolerant toward sharing with others.[104] Asexuality is an attribute of the father-son dyad because this relationship has nothing to do with sex. The attribute of authority expresses the important notion that the father understands that he is in authority over the son and the son understands that he is under the authority of his father.

Barth notes that these attributes are clearly expressed in the structure of the PKG: "the attributes of continuity, inclusiveness, authority, and asexuality have institutional correlates in patrilineality, joint property and responsibility, paternal authority, and incest taboos embracing the spouses of close agnates."[105] These attributes are "continually expressed and confirmed in etiquette summarized under the heading of respect behavior by the son towards the father."[106] Specifically, authority and continuity are seen to be major attributes with a significant influence on the surrounding culture and social world of the PKG.[107]

**Authority**

For the father in the culture dominated by the father-son dyad, authority is directly related to honor and shame. "The honor of a father, elder, patriarch depends to a

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[103]Hsu, "Hypothesis," 13.

[104]Ibid. Inclusiveness can be seen more clearly when contrasted to its opposite. The husband-wife dyad is typically exclusive in Western culture. The husband has one wife and vice versa. This relationship is intolerant toward sharing with others.

[105]Barth, "Role Dilemmas," 90.

[106]Ibid.

[107]See Hsu, "Hypothesis," 14 and 24.

very great extent on his being able to impose his will upon the members of the entire family."[108] But it is not solely the honor of the father that is at stake, but the honor of the entire kinship group. Malina explains that "social groups, like the family, village, or region, possess a collective honor in which the members participated."[109] Further, "the head of the group is responsible for the honor of the group with reference to outsiders, and symbolizes the group's honor as well. Hence members of the group owe loyalty, respect, and obedience of a kind which commits their individual honor without limit and without compromise."[110]

The honor of the son is inextricably linked to this collective honor as well. Thus, submission to authority is understood as the "obedience that a son owes his father."[111] Indeed, "family loyalty – doing whatever is necessary to uphold the honor of the family in public – is the quintessential Mediterranean value."[112] A son who did not submit to the authority of his father would bring shame on himself, his father, and his entire kinship group. Obedience, discipline, and respect are non-negotiable demands placed on the son in the father-son dyad of the PKG.[113]

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[108]John J. Pilch, "'Beat His Ribs While He is Young' (Sir 30:12): A Window on the Mediterranean World," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 23, no. 3 (1993): 101-13, 104.

[109]Malina, *New Testament World*, 45.

[110]Ibid.

[111]Moxnes, "What Is Family?," 34.

[112]Rohrbaugh, "Legitimating Sonship," 186. This loyalty is valued so highly because "family honor determines everything. It determines who can marry whom, who will do business with whom, who will eat with whom, even who can initiate a conversation. For this reason, aspersions cast on lineage, that is on family honour, are the most serious insults the Middle East has to offer. They are considered vulgar in the extreme." See ibid.

[113]Barth, "Role Dilemmas," 91.

Because of this mutual respect for and commitment to the collective honor of the PKG, the father's authority over the son is generally expressed not in brutal power or dominance, but rather "by conviction on the part of the subordinates of the superior's right, duty, or privilege to exercise authority just as it is their right, duty, or privilege to obey it."[114] In addition to family honor, the continuous nature of the father-son dyad also contributes to this conviction since sons see themselves as those who will wield the same authority in the future.[115] Hsu explains the accepted nature of the attribute of authority in the father-son dyad:

> Nurtured in this attribute, both the father and the son are attuned to its necessity. The superior does not have to disguise his power because he knows this is his due, and the subordinate has no need to disguise his obeisance since it is not necessary to be ashamed of it. Authority and compliance to authority are therefore carried out openly and elaborately with no qualms on either side.[116]

Due to this acceptance, "the individual reared in the father-son dominated system will have no resentment against benevolent authority; in fact, he will love it."[117]

**Continuity**

As stated above, continuity in the father-son dyad is due to the fact that in the normal course of events each son will become a father. In the PKG, because the father-son relationship is the dominant dyad, this transition from son to father includes the concepts of inheritance, succession, and descent. Inheritance is focused on the transmission of property, succession is focused on the transmission of an office, and descent is focused on the transmission of membership in the kinship group and all that

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[114]Hsu, "Hypothesis," 13.

[115]Ibid.

[116]Ibid., 24.

[117]Ibid.

this membership entails.

**Inheritance.** Typically, in the NT world, it was the firstborn son who would inherit his father's house.[118] The eldest son would remain in his father's house for this very purpose. While the dowry can be understood as a pre-mortem inheritance, the inheritance of property and wealth at the death of the male head of the family was a right given only to sons in the PKG.[119]

**Succession.** In the PKG, succession involves the transmission of the father's station or position in society to the son. In the case of succession, the focus is mostly on his profession. In addition, it potentially includes the transmission of the father's office as the head of the PKG upon his death to his eldest son.

The father's station or position is transmitted because "males follow the occupation of their father and remain in the same inherited social status."[120] Indeed, "what a person's parents did for a living usually determined what that person did: farmers' children became farmers, potters' children became potters."[121] This transmission of profession is not simply based on the preference of the father, instead it is an aspect of their society: "membership in the craftsmen's guilds of the preindustrial society was normally based on kinship, just as membership in the elite classes derived from birth."[122]

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[118]Malina, *New Testament World*, 126.

[119]For the notion of dowry as a pre-mortem inheritance, see Hanson, "Kinship," 73.

[120]Malina, *New Testament World*, 126.

[121]Hanson, "Kinship," 76.

[122]Malina, *New Testament World*, 123. This correspondence between the father-son relationship and the way society functions is likely a case of what Hsu discusses when he explains that kinship systems play a significant part in social and cultural

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However, more than his profession will be transmitted to the son who succeeds his father as head of the PKG. Moxnes explains that a son is transmitted "not only the property of his father, but also his role and authority upon his death."[123] This aspect of transmission is the ultimate expression of the continuous nature of the father-son dyad in the PKG: the son who was previously under the authority of his father becomes the bearer of that same authority.

**Descent.** The concept of descent is concerned with transmission of membership in the kinship group. It is by being a descendant of his father that a son gains admittance to the PKG. However, for the members of the PKG, membership in the group meant more than simply sharing a common name. It was directly linked to the shared honor a PKG possessed. Malina explains that "honor, both ascribed and acquired, is often symbolized by blood (one's blood relations, group) and name. A good name fundamentally means adequate honor to carry on the social interactions necessary for decent human existence."[124] Collective honor, family honor resulted from shared blood. Honor was transmitted "via birth. An honour status is *ascribed* the day one is born and is derived from the standing one's family has – and has always had – in the village (honour as status or precedence). Because it is derived from birth, all members of the family, both male and female, have the same general honour rating, though significant differences could also occur within families (birth-order is an obvious example)."[125] Honor was

developments. See Hsu, "Hypothesis," 5.

[123]Moxnes, "What Is Family?," 34.

[124]Malina, *New Testament World*, 55.

[125]Rohrbaugh, "Legitimating Sonship," 185.

inherited from the father.[126] "In publicly acknowledging a boy to be his son, that is a member of his genealogical tree, a father not only accepted responsibility for him and made him his heir, he determined his status (honour) in the community as well."[127]

This status determination has a dramatic effect on society. Members of this society were expected to act in accordance with their predetermined status in it.[128] Membership in a PKG provided an "all-important map for proper social interaction."[129] Indeed,

> ancestry both signified and determines character. Thus in the New Testament we are told: 'Cretans are always liars, vicious brutes, lazy gluttons' (Tit. 1:12); 'Judeans have no dealings with Samaritans' (John 4:9); nothing good can 'come out of Nazareth' (John 1:46). Such stereotyping worked because antiquity believed the dictum: Like father like son. 'Son of' thus tells us not only who the genealogical subject is, but what kind of person we should expect him to be.[130]

### Figurative "Son(s) of" Phrases in the PKG Context

In the course of this analysis of kinship, family, and genealogy in general, as well as the examination of the father-son dyad in the specific context of the PKG, numerous functions of these concepts and relationships have emerged. The task now is to channel this analysis into a framework for the interpretation of the "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. First it must be recognized that any "son(s) of" phrase ought to be understood as a genealogical statement. This classification is true whether the "son(s) of" phrase is literal or figurative and whether the phrase is found in isolation or in a series of "son(s)

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[126]Hanson, "Kinship," 66. Similarly, Barth writes that "the honor of the father is transmitted to the son, and the son's feats of courage and strength sustain the honor of the father, of the joint patriline." See Barth, "Role Dilemmas," 90.

[127]Rohrbaugh, "Legitimating Sonship," 187.

[128]Ibid., 186.

[129]Ibid., 187.

[130]Ibid., 188.

of" constructions. Second, because these phrases are genealogical statements, the categories outlined by Hood above should at the very least have some level of incorporation into the final framework for interpretation. Third, in each occurrence of a figurative "son(s) of" phrase, the human referent plays the role of son.[131] As a result, the interpretive framework should employ at minimum the major attributes at work in the father-son dyad – authority and continuity. Here, these should emphasize the role of the son in the attribute. It is with these statements in mind that the following interpretive categories are proposed: Identification, Participation, Submission, Characterization, Succession, Inheritance, and Motivation.[132]  These seven categories will be explained below.

**Identification**

Under Hood's functional classifications, identification is performing a genealogical statement's simplest function – to indicate who an individual is and who they are not. John was the son of Zebedee; he is not any other John. For the figurative uses of "son(s) of," identification is still at work. A son receives his identity from his father and is distinguished from others because of it. For example, a "son of light" is identifiable by his relationship to light. In addition, it is clear that he is not a "son of darkness." Thus, whether literal or figurative, identification describes both who a son is and who he is not.

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[131]In effect, the reader self-identifies with the "son" and not the "father."

[132]Just as with Hood's six functions of genealogy, these are not mutually exclusive and there is likely to be some overlap between the categories.

**Participation**

   This category has most in common with Hood's Organization. However, it acknowledges that membership in a kinship group is much more than being organized into a list of names transmitted through the written or spoken word. Instead, it incorporates the concept of descent whereby membership in the PKG is transmitted from father to son. The son's participation as a member of the kinship group will result in him bringing either honor or shame upon his family. Thus, it would also include Hood's magnification – participation as a member of the PKG would evoke pride in the individual as he shares in the collective honor of his kinship group. Figuratively, participation as a "son" not only establishes a link with a "father" but also with fellow "sons." Participants in this fictive kinship group possess a collective honor that they acquire at membership. Their participation in the kinship group has the potential to enrich the group's honor or diminish it.

**Submission**

   As noted above, authority is a major attribute of the father-son relationship. It is an innate aspect of the father-son dyad in the PKG. Both parties welcome it. Submission is not seen as a duty, but something in which the son can delight. This category is represented to a degree in Hood's motivation. However, here, it expresses not a desire to "live up to" one's ancestors, but rather an expectation of both the kinship group and the social world that the son will remain loyal, obedient, and respectful to his father. Figuratively, the "sons of the kingdom" are expected to live by kingdom ethics. They live in submission to the demands of the kingdom and its King.

## Characterization

For Hood, this category captures the ancient world's notion that genealogy represented for an individual, and to the rest of society, "what sort of person he was."[133] Thus, a "son(s) of" phrase is descriptive of who the son *is* because of his father.[134] Figuratively, the son is characterized by whatever or whoever is his father. A son of the devil, for example, shares his father's character. This category is also related to the category of submission – a son with his father's character will be both ready and able to do what his father wishes. Likewise, the son's character and actions reveal his true lineage.

## Succession

As expressed above, succession is focused on the transmission of office from father to son. This transmission included his profession, and, in some cases, the son's succession as the head of the PKG upon his father's death. Hood's qualification is closely related to this category. Being a son of a particular father brings with it important qualifications in the ancient world. The son is qualified to succeed the father in his office or profession. Figuratively, the "sons of those who murdered the prophets" reveal that they are truly their father's sons when they continue their father's opposition to God's appointed messenger.

## Inheritance

Being a son of a father – a future father in the patriline – meant that the son enjoyed the privilege of sharing in his father's inheritance. His father's wealth and

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[133]Hood, "Genealogies," 5.

[134]Cf. Rohrbaugh, "Legitimating Sonship," 188.

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property would be passed on to him. Under Hood's classification system, inheritance is only perhaps included under qualification. But even there, inheritance plays a minimal role in comparison to its significance in the NT world. Here, inheritance represents what will be passed on from father to son, whether good or bad. Figuratively, when the NT authors describe believers as sons of God, they are reinforcing the idea that, as sons, believers have obtained and share in an inheritance with Christ.

**Motivation**

While Hood has a similar category, motivation here is different. For him, motivation conveys the idea that genealogy can motivate an individual to imitate or follow the lives of his ancestors. It encourages them to "live up to" their lineage. Here, motivation is focused not on the past, but rather, on the present. As such, it will overlap with both participation and submission. As a member of the PKG, the son both possesses and shapes the collective honor of the family. His actions have the power to increase the PKG's collective honor or bring them shame. For a son, his most significant impact on family honor is found in his submission and loyalty to his father. His disobedience would shame the entire PKG.[135] Thus, as a son, he would be motivated, and even delighted, to do his father's will. Figuratively, this category will function similarly to submission: the sons of the kingdom will live by kingdom ethics in obedience to the King. However, this category exists to emphasize what likely would have been evident to the original readers: the obedience of a son to a father was typically not a reluctant or resentful product of the relationship. Rather, it was given joyfully and willingly to him. Sons should be motivated to obey their father simply because he is their father.

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[135]Pilch, "Beat His Ribs," 104.

**Conclusion**

Kinship language must be interpreted with an understanding of how these terms and concepts functioned in the ancient world – their social context. Kinship, family, and genealogy play a major role in any society. This major role is even more significant in the PKG of the NT world. The NT authors would not employ father-son language idly in a culture in which the father-son relationship is the dominant dyad. This relationship took a specific form, possessed specific attributes, and functioned to shape the son's life in specific ways. The framework presented above takes the form, attributes, and functions of the father-son relationship in the PKG context into account and will enable a much more accurate and thorough interpretation of the figurative use of these "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. The next chapter is devoted to this venture entirely.

CHAPTER 5

CLASSIFICATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE
FIGURATIVE USE OF "SON(S) OF" IN THE NT

**Introduction**

Of the 301 uses of υἱός plus the genitive in the NT, forty-two of these

occurrences were classified in chapter 3 as figurative uses. These forty-two "son(s) of"

phrases figuratively relate human individuals to human or other non-divine personal

beings or groups, non-human objects or concepts, and even God as Father. While the first

category may have a degree of overlap with the concept of pseudo-kinship, the last two

categories do not.[1] The first of these latter categories lies outside the realm of pseudo-

kinship because it describes the relationship between persons in kinship terms. On the

other hand, this category includes the figurative description of an individual using the

idiom of genealogy to relate him or her to a concept or thing. In the second of these

categories, a figurative description of the relationship between human beings and our

Creator cannot be described in purely sociological or anthropological terms. Here,

theology must be brought into the discussion. By exploring the father-son relationship in

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[1]Pseudo-kinship is helpfully summarized and presented by Pitt-Rivers: "(1) There is, first of all, the figurative use of kin terms, which may be little more than a convention of speech or which may, on the other hand, designate a status within the society or within a specific context. (2) There are also customs whereby a person is given the status of kin by attribution rather than by birth – and this is commonly called "fictive" or "artificial" kinship. (3) There are also institutions which, in some ways, resemble kinship and are named by analogy with it, yet which possess a separate nature and accord a distinct status." See Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Kinship: Pseudo-Kinship," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David L. Sills (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 408. For more information, see the discussion of Kinship in chap. 4.

the ancient world, chapter 4 developed a framework of interpretation to apply to these figurative "son(s) of" phrases. Here, the categories of Identification, Participation, Submission, Characterization, Succession, Inheritance, and Motivation will be used to interpret the figurative "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. It will be shown that using these categories will provide a more holistic and accurate understanding of these phrases than simply relying on a singular aspect or a myopic understanding of the father-son relationship.

<div align="center">

**Human-Human or Other Non-Divine**
**Personal Beings Figurative Use**
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As stated above, this category is an aspect of pseudo-kinship whereby kinship terminology is used figuratively in order to describe a non-kin relationship. In the case of the figurative uses in this category, the relationships between unrelated individuals are described using father-son kinship terminology. While the individuals are not truly father and son, their relationship possesses the typical qualities of kinship which results in the figurative description using this terminology.

**Sons of the Pharisees**

On two separate occasions, NT authors refer to the sons of the Pharisees using υἱός plus the genitive. These occurrences are found in Matthew 12:27, as well as its parallel in Luke 11:19, and Acts 23:6.[2] While in both of these cases, the "son(s) of"

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[2]Cf. Robert Shirock "Whose Exorcists Are They? The Referents of οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν at Matthew 12.27/Luke 11.19," *JSNT* 46 (1992): 41-51. Shirock argues that "your sons" has Jesus' disciples as the referent. According to him, it would then carry a meaning of "your kinsmen." While it is possible for υἱός to have this meaning, Shirock's argument is not compelling. On p. 49, he asks "Is it not likely that, he looked as his accusers, pointed to the disciples (twelve of them? seventy [-two] of them?) and said, 'And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them?' Why should we search for unknown Jewish exorcists in the background when there are known, reputed, kingdom-of-God exorcists standing before us in the scene?" The answer to his first question is a

phrase could refer to the literal male descendants of Pharisees, it seems best to understand

them as belonging to a common usage for "son" in both Hebrew and Greek – depicting

the relationship of a person to an academic, professional, or social group. However, even

phrases in this standard category will yield better interpretations using the suggested

framework to explain the use of father-son terminology. In these passages, the pupils or

disciples of the Pharisees are υἱοί.

In the Synoptic pericope, Jesus responds to accusations that his exorcism

ministry is empowered by Satan himself. In his response, he asks "If I cast out demons by

Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges"

(Matt 12:27 ESV). Jesus' argument here is *ad hominem* – he is appealing to the fact that

the Pharisees could also be linked to exorcists.[3] In this case, the "son(s) of" phrase

functions in reverse. Rather than illustrating who the son is by means of linking him to

his father, it is the fathers – those currently opposing Jesus – who are identified by a

reference to their sons. Since they are the figurative fathers of their students, they

collectively participate in the activities of their sons. The Pharisees would refrain from

attributing the exorcisms of their followers to Beelzebul because doing so would

implicate themselves as well. For, they share a collective honor as members of the same

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resounding "no" and thus becomes the cause for the second. Jesus was not so naive. He
knew what the answer from the crowd would have been were his disciples the referent:
"If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign
those of his household" (Matt 10:25 ESV). If Jesus had asked "by whom do my disciples
cast out demons," the response from the Pharisees would have came with the same
accusation they leveled against him: "by Beelzebul." If the disciples were his intended
referent, his argument would lose its logic as well as its persuasive force.

[3]Turner and France are representative of this modern consensus. See David L.
Turner, *Matthew*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2008), 321; and R. T. France, *The
Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 479. For evidence of
Jewish exorcists see Mark 9:38; Acts 19:13; Tob 8:1-3; 1QapGen 20:29; Josephus' *Ant.*
8.45-49; *J.W.* 7.185.

fictive kin group. Further, the students of the Pharisees are either performing exorcisms in submission to their figurative fathers, which would add credence to Jesus' retort, or they are not in submission to their fathers. Both scenarios would result in shame being cast upon themselves – the disobedience of a son is shameful for the entire kinship group – and, on the other hand, if the sons are simply executing their fathers commands but are performing their works by means of demonic empowerment, as the Pharisees themselves imply against Jesus, this activity would be shameful as well. Similarly, if they malign the character of their students in this manner, they do the same to themselves since their sons possess the character that they themselves have passed on to their students as their figurative fathers. Since sons succeed their fathers into a predetermined profession in the ancient world, more weight is given to Jesus' argument. The followers of the Pharisees only do what their figurative fathers have done. If the sons cast out demons by Beelzebul, how much more the fathers who have trained them in their craft? While motivation typically describes the sons being delightfully motivated to do the will of the father, here it carries more weight because the focus is on the father. Again, it is likely that these followers of the Pharisees are doing the work of exorcism at the behest of their figurative fathers. They delight to do this work. If their work is evil, then the Pharisees will have polluted the role of figurative father as benevolent authority with their own malevolence. This admission will certainly not be made by them and, as a result, Jesus' response is logically compelling – the Pharisees own followers cast out demons, if the explanation for Jesus' exorcism ministry is that it is empowered demonically, theirs is as well. The Pharisees cannot grant this premise without implicating themselves in it, so they must concede that both the exorcism ministry of Jesus and that of their own followers are not

necessarily demonic in nature. Jesus uses their figurative understanding of the father-son relationship to vindicate his ministry before his disciples and the crowds. This logic of his runs much deeper than a simple metaphor for close association.

In Acts 23:6, the Apostle Paul refers to himself as a υἱὸς Φαρισαίων. This self-description is not surprising since Paul elsewhere identifies himself as a Pharisee. As was mentioned above, this use of υἱός could be identifying a literal male descendant as is common for the term; Paul could be describing his father and grandfather as Pharisees with this phrase. However, from the context, it seems much more likely that Paul is using this phrase to emphasize the pseudo-kinship bond in which he participates with the other Pharisees present for they too are υἱοὶ Φαρισαίων.[4] Paul's reference to Pharisaism and the resurrection was a plea that the other Pharisees would recognize not only that they shared a common belief, but more importantly that they shared a common intellectual heritage. Thus, Paul identified himself with the Pharisees and verbally recognized their common participation in the same pseudo-kinship group. While Paul's belief in Jesus the Messiah was a point of separation, his belief in the resurrection, in contrast to the Sadducees, was in full submission to the Pharisaic instruction he had received. Further, by identifying himself as a member of their fictive kin group, Paul was appealing to the fact that he and the other Pharisees present shared a collective honor. Any shame brought upon Paul was effectively brought against the entire figurative kinship group because they share a common character as υἱοὶ Φαρισαίων. In addition, by appealing to their fellow fictive sonship, Paul is motivating the Pharisees to come to his aide against those who might

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[4]Cf. Peterson: "This is not necessarily a claim that his father was a Pharisee, but more generally could mean that his upbringing and education were in the Pharisaic tradition." See David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles,* PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 616.

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challenge their honor, namely, the Sadducees. As a result, the Pharisees defend their collective honor: "We find nothing wrong in this man. What if a spirit or an angel spoke to him?" (Acts 23:9 ESV).

**Sons of Those Who Murdered
the Prophets**

In Jesus' seventh woe against the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:31, he denounces them as υἱοί τῶν φονευσάντων τοὺς πφοφήτας. While υἱός here could be referring to the literal male descendants of these prophet murderers, based on the context, especially the phrase "brood of vipers" in verse 33, it seems best to conclude that Jesus is using this figurative "son(s) of" phrase to describe the scribes and Pharisees using father-son terminology. Although scholars are correct to recognize the element of characterization present in this use of father-son language, this "son(s) of" phrase expresses more than simple negative characterization.[5]

In employing this phrase against the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus is saying that instead of being identified as those who honor the tombs of the prophets, the Jewish religious leaders should be identified with their murderers. Indeed, in their rejection of Jesus, they are demonstrating their own participation in this figurative kinship group of prophet murderers. For the reader who is familiar with the father-son relationship in the ancient world, this "son(s) of" phrase brings with it an element of foreshadowing in Matthew's narrative. By describing the scribes and Pharisees as sons of those who murdered the prophets, the language implicitly describes them as those who submit to

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[5]For example, see Craig Blomberg, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NAC, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992); D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, *EBC*, vol. 8, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984); Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992); and John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

those who murdered the prophets. As sons, they will do what their figurative fathers have done. Their fathers' work, however sinister, will be theirs as well. Thus, it would have been understood that they too would oppose the messenger of God in their day – Jesus. As true sons of their fathers, they would not even shrink back from murder in their pursuit of silencing their opposition. Their sinister lineage likewise reveals their true character. Not only do they oppose Jesus in submission to their figurative fathers, but also because their actions flow out of the character they have had passed down to them from their prophet-murdering fathers. Similar to the idea of submission, with regard to succession, this "son(s) of" phrase describes how these sons are negatively qualified to be those who stand in murderous opposition to God's chosen messenger. Finally, Jesus' denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees must not be understood as a mere heaping up of guilt. Rather, it is a call for them to turn from their ways, repent, and recognize the reality that Messiah has come. Jesus' figurative use of the father-son relationship bears witness to this fact. If it was simply evidence of negative characterization it would merely be a damning phrase. But instead, motivation is found alongside the characterization. While motivation normally functions to encourage individuals to live up to their past and present kin and thereby increase the collective honor of their kinship group, here, motivation functions ironically. This "son(s) of" phrase should motivate his hearers not to live up to their lineage. They should forsake participation in the long line of those who have opposed the messengers of Yahweh and instead embrace his message in the hope that he can provide them with a new kinship and a better inheritance.

**Sons of Israel**

While this "son(s) of" phrase occurs multiple times in the NT, the occurrence in Matthew 27:9 is the only time in the NT the phrase appears to be used figuratively.[6] No small amount of scholarly discussion surrounding Matthew 27:3-10 has been devoted to Matthew's OT quotation and its attribution to the Prophet Jeremiah. However, very little attention has been paid to Matthew's substitution of υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ at the end of his quotation from Zechariah. Moo claims that Matthew provides this substitution for the Hebrew pronominal suffix as "a modification required because of the lack of an antecedent for the pronoun."[7] Davies and Allison argue that Matthew is "targumizing" Zechariah.[8] Unfortunately, France relegates a reference to Goulder to a footnote.[9] Goulder writes that Matthew's substitution of υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ has "an eye on the pricing of Joseph by the sons of Israel at Judah's behest in Genesis."[10] While Moo's explanation of why Matthew adds in this "son(s) of" phrase is plausible grammatically, it does not explain why Matthew chose to express his thought using father-son language. Goulder's suggestion, however, explains both the addition and the choice of father-son language.

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[6]Contra Davies and Allison who write that "'Sons of Israel' appears only here in the NT and is not common in the OT (Gen 42:5; Deut 23:17; 1 Chr 2:1; cf. *T. Sol.* 15:14)." W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew,* ICC (New York: T. & T. Clark, 1997), 3:570n51. However, this statement is a gross oversight. The phrase occurs at least 685 times in the OT and 13 times in the NT. In addition, there are the examples from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha mentioned above in chap. 2.

[7]Douglas J. Moo, "Tradition and Old Testament in Matthew 27:3-10," in *Gospel Perspectives*, ed. R. T. France and David Wenham (Sheffield: JSOT, 1983) 3:157-75, 3:158.

[8]Davies and Allison, *Matthew,* 3:570.

[9]France, *Matthew,* 1044n36.

[10]M. D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (London: SPCK, 1974), 447. However, citing Goulder on this point should not be seen as an endorsement of his main thesis in *Midrash and Lection in Matthew*.

Matthew is using this "son(s) of" phrase figuratively to link the Jewish religious leaders with Joseph's brothers in a manner that dovetails with the overall typological emphasis of the verse. This explanation of υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ is based on four conclusions: (1) Matthew's selection of this particular phrase, (2) its typological connection to the Zechariah and Jeremiah passages, (3) its conceptual link with Joseph typology, and (4) its fit with Matthew's overall purpose in this passage.

First, it must be recognized that Matthew refers to the Jewish religious leaders as "sons of Israel" only here. If he was simply looking for a substitute because the pronoun from Zechariah would lack an antecedent, one would expect him to connect the quote to the Jewish religious leaders using a phrase that is much more familiar to him. In addition, if Matthew left the original pronoun, it would not be without antecedent in the passage and most readers would make the connection easily. This change for him does not appear to be a random selection of a term to refer to these leaders who had his Savior killed but rather an intentional choice to communicate a specific point.

Second, establishing a figurative link between the Jewish religious leaders and the eleven sons of Israel who sold their brother into slavery fits with the overall typology of the passage. Carson, following Moo et al., writes that "the quotation appears to refer to Jeremiah 19:1–13 along with phraseology drawn mostly from Zechariah 11:12–13."[11] Carson explains the connection to Zechariah as follows: "in both instances Yahweh's shepherd is rejected by the people of Israel and valued at the price of a slave. And in both instances the money is flung into the temple and ends up purchasing something that

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[11]Carson, *Matthew,* 563.

pollutes."[12] The connection to Jeremiah is that the field is "a symbol of death and the destruction of the nation about to be buried as 'foreigners.'"[13] Further:

> Matthew sees in Jeremiah 19 and Zechariah 11 not merely a number of verbal and thematic parallels to Jesus' betrayal but a pattern of apostasy and rejection that must find its ultimate fulfillment in the rejection of Jesus, who was cheaply valued, rejected by the Jews, and whose betrayal money was put to a purpose that pointed to the destruction of the nation.[14]

In this verse, Matthew is attempting to link the Jewish religious leaders to this perpetual pattern of rejection experienced by God's chosen instruments. He establishes this link not only by quoting Zechariah and referring to Jeremiah but also by alluding to the eleven sons of Israel.

Third, Joseph typology is closely related to the overall thematic pattern emphasized by the Zechariah and Jeremiah passages.[15] Matthew 27 would not be the only passage in the NT where this connection is made. In Acts 7, Stephen's speech sees Joseph's rejection of his brothers as the beginning of a pattern of rejection that includes Moses and, ultimately, Jesus.[16] Further, there are other connections in the Passion narrative to Joseph:

> Just as Joseph was sold for 20 shekels of silver (Gen 37:28), so also Jesus was sold for a sum of silver, 30 pieces (Matt 27:14–16). Just as Joseph's brothers, sons of Israel, sold Joseph into the hands of Ishmaelite-Midianite traders (Gen 37:28), so the nations gathered together against Jesus (Acts 4:25–27; cf. Ps 2:1–2). Joseph's brothers had stripped him of the special coat his father gave him (Gen 37:23), and

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[12]Carson, *Matthew,* 564.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid., 566.

[15]Hamilton has established Joseph's validity as a type of the Messiah. The argument will not be rehashed here. See James M. Hamilton, "Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah? Tracing the Typological Identification between Joseph, David, and Jesus," *SBJT* 12, no. 4 (2008): 52–77.

[16]Hamilton, "Was Joseph a Type," 63.

Jesus too was stripped of his seamless robe (Matt 27:28; John 19:23).[17]
In addition, the thirty pieces of silver correspond to the Joseph account not only in that they made up a sum of silver, but also in that just as Joseph was sold into slavery, thirty pieces of silver "was the price of a slave and representative of how God's prophet is valued by an apostate people."[18] Matthew links the Jewish religious leaders to the eleven sons of Israel to show that Jesus was rejected and sold for the price of a slave in a similar manner – by those who should have been brothers to him.

Fourth, understanding this "son(s) of" phrase as a figurative link between the Jewish religious leaders and Joseph's brothers who sold him into slavery fits with Matthew's purpose in this passage. France explains that it exists "to show that even in the betrayal of the Messiah and in the fate of his betrayer Scripture continues to provide the pattern, even to the most incidental details."[19] The chief priests and the elders are merely the latest iteration of an opposition party that should have accepted instead of rejected God's servant. Matthew wants to demonstrate that regarding the opposition of the sons of Israel, "God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Gen 50:20 NIV).

Thus, υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ is used figuratively here to identify the Jewish religious leaders who rejected their brother and sold him into slavery. They are not only members of the same kinship group as genetic descendants of Jacob but are fellow participants in the dishonorable act of betraying a member of their own group. Their deception and scheming shows that they are truly like their figurative brothers and do what they have

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[17]Hamilton, "Was Joseph a Type," 68.

[18]Carson, *Matthew,* 566n9.

[19]France, *Matthew*, 1038.

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learned from their father. While the chief priests and elders should have been those with the character to lead the people in their worship of Yahweh, instead it is the one whom they have rejected who will lead the people to salvation. It is the reader who receives the motivation from this "son(s) of" phrase. Matthew's figurative language should help them to see the heinous acts of the Jewish religious leaders for what they are and cause them to accept the One whom these sons of Israel have rejected. Further, the reader would not want to find himself or herself counted as a member of this particular figurative kinship group.

**Sons of the Devil**

On two separate occasions in the NT, people are figuratively referred to as son(s) of the devil or evil one. These are found in Matthew 13:38 and Acts 13:10. These occurrences will be discussed individually.

The phrase οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ occurs in Jesus' explanation of the Parable of the Weeds in Matthew 13 in juxtaposition to οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας. Jesus explains that the weeds are the sons of the evil one and that the enemy who sowed them is the devil. So, the evil one in mind here clearly is the devil. Due to the nature of this phrase's occurrence in the explanation of a cosmic parable, it does not seem likely that Jesus has any specific human beings in mind as its referents. Rather, it would seem to be a general term referring to those who oppose God, his people, and his work in the world.

Nonetheless, it is important to recognize what the figurative use of the father-son relationship might tell us about this group. Those who are the enemies of God and his kingdom are identified as sons of the evil one – the devil. As such, they are participants in a figurative kinship group which can trace its intertextual lineage all the way back to the

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seed of the serpent in Genesis 3:15.[20] They are members of that group who have long

opposed God and his people and who bear the collective dishonor that results. Rather

than living in submission to their heavenly Father, these individuals submit themselves to

the father of lies. The character of these sons is made evident by the substantival

adjective that names their father. Like him, they too are πονηροί. Contrary to the υἱοὶ τῆς

βασιλείας who will have the King and his kingdom as their inheritance, the sons of the

evil one will share in his inheritance. Their inheritance will result in weeping and

gnashing of teeth as they and the rest of their kin are thrown into the fiery furnace to be

eternally consumed. In a culture which believes that a good name is of the utmost

importance, the motivation of this text is clear: no reasonable individual would want to

bear the attribution "son of the evil one." Nor would they want to participate in the

collective shame of this figurative kinship group or share in their damned inheritance.

The motivation here is an obvious warning that functions as a call to repent and to submit

to the loving rule of the heavenly Father and the norms of the kingdom of heaven.

In Acts 13:10, Paul identifies Elymas as υἱὲ διαβόλου. Elymas is a magician

and a false prophet. Bock points out that "the text's description of Bar-Jesus adds a note

of irony, as the first opponent of Paul and Barnabas is a false prophet named 'son of

Jesus/Joshua.'"[21] Thus, his opposition to the missionary activity of Paul and Barnabas

reveals where his true lineage lies. In fact, his ironic name may have led to Paul's

figurative use of this "son(s) of" phrase.

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[20]For more on this intertextual theme, see James M. Hamilton, "The Skull Crushing Seed of the Woman: Inner-Biblical Interpretation of Genesis 3:15," *SBJT* 10, no. 2 (2006): 30–54.

[21]Darrell L. Bock. *Acts*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 443.

In employing the vocative to describe Elymas as son of the devil, it is clear that Paul is addressing him in this manner. For Paul, Elymas' identity is son of the devil. As above, his membership and participation in this figurative kinship group is illustrated by his actions. His opposition to Paul and Barnabas, his leading the Proconsul away from the faith, his all-encompassing deceitfulness and villainy, his hatred of all righteousness, and his continual corruption of the ways of the Lord all demonstrate that Bar-Jesus truly is seed of the serpent. It is no surprise that this son of the devil is described by Luke as a false prophet, for he lives in submission to his father – the father of lies. Paul's description of Elymas' character in verse 10 is a comprehensive rebuke to one who has inherited his virtue from the thief who steals, kills, and destroys. Elymas' actions not only demonstrate submission to his father and an inherently evil character but also a demonic office for which he qualifies as a member of this figurative kinship group. Paul's figurative use of the father-son relationship here serves to motivate Elymas, the Proconsul, and the readers of Acts. Elymas is encouraged to recognize who he truly is and repent. However, the form of Paul's question "you will not stop making crooked the straight path of the Lord, correct?" does not imply much hope for repentance on the part of Elymas.[22] The Proconsul, however, is effectively called to repentance by Paul's Spirit-filled words and he responds with faith. The readers of Acts are motivated to recognize that their membership lies in one of two pseudo-kinship groups; they are either sons of their heavenly Father or, with Elymas, sons of the devil.

**Sons of Abraham**

In Galatians 3:7, Paul uses the phrase υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ. While the verbal form in

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[22]See BDF § 427.

this verse is ambiguous, Schreiner argues that Paul is using an imperative to exhort the

Galatians to recognize a truth that they have overlooked or misunderstood.[23] He expounds

this truth as follows:

> What is required to be part of Abraham's family, to be counted as his sons? Not circumcision or the other works required by the law. Those who belong to Abraham's family believe just as Abraham did, for Abraham lived before the law was even given. Therefore, his faith was constituted him as righteousness before God. The Galatians, then, do not need to be circumcised to be Abraham's sons. They are already his children if their faith is in Christ Jesus.[24]

Those who have the same faith that Abraham had are identified as figurative members of

his kinship group. Recognizing that they are participants in Abraham's kinship group is

more focused on a removal of shame or dishonor rather than emphasizing their share of

the group's collective honor. Paul is using this phrase – which may have belonged to his

opponents and been used by them to distinguish between those who had the honor of

being children of Abraham and those who did not – to communicate that they need not be

ashamed of their non-Abrahamic lineage, their uncircumcised flesh, or their lack of law-

keeping. Instead, they need to recognize that their faith has already made them

participants in and partakers of the collective honor that comes from being a true son of

Abraham.[25] As true sons of their father, those who are of faith both submit to their father

and succeed him as they "believe the same way as Abraham."[26] As sons, they simply do

what their father has done. Here, the dominant note of characterization is that the sons of

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[23]Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 193.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Cf. Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC, vol. 41 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 114.

[26]Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 142.

Abraham will be characterized by their faith. For Paul, it is clear that these sons share in their father's inheritance: "And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (Gal 3:29 ESV). Their figurative kinship resulting from faith qualifies them to inherit alongside those who might, in addition to the sole requirement of faith, also happen to be genetic descendants of Abraham. Paul motivates his audience by means of the imperative. He wants them to recognize the truth that faith is what is required; not law-keeping, not circumcision, not the ability to demonstrate a claim to patrilineal Abrahamic descent. Paul is motivating the Galatians to have faith, to trust in Christ.

**Sons of Men**

In Ephesians 3:5, Paul refers to human beings as τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Paul is saying that the mystery of the gospel "was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph 3:5 ESV). Arnold writes that "Paul uses a Semitic expression that Gentiles unfamiliar with the Scriptures of Israel would be hard pressed to understand. The expression itself simply means human beings."[27] Two issues are present here and must be explored. First is the assumption that understanding this "son(s) of" phrase would prove problematic for Gentiles unfamiliar with the Hebrew Bible. It was shown above in chapter 2 that "son(s) of" phrases, both literal and figurative, are not absent in Greek literature. Thus, while a Gentile might be unfamiliar with ἄνθρωπως as the genitive noun modifying υἱός, they would not be unable to understand its basic meaning.[28] As a member

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[27]Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 189.

[28]However, Gentiles would certainly be much less prepared to understand this

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of a patrilineal kinship group, they would have been well-versed in the father-son

relationship and the figurative use of kinship terms; as a result, they would be adequately

prepared to interpret the phrase as it occurs here. The second issue with Arnold's

statement is the notion that this expression "*simply* means human beings."[29] While it is

certainly possible, within the semantic domain of this phrase, that this expression is a

simple reference to human beings, Paul's use of it here does not seem so simple. First, the

only other NT occurrence of this phrase when υἱός is plural is found in Mark 3:28.[30]

However, in Mark it is clearly dependent upon Aramaic as it is found on the lips of Jesus.

If Paul wanted simply to refer to human beings he could have easily chosen a more

common *and simple* expression to communicate just that. Second, elsewhere in

Ephesians, Paul has employed υἱός and the concept of sonship to communicate

significant theological truths.[31] It does not seem likely that Paul would risk confusing his

readers regarding the concept of sonship in order to make an idle reference to humanity.

Third, the notion that this phrase is simply a reference to humanity must be avoided

because of what this "son(s) of" phrase figuratively communicates through Paul's use of

the father-son relationship.

     Multiple commentators have argued that there is antithetical parallelism

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phrase than those familiar with the Hebrew Bible. Hopefully, this sentiment is what
Arnold was trying to express.

[29]Arnold, *Ephesians*, 189. Emphasis added.

[30]For this phrase when υἱός is plural, see Gen 11:5; 1 Kgdms 26:19; 2 Kgdms
7:14; 3 Kgdms 8:39; 2 Chr 6:30; Ps (LXX) 4:3, 10:4, 11:2, 9, 13:2, 20:11, 30:2, 32:13,
35:8, 44:3, 48:3, 52:3, 56:5, 57:2, 61:10, 65:5, 88:48, 89:2, 106:8, 15, 21, 31, 113:24,
144:12, 145:3; Prov 8:4, 31; Jer (LXX) 39:19; Ezek 31:14; Dan 3:82; Dan (TH) 2:38,
3:82; Mic 5:6; Joel 1:12; Mark 3:28; 1 Esd 4:37; Jdt 8:12; Wis 9:6; Sir 36:23; *Odes Sol.*
8:82; and *Pss. Sol.* 9:4.

[31]See "adoption as sons" in Eph 1:5, "sons of disobedience" in Eph 2:2 and 5:6,
and Jesus as the "son of God" in Eph 4:13. Cf. "children" in Eph 2:3, 4:14, 5:1, 8.

present in the text emphasizing a contrast between (1) other generations and now, (2) was not made known and has been revealed by the Spirit, and (3) to the sons of men and to his holy apostles and prophets.[32] Thus, they claim that the third contrast is emphasizing the distinction between all humanity in former generations and the holy apostles and prophets to whom the mystery of Christ has been revealed. However, these scholars risk missing the forest for the trees. Paul's overarching point is not the contrast but the reality that the mystery of Christ has now been revealed. Further, this glorious revelation has been made not only *to* his holy apostles but also *through* them. Paul reveals this mystery to his readers in the very next verse: "that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (Eph 3:6 ESV). Undeniably, the concept of sonship is intimately related to the ideas of inheritance and pseudo-kinship expressed in this revealed mystery. The significant contrast is not ultimately between general humanity and a select few who have received the revelation of this mystery, but instead the same contrast Paul has been emphasizing elsewhere in Ephesians: the adopted sons of God and the sons of disobedience, the beloved children of the Lord and the children of wrath. The glorious mystery is that before the revelation of Christ every human being was simply a son of man, but now, the sons of men can become sons of God by faith in Christ.

By identifying these individuals with no knowledge of the mystery of Christ as τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶς ἀνθρώπων, Paul is emphasizing who they are not – υἱοὶ θεοῦ. In Ephesians, it would seem that these sons of men participate with the rest of unredeemed humanity as

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[32]For example, see Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 231; and Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, WBC, vol. 42 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 177.

sons of disobedience and children of wrath. These sons live in submission to their fallen

humanity; they live in the passions of their flesh and carry out the desires of the body.

Rather than being like the sons of God who are characterized by their imitation of their

Father, they are characterized by their similarity to their demonic father – the prince of

the power of the air. The phrase highlights not only the sons of men from former

generations but those sons who succeed them in the present. They are ignorant of the

mystery of Christ and not partakers of the promise. Instead of being fellow heirs with

those who have faith in Christ, these sons of men share an inheritance with the children

of wrath. Finally, the motivating element of this phrase is clear. No member of Paul's

audience would want to be identified as a son of disobedience, a child of wrath, or a son

of unredeemed humanity. Instead, they would by faith press into the revealed mystery

that they can be adopted sons of God and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through

the gospel.

**Your Son**

In John 19:26, Jesus uses the phrase ὁ υἱός σου to redefine the nature of the

relationship between his mother and the Beloved Disciple. The transferring of filial

obligation is cast in fictive kinship terms. Carson explains that the words employed by

Jesus "are reminiscent of legal adoption formulae, but such formulae would have been

cast in the second person."[33] Köstenberger writes that Mary "almost certainly was

widowed and probably in her early fifties with little or no personal income."[34] As a result,

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[33]D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 616.

[34]Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 549.

she would have been dependent on Jesus as her eldest son. Here, he is seen making provision for her care in obedience to the moral commands of the OT Law.[35] Thus, this "son(s) of" phrase is used figuratively to establish a fictive or artificial kinship as expressed by Pitt-Rivers and outlined in chapter 4.[36] Since this is a fictive mother-son relationship rather than that of father-son, the same interpretive categories do not apply.[37]

**My Son**

In 1 Peter 5:13, Peter describes John Mark in figurative kinship terms using the phrase ὁ υἱός μου. While their pseudo-kin relationship is well in keeping with a typical use of υἱός plus the genitive to describe the relationship of a student to his teacher, it still represents a figurative use of the father-son relationship. John Mark is figuratively identified as Peter's son to emphasize the closeness of their relationship. This relationship is not surprising since Peter likely would have been a fixture in John Mark's life since the early days of the church when they met in his home.[38] By referring to him in figurative kin terms, Peter is acknowledging that John Mark and he participate in a collective honor due to the nature of their relationship. While the nature and dynamics of John Mark's submission to Peter would have likely differed from the typical father-son relationship, there seems to be a functional distinction between Peter's pseudo-kin relationship to

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[35]Köstenberger, *John*, 549. Köstenberger explains that she was entrusted to the Beloved Disciple's care instead of the care of one of his brothers due to their unbelief; ibid. Cf. 1 Tim 5:3-16.

[36]See pp. 96-97 above.

[37]For a brief discussion of the nature and dynamics of the mother-son relationship see Joseph H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 33.

[38]See Acts 12:12.

Silvanus as brother and John Mark as son.[39] Although it is purely speculative, it may be more than coincidental that Mark's seemingly impulsive behavior hinted at in Acts is faintly reminiscent of a less-sanctified Peter. Perhaps, John Mark has inherited some of his character traits from his figurative father. Succession is not as evident in the pseudo-father-son relationship of Peter and John Mark as it is in Paul's relationship to Timothy and Titus. However, the idea is certainly present in the figurative use of father-son relationship even without an explicit letter passing on Peter's ministry to John Mark. While there may have been some transmission of property from mentor to mentee, inheritance is not a major aspect of this pseudo-kin relationship.[40] Motivation is neither explicit nor implicit in this text, the figurative father-son relationship is not the focal point of Peter's thought; it is merely a more thorough identifier of John Mark to his readers.

## Human-Non-Human Figurative Use

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, this category lies outside the strictly defined bounds of pseudo-kinship because it is not directly related to pseudo-kinship at all. While pseudo-kinship typically describes the relationship between persons in kinship terms, these uses of the father-son relationship describe the relationship between a person and a concept or object using "son(s) of" phrases. Here, individuals are identified as sons of personified places, things, and abstract concepts. These figurative uses of "son(s) of" appear to be more problematic for commentators based upon the very little that is said about them. This lack of interpretation and explanation is likely due to the difficultly in arriving at a robust understanding of how an individual might relate to

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[39]See 1 Pet 5:12.

[40]Potential examples of transferred property may have been parchments, codices, tools related to a tent-making skill, etc.

light, for example, as a son relates to a father. However, a more thorough interpretation and explanation can be found by utilizing the interpretive categories outlined at the end of chapter 4.

**Sons of the Kingdom**

The phrase οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας is found twice in the Gospel of Matthew. Its first occurrence is found in Matthew 8:12. In this passage, Jesus is describing the eschatological messianic banquet in which many will come from east and west and feast with the patriarchs of old. However, despite this implicit inclusion of the Gentiles, Jesus explains that the sons of the kingdom will not be allowed to attend. Instead, the opposite is true, they will be thrown into the outer darkness where they will experience the agonizing torment that accompanies eternal punishment. The phrase is used ironically; the true sons of the kingdom would never be barred entrance to the great feast celebrating the kingdom's final consummation. Rather, their exclusion reveals that they are not, in fact, true sons of the kingdom.

The Jews, and especially the Jewish religious leaders, are those who should have been most closely connected to expectantly waiting for the coming of God's kingdom. They should have been celebrating the arrival of the King of the Jews who announced the nearness of the kingdom of heaven. Instead, their opposition to God's Kingdom and his King warrants this ironic identification as the sons of the kingdom who are outcasts. Rather than bringing with it collective honor, the irony of their exclusion reveals that are figurative participants in the collective shame of all those who stand in opposition against God and his people. Despite their feigning of submission to the ways of God, Jesus reveals in this ironic designation that they do not live in submission to the

norms of his kingdom. Their lack of submission reveals their true identity. Similarly, they do not demonstrate the character cultivated by the virtues of Christ's kingdom. Their character demonstrates their lack of true citizenship in it. If they were truly sons of the kingdom, they would be the true successors of the patriarchs Jesus mentions at the table in the kingdom. Their exclusion reveals that they instead follow in the footsteps of those who have stood against his kingdom. These false sons of the kingdom do not share in its inheritance. They do not enjoy the bounty of the king, his feast, or the new heavens and the new earth. Their inheritance is gravely depicted by Jesus as weeping and gnashing of teeth. The motivation inherent in this figurative father-son language is clear – the listener and the reader does not want this ironic identification to be true of them. They should press into Christ for assurance that they are true sons of the king and that they will not be excluded from the final celebration of his kingdom's consummation.

The second occurrence of οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας is found in Matthew 13:38. The phrase occurs in Jesus' explanation of the Parable of the Weeds. The sons of the kingdom are equated to the good seed and are juxtaposed with οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ. As in the explanation of that phrase above, it needs to be recognized that this phrase occurs in the explanation a cosmic parable. As a result, it is unlikely that Jesus has any specific human referents in mind. Rather, it would seem to be a general term referring to those who live in obedient submission to the king – the one who sowed them – and the norms of his kingdom.

The good seed here is identified by the close nature of their relationship with the kingdom. As its figurative sons, they participate in the collective honor of this pseudo-kinship group which is composed of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven. These

sons live their lives striving toward full submission to their King and the ethics of his kingdom. While the distinction between the sons of the kingdom and the sons of the evil one is not initially apparent, their character is revealed with time. Those who are truly sons of the kingdom are those whose lives are characterized by it and its norms. While they will not succeed the King, they do follow others in a lengthy procession of those who have expectantly awaited the inauguration of God's kingdom. These sons inherit an eternal life in the kingdom with her King. The motivation of this text is twofold. First, there is the positive motivation for the individual to live his or her life in submission to the King and the ethics of his kingdom with the result that he or she will inherit all the blessings of a true son of the kingdom. Second, there is the negative motivation for the individual not to live the kind of life which results in him or her sharing in the inheritance of those with whom the sons of the kingdom are juxtaposed – the sons of the evil one.

**Sons of the Bridal Chamber**

The phrase οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος is found in Mark 2:19 as well as the parallels of Matthew 9:15 and Luke 5:34.[41] This phrase is found in the first of three illustrations that Jesus gives in answer to the question of the disciples of John the Baptist.[42] Scholars are quick to point out the idiomatic nature of this "son(s) of" phrase. Many NT scholars follow Jeremias and his remarks that this Semitic phrase is a slavishly literal rendering of בְּנֵי הַחוּפָּה from rabbinic literature.[43]  Neusner translates this phrase as "members of the

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[41]Luke has the head noun in the accusative case because it is functioning as the subject of the infinitive: τοὺς υἱοὺς τοῦ νυμφῶνος.

[42]Luke provides a fourth illustration.

[43]Joachim Jeremias, "νύμφη, νυμφίος," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 4:1103. See *Tos. Ber.* 2, 10; *bSukka*, 25b.

wedding."[44] The Hebrew word חֻפָּה is used in the MT to refer both to a canopy and to a

bridal chamber.[45] The "son(s) of" phrase is understood idiomatically to refer to the guests

at a wedding. However, both the translation of Neusner and the "wedding guests" of most

modern English translations lose the nuance of this phrase.[46] Literally, this phrase is not

describing the relationship of these sons to a personal father. Instead, they are sons of the

chamber itself. They are sons of the chamber in which the marriage was consummated.[47]

Thus, the phrase connotes not simply their attendance at the wedding, but rather, the

emphasis lies on a particular aspect of the wedding celebrations – the ecstatic joy

resulting from a marriage newly consummated.

In the Synoptic Gospels, this "son(s) of" phrase brings forth the same imagery.

Here, Jesus is asked about why his disciples do not fast. His answer comes in the form a

rhetorical question beginning with the particle μή which assumes a negative answer.[48]

Thus, he is making a declarative statement: the sons of the bridal chamber cannot fast as

long as the bridegroom is with them. Many commentators note that fasting would be

inappropriate because it does not fit the joyous nature of wedding festivities.[49] In fact, the

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[44]*The Talmud of Babylonia: An American Translation*, vol. 6, Tractate Sukkah, Brown Judaic Studies 74, trans. Jacob Neusner (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), 133.

[45]See Ps 19:5; Isa 4:5; Joel 2:16.

[46]So ESV, NET, HCSB. Cf. "guests of the bridegroom," NIV and "attendants of the bridegroom," NASB.

[47]This word "evolved in postbiblical Judaism to designate the tentlike temporary structure under which wedding ceremonies were conducted, in the Old Testament itself, however, it appears to refer rather to the room (tent) in which the marriage was consummated." See Raymond B. Dillard, "Joel," in *The Minor Prophets*, ed. Thomas E. McComiskey (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1992), 283. Cf. Duane A. Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, NAC, vol. 19A (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997), 349.

[48]See BDF § 427.

[49]For example, see France, *Matthew*, 356: "The festivities in connection with a wedding, which usually went on for several days, are a symbol of joy and celebration...

Talmud reference above specifically frees those celebrating at a wedding from specific cultic requirements that might conflict with the festivities. However, this "son(s) of" phrase extends the metaphor past the simple celebratory nature of a wedding. Jesus' disciples are being specifically linked to the bridal chamber – the locus of marital consummation. This particular bridal chamber is the place of no ordinary consummation. Rather, it represents the reality that the King's consummation with his bride has begun. John the Baptist, as the ὁ φίλος τοῦ νυμφίου, attests to this reality and the disciples have their role as well – they are the "sons of the bridal chamber."[50]

These sons cannot fast because they are to be closely identified with the joy that comes forth from the bridal chamber. Later, they will fast, but that is only while they await the final consummation of this metaphorical marriage. As sons, the disciples not only bear witness to the joy of the bridal chamber, but participate and share in it as they celebrate the newly consummated marriage. Here, submission means that joy is not only the appropriate response, but the only honorable response. As sons, they must celebrate and μή δύνανται νηστεύειν. Characterization is what has lead to this question being asked of Jesus. The sons of the bridal chamber are characterized by joy and celebration while the disciples of John the Baptist and the Pharisees fast. While Jesus' description of his disciples as sons of the bridal chamber makes it clear that the consummation has begun, he also explains that "the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them,

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Fasting does not fit naturally into such a setting."

[50]Jeremias on the role of the "best man" which is attributed to John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel: "At the wedding they conducted the bridegroom to the bride, though their main task was to superintend the sexual intercourse of the young couple. Hence the φωνὴ τοῦ νυμφίου of Jn. 3:29 is probably the call of the bridegroom from the bridal chamber for the friend who customarily fetches the *signum virginitatis*." See Jeremias, "νύμφη, νυμφίος," 4:1101.

and then they will fast" (Matt 9:15 ESV). Thus, these sons will be forced to wait for the day in which they will again take up the role of celebrants and finally receive their joyous inheritance upon the marriage's final consummation. However, in the moment, as Jesus linked them with the bridal chamber, his disciples were motivated not to feel the shame and guilt cast upon them for not fasting but instead to revel in the joyful celebration that the Lamb has come to take his bride and inaugurate his kingdom.

**Son of Gehenna**

In Matthew 23:15, Jesus refers to a hypothetical convert of the scribes and Pharisees as a υἱὸν γεέννης.[51] However, his comparative διπλότερον ὑμῶν draws them into the identification as well. Certainly, this figurative "son(s) of" phrase will function similarly to οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ in Matthew 13:38. In this second woe to the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus is warning them that their proselytizing is actually harming those they are seeking to convert. While they think they are traveling across land and sea doing the work of God, they are instead doing the work of Satan. Jesus uses this "son(s) of" phrase figuratively in an attempt to warn them out of their hypocritical stupor to true faith in God.

These individuals are identified as sons of Gehenna. The translation of Gehenna as "hell" in most modern English translations represents the virtually synonymous connection between these two terms. This connection between hell and Gehenna is due to the prophetic judgment pronounced upon the Valley of Hinnom – גֵּיא־הִנֹּם – and its frequent figurative use in apocalyptic literature from second century BC

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[51]BDAG notes a possible connection between this phrase and בני גיהנם in the Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Ha Shanah 17a. See BDAG, s.v. γέεννα.

onward.[52] Thus, the identification is not so much with the physical, or spiritual, location but rather with the associated judgment. These individuals are sons of eschatological judgment. As sons, they participate in the figurative kinship group marked by their identification with this eschatological judgment. Further, not only they participate in this group, but also those who have proselytized them. Together, they share in the collective dishonor of this condemned group. It is their submission to the ways of the scribes and Pharisees that has converted them into sons of Gehenna rather than sons of God. Their hypocritical law-keeping does not result in worship of Yahweh but instead is revealed to be in keeping with the previous acts of heinous idolatry associated with their figurative father.[53] The kind of character implied by this phrase is exemplified in its North American contemporary term "hellion." They have the character which merits judgment and punishment. Here, succession functions not only to show how the son does what his figurative kin before him have done, but also to show the progression of dishonoring evil within the kinship group. First, Jesus calls not only their converts sons of Gehenna but the scribes and Pharisees as well. They are both members of this fictive kin group and, as a result, they both do what their fictive father does. In their case, the work is idolatry and meriting judgment. Second, as is emphasized in the genealogical progression of evil from Cain to Lamech, these proselytes are twice the son of Gehenna when compared with the preceding generation. Carson explains that this phrase likely refers to the notion that these converts will be so committed to their teacher's instructions that the students will

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[52]Joachim Jeremias, "γέεννα," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 1:657.

[53]See 2 Kgs 16:3, 21:6.

"out-Pharisee" the teacher.[54] As sons of Gehenna, their inheritance is bleak. The OT

prophets make it clear that the Valley of Hinnom will be renamed the Valley of Slaughter

because of the impending judgment.[55] Jesus' message is one of warning to the scribes and

Pharisees, and their converts as well. The call is for them to realize that they are barring

entrance to the kingdom of heaven not only for themselves but also for their followers.

They need to repent and turn from their idolatry as they flee the impending judgment.

The motivation is for the individual to heed the woe and so reveal himself or herself to be

a true child of God rather than a son of Gehenna.

**Sons of Thunder**

In Mark 3:17, Mark provides the reader with an expansive identification of

James and John. They are sons of Zebedee and βοανηργές. BDAG notes that Boanerges

appears to be a transliteration of בְּנֵי רֶגֶשׁ which would mean son of commotion.[56] Stein

argues that βοανηργές should be understood "as a rough transliteration into Greek of

'sons of thunder.'"[57] Guelich, however, claims that "either Mark's translation offers a

traditional meaning of the underlying Semitic phrase that is lost to us or it simply

represents an attempt to clarify an obscure, if not corrupted, βοανηργές."[58] Regardless of

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[54]Carson, *Matthew,* 479.

[55]See Jer 7:32, 19:6.

[56]BDAG, s.v. βοανηργές.

[57]Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 172. See also John T. Rook, "'Boanerges, Sons of Thunder' (Mark 3:17)," *JBL* 100, no. 1 (1981): 94-95. Rook argues that based upon a transliteration convention which rendered ayin with gamma, the resulting phrase would be בני רעש or "sons of the quaking heavens." Ibid., 94.

[58]Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, WBC, vol. 34A (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989), 162.

the origin of the phrase, Mark seems to provide the reader with a figurative "son(s) of" phrase as an explanation – υἱοὶ βροντῆς. In order to explain that they are named βοανηργές, Mark refers to James and John as sons of thunder.

Thus, they are identified not only as literal sons of Zebedee, but also as figurative sons of thunder. Βροντή is used elsewhere in the LXX and NT both literally – to refer to actual sounds of thunder – and figuratively – to refer to thunderous power or speech.[59] Here, it is probable that they are being identified with the figurative connotation of βροντή rather than with the literal, physical event as it occurs in nature. Since sons of thunder are not a common figurative collective in Scripture, participation is not a major factor in this "son(s) of" phrase. However, at the very least, James and John participate together as υἱοὶ βροντῆς. Perhaps, aspects of submission are bound up in the notion that their figurative father has a thunderously powerful nature. Many scholars make a connection between the character of these figurative sons and that of their father. Stein notes that it "seems to reveal the temperament of these two brothers."[60] Likewise, France concedes that while there is not a wealth of information in the NT writings regarding the character of James and John, "their hasty and violent reactions" in Mark 9:38 and Luke 9:54 seem to confirm what Stein suggests.[61] Thus, their character is like their figurative father – sudden and forceful. While not exactly succession, in some sense, these two attempt to do the work of their figurative father in Luke 9:54 when they seek Jesus' approval to call down fire from heaven. The only motivation in this phrase is subtle: the

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[59]See Pss 76:19, 103:7; Sir 32:10, 40:13, 43:17; Amos 4:13; Isa 29:6; Rev 4:5, 8:5, 11:19, 16:18; and Job 26:14; John 12:29; Rev 6:1, 10:3, 4, 14:2, 19:6 respectively.

[60]Stein, *Mark*, 172.

[61]R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 162.

recurring theme that actions reveal an individual's true lineage. Jesus figuratively

identified them on the basis of who they were and their actions confirmed their identity.

**Son of Peace**

When Jesus sends out the seventy-two in Luke 10, he instructs them to

pronounce peace upon each house they enter. He says their peace will either return to

them or remain resting upon a υἱὸς εἰρήνης. Klassen emphasizes the surprising

uniqueness of this phrase considering the prominence of both "son(s) of" phrases and the

concept of peace.[62] Scholars typically argue for one of three understandings of this

phrase: (1) the son of peace is a person who is peaceful, especially in their response to the

disciples, (2) the son of peace is one who is destined for peace, (3) the son of peace is one

who is a fellow disciple already.[63] Klassen pushes for a more mediating position by

arguing that "the child of peace is one who has been born of peace and is also destined for

the peace of others."[64] Unfortunately, even his position fails to account for all that is

implicit in the figurative use of "son(s) of" in this phrase.

Their identification as a son of peace does in fact mean that these individuals

are peaceful persons. As sons of peace, they participate in the figurative kin group made

of those characterized by peace. Their feet are guided in the way of peace and, because of

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[62]William Klassen, "'A Child of Peace' (Luke 10.6) in First Century Context," *New Testament Studies* 27, no. 4 (1981): 488-506, 497.

[63]For (1), see Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, *The Gospel according to Luke X-XXIV*, AB, vol. 28a (New York: Doubleday, 1985); and Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: 9:51–24:53*, vol. 2, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996). For (2), see I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978). For (3), see Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, NAC, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992). Regarding Stein, note that his comments are so brief this is assumed to be his position. He simply has "a man of peace. That is, a believer." Ibid., 305.

[64]Klassen, "Child of Peace," 501.

God's pleasure, peace has been pronounced upon them.[65] Klassen does well to glean the aspect of submission in this "son(s) of" phrase:

> The term 'Son of Torah' comes closest perhaps to the term 'Son of Peace'. For the son of the Torah is one who dedicates himself to the study of the Torah and in that way becomes one learned in Torah. So it is likely that Jesus, when he asked his disciples to go out to gather the sons of peace, was sending them out to identify with those in Galilee who were bent on pursuing peace.[66]

Further, the son's reception of the disciple's pronouncement of peace displays the son's submission to his figurative father. Certainly, those who are so closely identified with peace and live in submissive pursuit of it will have the character of a peaceful person. Their peaceful actions as well as peace-making actions will reveal that they truly are sons of peace. Succession is evident in the very nature of the peace they have received and accepted. It is a message of peace. Just as the very disciples who pronounced upon them received it from someone else, namely Jesus, so too will they turn and announce this peaceful message of good news to others. Inheritance conveys the notion that they are destined for peace, as has been argued by others. Their status as sons of peace means that they will inherit the fully restored *shalom* of the new creation. Finally, the implicit motivation for Theophilus, and any other reader, is to receive the message of peace being pronounced upon him by Luke. Following his reception of it, as a true son of peace, he will pass on the peaceful message to other sons of peace who have yet to be revealed.

**Sons of this Age**

In Luke's Gospel, he records Jesus referring to a group as οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου on two separate occasions. In Luke 16:8, the phrase "the sons of this age" is

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[65]Luke 1:79, 2:14.

[66]Klassen, "Child of Peace," 497.

juxtaposed with the phrase "the sons of light" which will be discussed below. In Luke 20:34, the phrase stands in opposition to those identified as sons of God and sons of the resurrection. Likewise, these phrases will be discussed below. In the first occurrence, the phrase is found in Jesus' explanation of the parable of the dishonest manager. Their description as sons of this age, as well as their juxtaposition with the sons of light, identifies them as unbelievers. Jesus is saying that the sons of this age deal in a manner more shrewd than that of his own people. His conclusion is that the sons of light should be even more diligent in light of the future – the age to come – which is awaiting them.

In the second occurrence, Luke 20:34, the implicit contrast between the sons of this age and the sons of the age to come that was seen in 16:8 is made explicit. In his answer to the challenge from the Sadducees, Jesus explains that while the sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, those who are of the resurrection age – the sons of the resurrection – neither marry nor are given in marriage. While the Sadducees seek to equate what happens in this age to what will happen in the age to come, Jesus "poses a contrast between conditions in this life and the next, and elaborates the status of those who participate in the resurrection as sons of God. In this way Luke brings out more clearly the difference between the two ages and stresses that not all men qualify for life in the new age."[67]

By referring to unbelievers as οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, Jesus is not only identifying who they are, but also who they are not. They are those whose lives are closely related to and determined by the present age. They are not those who will be in any way in close relation to the age to come. Thus, a clear line of demarcation is being

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[67]Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 740.

made between unbelievers and believers regarding their participation in and qualification

for the age to come. The sons of this age are full participants with those who are solely

linked with the present age. They are old creations rather than new and members of the

fictive kinship group associated with the old order. While being a son of light, son of

God, or son of the resurrection brings with it a great amount of collective honor, a

corresponding dishonor is shared by all the sons of this age. The sons of this age live not

only *in* this present age but also *for* this present age. Their focus is only on their own

selfish pursuits with no thought to what is awaiting them at the end of this age. These

fictive sons live in blind submission to the god of this age.[68] As a result of their kinship to

this age, they continue to live as the old man and are characterized by sins like sexual

immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, slander,

obscene talk, and deceitfulness.[69] The sons of this age beget more sons of this age. While

the sons of the age to come are being renewed in the image of their creator, the sons of

this age continue to reproduce their own broken, corrupt image. Their inheritance stands

in stark contrast to the sons of the resurrection; it is eternal, eschatological death. In Luke

16:8, Jesus' motivation is that his followers – the sons of light – would see that if even the

sons of this age can diligently work and plan for such a broken future, how much more

should they be diligently working for and hoping in the age to come. While Jesus'

response to the Sadducees in Luke 20:34 is to demonstrate how very different the present

age is from the age to come, the motivation of the figurative "son(s) of" phrase is quite

similar. His audience should see the stark contrast between the sons of this age and the

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[68]See 2 Cor 4:4.

[69]See Col 3:5-9.

sons of the resurrection and desire to be numbered among the latter.

**Sons of Light**

The phrase "sons of light" is found in two different constructions in the NT. The first construction – τοὺς υἱοὺς τοῦ φωτὸς – is found in Luke 16:8. The second occurrence of this construction – υἱοὶ φωτός – is found in John 12:36 and 1 Thessalonians 5:5. Many scholars have made note of the similar usage of this phrase in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[70] There is dualism present in each of these occurrences. As has been mentioned above, the explicit dualism in Luke 16:8 is between the sons of light and the sons of this age. In both John 12:36 and 1 Thessalonians 5:5, the typical light-darkness dualism is present. In all three passages, followers of Jesus are the intended referents of the sons of light. In Luke, Jesus is giving and explaining the parable of the dishonest manager to his disciples. In his explanation he explains that the sons of this age – unbelievers – more diligently and shrewdly plan for their future than the sons of light – his followers, the people of God. In John, Jesus is speaking to a crowd and encourages them to believe in the light – himself – that they might become sons of light. In 1 Thessalonians, Paul describes his fellow believers as sons of light and, as will be discussed below, sons of day.

In all three passages, identification serves both to establish who these sons are and also who they are not. As a result, while the light-darkness dualism is explicit in two of these passages, it is implicit in all three phrases. By identifying them as sons of light

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[70]For example, see Henry A. Gustafson, "The Sons of Light," *The Covenant Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (1961): 1-12, Jacob J. Enz, "Origin of the Dualism Expressed by 'Sons of Light' and 'Sons of Darkness,'" *Biblical Research* 21 (1976): 15-18, and Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 2:882n135.

Jesus, in Luke and John, and Paul, in 1 Thessalonians, make a clear, albeit implicit in the Gospels, line of demarcation between the sons of light and the sons of darkness. In each case, identification leads into participation as it clarifies who is in the community and who is not: "It clearly distinguishes those who belong to the community of faith from those outside, who are part of the darkness to be judged and condemned when the Lord Jesus comes."[71] As participants in the sons of light, they share in the collective honor of those who walk in the light. Similarly, "Their participation in *the light* and in *the day* has clear moral implications."[72] However, it is important to note that obedience is expected because they are sons and not so that they might become sons: "since we belong to the day, let us be sober" (1 Thes 5:8 ESV).[73] As sons, they delightfully submit to the ethics of their figurative father. The υἱοὶ φωτός emulate the character of the one who is the true light – the one in whom there is no darkness at all. By walking in the light, these sons not only have the character of the light, but also do his work. Thus, the NT refers both to the Messiah and the sons of light as the light of the world.[74] Because of their standing as sons, it is clear that the Father has qualified them "to share in the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col 1:12 ESV). Finally, the motivation of these phrases is twofold. First, there is the call of the light of the world: "believe in the light, that you may become sons of light" (John 12:36 ESV). Second, there is the motivation toward an obedient submission

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[71]Charles A. Wanamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 182.

[72]Gene L. Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 236. Emphasis original.

[73]Similarly, Carson writes that "a 'son of light' displays the ethical qualities of 'light', and has become a disciple of the 'light'. However, Carson could put greater emphasis on the fact that it is faith which makes a son or disciple of the light and the ethics follow from the "becoming". See Carson, *John*, 446.

[74]See John 8:12 and Matt 5:14.

in keeping with their true identity. While, it is not a "son(s) of" phrase using υἱός, Ephesians 5:8-12 expresses this aspect of the motivation perfectly: "For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret" (Eph 5:8-12 ESV).

**Sons of Day**

Closely related to the phrase υἱοὶ φωτός is the phrase υἱοὶ ἡμέρας which is also found in 1 Thessalonians 5:5. In this verse, these two "son(s) of" phrases stand parallel to one another. In addition, there are two implicit "son(s) of" phrases – "of the night, of the darkness" – which complete a chiastic structure.[75] While it is quite tempting to see υἱοὶ ἡμέρας as merely synonymous to υἱοὶ φωτός, such an interpretation would overlook Paul's use of ἡμέρα in the surrounding verses.[76] Instead of simply referring to the daytime or daylight, the sons of the day are connected to ἡμέρα κυρίου.[77] They are beneficiaries by faith of the new life in the present and those who wait with hope for the full and final dawning of that future day when the Lord returns.

Paul identifies both who these sons are – ἡμέρας – and also who they are not – νυκτός. Again, ἡμέρα in the context of this passage is closely connected to the day of the Lord. Therefore, these sons are identified as sons of ἡμέρα κυρίου. As such, they are

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[75]Cf. Green, *Thessalonians*, 237.

[76]Contra Martin. See D. Michael Martin, *1, 2 Thessalonians*, NAC, vol. 33 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995), 163.

[77]Cf. Wanamaker and Green. See Wanamaker, *Thessalonians*, 182, and Green, *Thessalonians*, 236.

"those who in the present time participate in the new era of God's order that is now being inaugurated."[78] Further, they participate in their figurative kinship group by being those who await the day of the Lord with hope and expectation.[79] Collectively, these sons belong to the day of the Lord.[80] Their standing as sons brings with it the responsibility of submission as is made evident by the imperatives which begin in verse 6.[81] In this case, their submission to the moral imperatives placed upon the sons of the day results in them being characterized by sobriety and wakefulness. While the concept of succession is not as clear for υἱοὶ ἡμέρας as it was for υἱοὶ φωτός above, there is some sense of it in the idea that these sons are not only sons of the day of the judgment but those who will in some way participate in the work of judgment.[82] The inheritance of all the sons of the day is made clear by Paul in verses 9-10: "God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him" (1 Thes 5:9-10 ESV). Here, Paul is motivating the Thessalonians with regard to the day of the Lord. They need neither to worry about being ill-prepared nor be insecure about the implications of its coming for themselves. They are not of the darkness nor of the night; rather, they are sons of light and sons of the day. Their identity has been changed. They are awake and need to walk as those who are of the day. The day of the Lord is a day of hope for them because they belong to it. Rather than fear its coming, they should long for that day's arrival as children long for the return

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[78]Green, *Thessalonians*, 236.

[79]Wanamaker, *Thessalonians*, 182.

[80]Cf. Ibid.

[81]Cf. Green, *Thessalonians*, 237.

[82]See 1 Cor 6:2-3. Cf. Matt 19:28; Rev 3:21.

of their father.

**Sons of the Resurrection**

The phrase υἱοὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως is found Luke 20:36. It is linked to two other sons of phrases. First, it is presented as the opposite of οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου in verse 34. Second, it is connected causally to υἱοί θεοῦ – they are sons of God *because* they are sons of the resurrection.[83] In this passage, Jesus is answering the challenge from the Sadducees. In the course of his answer, Jesus explains that while the sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, those who are of the resurrection age – those who are sons of God because they are sons of the resurrection – neither marry nor are given in marriage. Thus, these latter two "son(s) of" phrases are provided by Jesus as a figurative reference to those who will be partakers of the coming resurrection age.

Identification again serves the purpose both of indicating who these individuals are and also who they are not. They are the sons of resurrection – those who will partake of the age to come. They are not the sons of this age – those who have judgment alone waiting for them in the age to come. While the focus of Jesus' response is on the Sadducee's question regarding marriage, his figurative identification of believers as sons of the resurrection provides further information about the relationship of believers to the resurrection. As sons, "they participate in the age to come and have an immortal life."[84] It is through their union with Christ in both his life and death that believers walk in this new kind of life (Rom 6:4-5). Just as they have borne the broken image of the man from the dust, they will bear the fully restored image of the man from heaven (1 Cor 15:49).

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[83]Stein, *Luke*, 503. The phrase υἱοὶ θεοῦ will be discussed below.

[84]Bock, *Luke*, 1624.

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Believers' participation in the resurrection means that they submit to the moral implications of the new life they are "raised up" to walk in. Because they have been raised up, the sons of the resurrection must submit themselves "to God as those who have been brought from death to life... as instruments for righteousness" (Rom 6:13 ESV). As a result of such submission, they will be those who are characterized by the new life in them. They will have "put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (Eph 4:24 ESV). The sons of the resurrection will succeed Christ who is the firstfruits of those who will follow after him in the resurrection (1 Cor 15:20-23). Certainly, the sons of the resurrection share in an eternal inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.[85] They become qualified to share in this inheritance by being "born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet 1:3 ESV). As was seen in the discussion of οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, Jesus' response to the Sadducees demonstrates the stark contrast between the present age and the age to come. Those listening to him or reading his words should see the great divide between the sons of the resurrection and the sons of this age and be motivated to be numbered among the former.

**Son of Destruction**

The phrase ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας is found twice in the NT.[86] In John 17:12, the phrase is on the lips of Jesus in his high priestly prayer as a reference to Judas Iscariot. In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, the phrase is used by Paul in apposition to ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας.

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[85]Heb 9:15; 1 Pet 1:4.

[86]Similar phrases are found in Prov 24:22a (LXX); *ApPet.* 1.2; and *EH* 5.1.48. Cf. τέκνα ἀπωλείας in Isa 57:4.

The term ἀπώλεια is typically used in the NT to indicate eschatological condemnation.[87]

While most scholars attempt to limit these phrases to a reference to character, or destiny,

or both, there is much more implicit in the use of a "son(s) of" phrase.[88]

In the first passage, Jesus identifies Judas Iscariot as a son of eschatological

condemnation. With this grave identification, Jesus also specifies who he is not. Judas

Iscariot has not been kept back from perishing. He is not counted as one of Jesus' faithful

followers. He has not been numbered among the redeemed people of God. As a son of

destruction, he participates along with his figurative kin in a "a typology of evil

personages seeking to thwart God's sovereign purposes across the sweep of salvation

history."[89] The son of eschatological condemnation and all his pseudo-kin are the seed of

the serpent. While Scripture emphasizes the reality that his betrayal and perishing is

mysteriously part of God's redemptive plan, the son of destruction also submits to

another. Judas, as a son of destruction, submits to the one who always seeks to cause

ἀπώλεια.[90] The majority of information in the NT regarding Judas' character is closely

associated with his betrayal of Jesus, however, the fact that "he was a thief, and having

charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it" certainly reveals

that he truly was a son of eschatological condemnation (John 12:6 ESV). As a successor

to the ultimate son of destruction, Judas is seen in the NT doing his work. He is a thief

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[87]Carson, *John*, 563; and Köstenberger, *John*, 494.

[88]For example, see Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12–21*, NAC, vol. 25B (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2002), 198; Carson, *John*, 563; and Köstenberger, *John*, 494.

[89]Köstenberger, *John*, 494.

[90]Cf. John 10:10. In Jesus' description of the thief's activity, the cognate of ἀπώλεια, ἀπόλλυμι is used.

and his betrayal of Jesus leads to the killing of the Messiah.[91] Judas Iscariot, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, inherits what he has wrought in the world – destruction, eschatological condemnation. The motivation of this "son(s) of" phrase is likely a form of negative motivation for those disciples who have been kept in his name and guarded. They hear and, later, read Jesus' words and are motivated to work out their sonship with fear and trembling rather than being deceived by the father of lies who duped Judas into his own eschatological destruction.

In the second passage, 2 Thessalonians 2:3, Paul further identifies the man of lawlessness as the son of destruction. This man of lawlessness is thereby closely identified with the destruction that Satan attempts to bring about in God's creation.[92] As was mentioned above, these sons of eschatological condemnation participate together in a lengthy line of figurative kin who have opposed God's redemptive work to their own destruction.[93] Thorough their participation, they share in a collective dishonor. In verse 9, Paul explains to whom this son of destruction submits. It is none other than the Destroyer himself. It is according to his power that this son arrives. Likewise, this son's character is in keeping with the one who destructively empowers him. He "opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God" (2 Thes 2:4 ESV). His character is defined by prideful self-worship and opposition to God. Here, it is evident that ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας not only descends from the one who destroys, but also causes others to become

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[91]John 12:6; Matt 20:18.

[92]Wanamaker, *Thessalonians*, 245.

[93]See p. 166n86 above.

sons of destruction themselves.[94] The son of destruction does his father's work and reproduces it. The son of eschatological condemnation receives his inheritance when he is killed by the breath from Jesus' mouth and brought to nothing – his inheritance is his own destruction (2 Thes 2:8). This "son(s) of" phrase serves to motivate the Thessalonians to take comfort as the beloved family of the Lord who have been chosen as his firstfruits (2 Thes 2:13). They do not need to fear this son of destruction or those who come before or after him for they themselves are not being destroyed but instead have been chosen, called, saved, loved, and eternally comforted with the hope that they will receive glory, and not condemnation, upon the appearance of Jesus' coming (2 Thes 2:13-17).

**Sons of the Prophets and the Covenant**

In Peter's speech in Acts 3, he refers to his listeners as οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ τῆς διαθήκης. While οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν προφητῶν by itself could be an example of a human-human "son(s) of" phrase, the addition of καὶ τῆς διαθήκης means that this "son(s) of" phrase fits instead in the current category.[95] Instead of referring to the descendants of the prophets and heirs of the covenant, this construction is a figurative "son(s) of" phrase in which Peter is describing the relationship of his hearers to the prophets *and* the covenant

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[94]His works lead to others being destroyed. Notice Paul's use of ἀπόλλυμι, the cognate of ἀπώλεια, in verse 10.

[95]Contra Culy and Parsons who argue that "the conjoined genitive nouns clearly function differently. The first denotes relationship while the second is descriptive. This distinction necessitates using two separate terms to render υἱοὶ in English." See Martin M. Culy and Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), 62. However, this argument is based on the presupposition that (1) υἱός here is referring to these individuals as descendants (2) προφήτης is referring to the people rather than the body of their writings, and (3) τῆς διαθήκης does not denote relationship. Even if (2) is true, υἱός does not necessarily describe a literal father-son relationship between two persons and τῆς διαθήκης can absolutely function in relational terms since this "son(s) of" phrase is likely used figuratively.

in father-son terminology.

He identifies his listeners as sons of both the prophets and the covenant. They are identified not as sons of those who rejected and murdered the prophets but instead are those who have borne witness to the fulfillment of their prophetic speech. Likewise, they are not sons of those who have transgressed and broken the covenant, but instead are those who have seen firsthand the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. They are participants in this figurative kinship group by being both those who receive the prophetic message and covenantal promises and also those announce the fulfillment to others and thereby pass on the promised blessing. They share in collective honor rather than being those who are shamefully destroyed from among the people for failing to listen to God's Prophet. Their submission is to God himself as they receive his message through the prophets and believe that he will keep his promises to his people. In addition to reception and belief, they heed the word of his anointed messengers and seek to be a blessing to the nations in keeping with the covenant. Their submission to the Author of the prophets and the covenant results in their imitation of his character which undergirds them. They turn from wickedness because he hates wickedness. They are a blessing because they have been blessed by him. Their role as sons of the prophets and the covenant is succeeding them in their work. They continue to announce the coming of the Promised One. Only for them, it is no longer a forward-looking announcement but is instead the heralding of the fulfillment of their figurative fathers in Jesus the Christ. As the sons of the prophets and the covenant, they are their true heirs. Through their faith in the one who fulfills the prophets and who is the 'yes' to all of the covenant's promises, they become heirs alongside him. Peter uses this "son(s) of" phrase as a means to

motivate his hearers to believe the good news and repent. He longs for God to bless every

one of his listeners by turning them from their wickedness toward faith.

**Son of Encouragement**

In Acts 4:36, Luke provides the phrase υἱὸς παρακλήσεως as an explanation of

the name Barnabas. Luke's Greek explanation of his transliteration of Aramaic poses very

similar problems to Mark's explanation of βοανηργές as υἱοὶ βροντῆς. While various

solutions have been proposed, a clear consensus has not be reached:

> All sorts of conjectures have been suggested, such as Bar-nabi (son of a prophet), or Bar-nawha (son of refreshment), or Bar-nebo (son of the pagan god Nebo), or Bar-menahem (son of consolation). Obviously the last suggestion fits best, but there is no way one can derive nabas from menahem. Scholars who make this suggestion assume that Luke confused Barnabas with the Manaen whose name is listed along with his in Acts 13:1, but this is grasping at a straw.[96]

While the etymological origin of Joseph's second Aramaic name which was given to him

by the Apostles remains undecided, Luke provides the reader with a "son(s) of" phrase as

an explanation of his name.

Barnabas is further identified as a υἱὸς παρακλήσεως. He is the son of

encouragement or exhortation. While this "son(s) of" phrase is unique to this verse, as a

son of encouragement, Barnabas is a member of a figurative kinship group whose

collective honor is bound up in their lifting up of others. The son of encouragement

submits to the kin group's mandate to be continually encouraging and building up the

group. In the book of Acts, Barnabas certainly reveals that his true identity fits well this

nickname given to him by the Apostles:

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[96]John B. Polhill, *Acts*, NAC, vol. 26 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1992), 154n80. For helpful summaries of these positions, see Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, AB, vol. 31 (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1998), 321; C. K. Barrett, *Acts 1-14*, ICC (New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 258; and S. Brock. "Barnabas, Huios Paraklēseos." *JTS* 25 (1974): 93–98.

He was the encourager, the advocate, the paraklete par excellence of all the characters in Acts. When the Christians in Jerusalem shied away from Paul after his conversion, Barnabas interceded and introduced him to them (9:26f.). When Paul refused to take Mark on his second missionary journey, Barnabas took up for Mark (15:36–39). When the Christians of Jerusalem became concerned over the orthodoxy of the Antiochene Christians in their witness to Greeks, Barnabas again served as intercessor, saw the gracious work of the Antiochene Christians, and encouraged them (11:20–23). Indeed, 11:24 well sums up the portrait of this "Son of Encouragement": "He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith."[97]

Further, Luke provides a concrete example of his encouraging nature in the next verse: Barnabas "sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet" – he gave of himself for the building up of others (Acts 4:37 ESV). While the Apostle Paul is never referred to as a υἱὸς παρακλήσεως, Barnabas' initial ministry to him following his conversion likely would have had a profound effect upon his own ministry which would follow. Later, Paul tells the Thessalonians that they themselves know how, when he was with them, he encouraged and exhorted them as a father with his children (1 Thes 2:11-12). Certainly, a son of encouragement encourages and builds up others so that they too become υἱοὶ παρακλήσεως. While there is an absence of information regarding what happens to Barnabas after he and Paul part ways in Acts 15, it is intriguing that the prime example of Barnabas' encouraging acts is the sale of his property. The inheritance of a son from his father was particularly focused on the transmission of property in the ancient world. Thus, it is possible that Barnabas sells his inheritance from his literal father with the result that he is shown to be a figurative son of encouragement. Luke's inclusion of Joseph's second name and his property sale likely serves to motivate Theophilus and other readers toward similar encouraging acts rather that being deceitfully self-serving like Ananias and Sapphira.

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[97]Polhill, *Acts*, 154.

**Sons of Disobedience**

This "son(s) of" phrase occurs twice in Ephesians and, probably, once in Colossians. In Ephesians, it is found as τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας in 2:2 and as τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας in 5:6. In Colossians 3:6, the phrase is also τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας. However, its inclusion in the text is debated. In the UBS[4] Greek New Testament, the entire phrase – ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας – is included in brackets which mean that the presence of these words in the text are marked by the editors as disputed. Metzger notes that this reading is assigned a "C" rating which "indicates that the Committee had difficulty in deciding which variant to place in the text."[98] He explains the decision regarding this text as follows:

> It is exceedingly difficult to decide whether the words ἐπὶ ... ἀπειθείας were added in most witnesses by copyists who recollected Eph 5.6 (where no manuscript omits the words), or whether they are absent from 𝔓[46] B cop[sa] eth[ro] and several Fathers (Clement Cyprian Macrobius Ambrosiaster Ephraem Jerome) because of an accident in transmission. In view of (*a*) the very widespread testimony supporting the longer reading (ℵ A C D[vid] F G H K L P almost all minuscules it vg syr[p, h] cop[bo] goth arm eth[pp] Clement Chrysostom *al*) and (*b*) the inconcinnity produced by the shorter reading with the following ἐν οἷς, as well as (*c*) the impression that καὶ ὑμεῖς in ver. 7 assumes a previous mention of unbelieving Gentiles, a majority of the Committee decided to retain the words in the text but to enclose them within square brackets in order to indicate a measure of doubt as to their genuineness in Colossians.[99]

Both English translations and modern commentators are likewise uncertain. The KJV, NKJV, HCSB, NRSV, NASB, NET, and TEV include the phrase; the TNIV, RSV, ESV, and NLT omit it.[100] Similarly, Dunn and Wright argue to include the phrase; Harris, Moo, and O'Brien omit it.[101] While it is certainly possible that this phrase was inserted by

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[98]Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, Second Edition* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), xiv. Also, ibid., 556.

[99]Ibid.

[100]Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 259.

[101]See James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 210n4; N. T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon*, TNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 135n1;

scribes due to its presence in Ephesians 2:2 and 5:6, it should tentatively be considered as original. First, as Metzger argues in his points *b* and *c* above, including the phrase fits the grammatical context better than its exclusion. Second, the inclusion of a "son(s) of" phrase here is in keeping with Pauline thought. The connection between Colossians 3:6, Ephesians 2:2, and Ephesians 5:6 is not limited to this phrase alone. In both Ephesians 2 and 5, Paul is making a similar argument to what he is writing about in Colossians 3 – he is talking about the distinct, fundamental shift that has taken place in believers between who they were before Christ redeemed them and who they are now as a result of his redemption of them. In Ephesians 2, Paul explains that they once walked in trespasses and sins, submitted to the same evil spirit to which the sons of disobedience now submit, and were, in their very nature, children of wrath. For Paul, their former way of living is figuratively described using father-son language – they were sons of disobedience and their disobedient sonship, if it continued, would have necessitated an outpouring of wrath – as it will for those who now remain in their former state. Similarly, in Ephesians 5, Paul speaks of various sins that are out of place among the children of light. He insists that it is because sins such as these that "the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience" (Eph 5:6 ESV). Again, the distinction between their former and new life is expressed using father-son language and their former disobedient sonship merits the outpouring of the wrath of God. In Colossians 2, Paul is emphasizing how their new life should be distinct from their old life as a result of being raised with Christ. In explaining the various sins that characterized their old way of life, Paul explains that is on account of

Murray J. Harris, *Colossians and Philemon*, EGGNT (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2010), 128; Moo, *Colossians*, 260; and Peter T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 173na.

these that the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience (Col 3:6). Thus, with the "son(s) of" phrase in the text, the same major themes are present just as they are in Ephesians 2 and 5 – the contrast between their old way of life and their new life in Christ is underscored and the disobedient sonship that characterized their old life results in the wrath of God.

In each of these passages, Paul identifies unbelievers as sons of disobedience.[102] Not only are they those who are related to disobedience as a son is to a father, but they are not those who can be identified as sons of obedience.[103] As sons of disobedience they participate in a pseudo-kinship group alongside all others who follow the course of the world and submit to the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2). These sons of disobedience do such awful works of darkness, they not only bear collective shame, but it is shameful even to speak of the deeds they do in secrecy (Eph 5:12). In Ephesians 2, Paul explains that these sons of disobedience live in submission to the broken patterns of this fallen world and its would-be ruler. "Their behavior has been determined by the powerful influence of society's attitudes, habits, and preferences."[104] Further, Paul is describing the work of Satan as an "evil supernatural activity whereby he exercises a powerful, compelling influence over the lives of men and women."[105] Instead of living in submission to God and his loving rule, the sons of disobedience submit to Satan. Their character is fully bound up in the identity of their figurative father.

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[102]Even though Paul is referring to the former way of life of believers in Eph 2, they were unbelievers then, so the identification would apply.

[103]Cf. τέκνα ὑπακοῆς in 1 Peter 1:14.

[104]O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 159.

[105]Ibid., 161.

Disobedience is who they are. The sons of disobedience are earthly, in darkness, dead, and enslaved to their fleshly desires which they carry out in rampant wickedness. These sons of obedience are neither the first nor the last. They follow the course of this world – its course has been shaped by their figurative ancestry. In sin, they reproduce themselves – both literally and figuratively. The sons of disobedience share in an ominous inheritance – the wrath of God is what is coming to them. In addition, Paul makes it clear that they have "no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God" (Eph 5:5 ESV). The motivation is quite simple: Paul wants his audience to see the stark contrast between the old life and the new. For those who are still entrenched in their disobedient sonship, the desire is for them to be made alive and be remade as obedient children. For those who are being made new, the desire is for them to heed the imperatives which are given as a result of the new identity he has given them: "be imitators of God, as beloved children" (Eph 5:1 ESV).

## Human-Divine Figurative Use

Nine of the forty-two figurative "son(s) of" phrases in the NT describe the relationship of believers to the Creator in father-son terms. These nine human-divine figurative uses are found in Matthew, Luke, Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews. The most common "son(s) of" phrase in this category is υἱοὶ θεοῦ; it is found in five passages.[106] The other four phrases are slight or, in some cases, moderate variations which all have the same basic meaning. In Matthew 5:45, Jesus encourages his followers toward obedience that they might live as υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς. In a parallel passage, Luke

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[106]Matt 5:9; Luke 20:36; Rom 8:14, 19; and Gal 3:26. The head noun is in the genitive in Rom 8:19 and each noun has the article: τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ θεοῦ.

6:35 has Jesus issuing a promise to those disciples who love their enemies: they will be υἱοὶ ὑψίστου. In Romans 9:26, Paul quotes Hosea 2:1 (LXX) which includes the phrase υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος. Finally, in Hebrews 12:5, the author applies Proverbs 3:11-12 to the concept of divine sonship.[107] These phrases will be grouped and discussed below in the following categories: Human-Divine Figurative Use in the Gospels, Human-Divine Figurative Use in the Pauline Epistles, and Human-Divine Figurative Use in Hebrews.

**Human-Divine Figurative Use in the Gospels**

Four of the nine phrases in this category are found in the Gospels. In the first three phrases – Matthew 5:9, Matthew 5:45, and Luke 6:35 – it is the believer's imitation of God as their Father that shows that they are truly sons.[108] In Matthew 5:9, it is their peacemaking which results in them being recognized as υἱοὶ θεοῦ. While in the OT, Israel was God's son, now the title "belongs to the heirs of the kingdom who, meek and poor in spirit, loving righteousness yet merciful, are especially equipped for peacemaking and so reflect something of their heavenly Father's character. "[109] In both Matthew 5:45 and Luke 6:35, Jesus' followers love their enemies that they might be υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς and υἱοὶ ὑψίστου. Marshall, commenting on Luke, explains the question

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[107]It is worth noting that the author here is in agreement with MT against the LXX reading which omits μου. See Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 648. This variance from the author's typical pattern might indicate that the author is intentionally emphasizing the believer's sonship to God as their Father – they are not simply "sons," they are *his* sons.

[108]Contra Carson, *Matthew,* 159.

[109]Carson, *Matthew,* 135. While Carson disagrees with the previous conclusion, see n108, here, he seems to acknowledge that their work as peacemakers does not make them sons but rather is a by product – as any good son in the ancient world, they imitate their Father.

when interpreting these phrases:

> It is not clear whether the next clause is to be regarded as epexegetic of the thought of reward. If so, the promise of divine sonship is a reward for faithful service; those who love will enjoy God's fatherly love and care. The next clause, however, and v. 36 both suggest that the point is that the disciples will show themselves to be God's children by their imitation of his character. Probably this thought is primary, but the idea that those who show themselves to be God's sons will receive his fatherly blessing cannot be excluded.[110]

Similarly, Nolland writes that "the link with the example of God is best respected by taking the thrust of the text to be: 'By loving enemies you will be acting in the proper family manner (like father, like son)'. Marked by this family likeness, one's actions will be good works that 'glorify your Father in heaven' (5:16)."[111] The disciples do not love their enemies so that they can become sons; rather, because they are sons, they must imitate their Father. Finally, in Jesus' response to a question from the Sadducees in Luke 20, he explains that "those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead . . . are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20:35-36 ESV). Here, the focus is eschatological – while followers of Jesus are already sons of God, their sonship to him will not be fully consummated until they are with him in the new creation.[112] Resurrection completes their sonship.[113]

In Matthew and Luke, these "son(s) of" phrases are used figuratively to identify believers as sons of God. Thus, they are members of his family and are not members of the pseudo-kinship group associated with those who are not the people of God – the seed of the serpent. As his sons, they participate as members in a figurative

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[110]Marshall, *Luke*, 264.

[111]Nolland, *Matthew*, 268.

[112]Cf. Marshall, *Luke*, 742 and Fitzmeyer, *Luke*, 1306.

[113]Stein, *Luke*, 503.

kinship group and share in a collective honor. It is through their imitation of their figurative Father that they bring honor to him (Matt 5:16). As sons, they obey their Father. These sons must be merciful because their Father is merciful (Luke 6:36). They do not submit that they might become sons, but because they are sons. They show their true lineage by their obedience and their character. As sons of God, they should strive toward having his perfect character (Matt 5:48). The call in Matthew 5 and Luke 6 for his sons to love their enemies is fully grounded in God's common grace poured out on even his enemies. It is through their submission to and imitation of their Father that they do his work in the world. Certainly, these sons will never succeed their figurative Father by taking his place as is customary in the concept of succession. However, although not in every way or sense, they do what he does. As sons of God, they await their inheritance which Luke 20 indicates will come in its fullness with their own resurrection from the dead. They will be fully and finally remade as sons of God. Mysteriously, their inheritance as sons is the completion or perfection of their own sonship. The motivation in the first three of these passages is for the sons of God to be who they are. They are sons of God and as such, they must pursue and make peace and actively love their enemies. In Luke 20:36, although the main focus of the passage is the debate with the Sadducees, the motivation for Theophilus and other readers is to have expectant hope in the coming completion of their sonship to God which will be theirs by means of the resurrection from the dead.

**Human-Divine Figurative Use in**
**the Pauline Epistles**

On four occasions, Paul uses a "son(s) of" phrase to refer to God's people as sons of God. As would be expected, Paul's use of υἱοὶ θεοῦ is closely related to his

concept of υἱοθεσία.[114] Thus, in Pauline thought, these figurative "son(s) of" phrases are often examples of figurative uses of fictive or artificial kinship.[115] While other studies have drawn meaning and implications from Paul's use of υἱοθεσία, here the focus will be on the meaning and implications of his figurative use of υἱός plus the genitive.[116]

In each of these passages, Paul uses the phrase "sons of God" to identify believers. They are members of his family and are not those who have no relationship with him. In Romans 8:14, it is those who are led by the Spirit who truly are sons of God.[117] In Romans 8:19, Paul explains that all of creation is eagerly anticipating the future glorification of God's people – his sons. In Romans 9:26, Paul quotes Hosea who prophesies of the day – in which Paul is now writing – when the Gentiles will no longer by identified by God as "not my people" but instead will be known as his sons. In Galatians 3:26, it seems that "Paul's opponents are making kinship or sonship to Abraham a prerequisite for the Galatians' inclusion into the community, a theme Paul merges with a newly redefined kinship or sonship to God through Jesus Christ."[118] Thus, υἱοὶ θεοῦ serves to identify the people of God and not, exclusively, the genetic descendants of Abraham.[119] As sons of God, they participate in the fictive family of God which is the

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[114]Adoption is present in the context of each of these references to the sons of God.

[115]See n1 above and the discussion of kinship in chap. 4.

[116]Naturally, Paul's adoption metaphor cannot be explored fully here. For a helpful and thorough study, see Trevor J. Burke, *Adopted into God's Family: Exploring a Pauline Metaphor* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

[117]Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, BECNT, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 422.

[118]Burke, *Adopted*, 112.

[119]See also the discussion of υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ above.

church. They share in a collective honor and partake of God's promises together. The collective participation believers experience is especially seen in Galatians 3:26: "in Christ Jesus *you are all* sons of God, through faith."[120] In addition, these sons of God participate as sons alongside the Son of God (Rom 8:17). As sons of God, they submit to him by being led by his Spirit. "The leading of the Spirit in Romans 8:14 refers to the Spirit's governing authority in one's life that is manifested in human obedience."[121] This conclusion is based primarily on the passive form of ἄγω which refers to the sons of God being controlled or governed by the Holy Spirit.[122] These sons submit to God as Father by putting to death the deeds of their flesh under the empowering leadership of his Spirit. The prime characteristics of the sons of God are those related to new life in Christ which has been and is being wrought in them by the Spirit of adoption who leads them. They no longer live as those who are enslaved to the flesh but instead live as free sons who present their members to God as instruments for righteousness. As was seen above, the υἱοὶ θεοῦ never succeed their Father by becoming θεός. However, these sons do pattern themselves after their obedient elder Brother by seeking to be conformed into his image. In fact, their progressive conformance to him results in them sharing in both his suffering and also his glorification (Rom 8:17). The sons of God wait expectantly for the inheritance they will share in as his sons. In Romans, Paul says that they are "heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided [they] suffer with him in order that [they] may also be glorified with him" (Rom 8:17 ESV). In Galatians, he says that they are heirs of the promises of God to Abraham (Gal 3:29). While they experience some foretastes of

[120]Gal 3:26, ESV. Emphasis added.

[121]Schreiner, *Romans*, 423.

[122]Ibid., 422.

their inheritance now – for example, they relate now to God as Father – similar to any

son, much of their inheritance lies in the future. Along with the rest of creation, the υἱοὶ

θεοῦ wait with eager anticipation for "the revelation of God's children, that is, their future

glorification."[123] In Romans 8:14, Paul is motivating the sons of God to live as sons of

God. If they are truly sons of God, they will be led by the Spirit. If they are led by the

Spirit, they will put to death the deeds of the body. Essentially, he is calling for them to

live as sons of God and not as slaves to sin. In Romans 8:19, Paul is motivating the

Romans toward endurance in the face of the brokenness of the current creation by

reminding them of the glorious consummating fulfillment that is coming as the

inheritance of the sons of God. In Romans 9:26, Paul is seeking to motivate his national

brothers to recognize his spiritual brothers as a fulfillment of the promise of God to

Hosea. In Galatians 3:26, Paul is motivating the Galatians to see that they are already

sons of God, and sons of Abraham, through faith in Christ. They do not need to pursue or

manufacture kinship to Abraham – the Spirit of God has already made them sons and

heirs in Christ.

**Human-Divine Figurative Use in**
**Hebrews**

In Hebrews 12:5, the author includes the phrase υἱέ μου in a quotation from

Proverbs 3:11-12.[124] In this passage, the author is encouraging his audience toward

endurance in Christian living. In his encouragement, he teaches them about God's

fatherly discipline of his sons.[125] He reminds them that, through Scripture, God addresses

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[123]Schreiner, *Romans*, 435.

[124]See n107.

[125]The author is referred to using a masculine pronoun merely due to

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them as sons (Heb 12:4). O'Brien notes that Scripture does not address them as sons *as if they were sons* but instead *because they are sons*.[126] The quotation is seen as "God's personal word to those who enjoy sonship through the mediation of Jesus."[127] His personal word for them is to encourage them to see his discipline not as a mark against their sonship but for it.

With the quotation from Proverbs attributed to an address from God, υἱέ μου is used to identify believers as God's sons. As his sons, they participate and share in their sonship with all their figurative kin. In this passage, their participation as sons is specifically linked to sharing in the Lord's discipline of his sons. In fact, if they do not participate in the discipline, it is because they are not true sons (Heb 12:8). As these sons have submitted to their earthly fathers, so also they must be subject to God as their Father (Heb 12:9). Their submission need not be begrudging. Even as they learned to love the benevolent authority of their earthly father, they will delight in the always good and loving rule of their heavenly Father. The purpose of his fatherly discipline is so that they might share also in his holy character and produce the peaceful fruit of righteousness (Heb 12:10-11). As has been seen in the discussion of this category in the Gospels and in the Pauline Epistles, the sons of God never succeed him by taking his place. However, they do follow Jesus – their elder brother – by, in some ways, doing what he has done.[128]

convenience. It should not be seen as an argument for or against any suggested author of Hebrews.

[126]Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Hebrews*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 463.

[127]William L. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, WBC, vol. 47B (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 241.

[128]See, for example, Heb 13:12-13.

Because of their endurance brought about by their Father's discipline of them as sons, they will inherit glory along with their many brothers because Jesus destroyed the devil and his power through his death.[129] He has freed those whom he is not ashamed to call his brothers from Satan's enslaving grasp.[130] The author seeks to motivate believers to welcome rather than fear the Lord's discipline. They should see it not as punishment but instead as the action of a loving father who truly desires what is best for them. Rather than destroying them, his discipline will keep them back from destruction and result in their full status and standing as sons with him in the new creation.

## Conclusion

The interpretative categories of Identification, Participation, Submission, Characterization, Succession, Inheritance, and Motivation which were drawn from the PKG of the biblical world result in a much more well-rounded and robust interpretation of these figurative uses of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. Most interpreters simply choose one aspect of the father-son relationship, such as characterization or destiny, and base the interpretation of these phrases on that sole criteria. Even then, they rarely link that criteria to the father-son terminology which was intentionally chosen by the author. Here, it has been shown that the relationship as a whole, as expressed in these seven functions of the father-son relationship, is a much more suitable framework for interpreting these phrases and others like them. In addition, this framework remains consistently applicable across the diverse category lines drawn above – Human-Human or Other Non-Divine Personal Beings, Human-Non-Human, and Human-Divine.

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[129]Heb 2:10, 14.

[130]Heb 2:11, 15

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The goal of this work is to demonstrate that the figurative use of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT represents the author utilizing the father-son relationship, and what this relationship represents in the ancient world, as a tool to illustrate and explain various concepts and ideas in NT thought. As a result, the father-son relationship in the ancient world must be employed in the interpretation of these figurative "son(s) of" phrases. In fact, failing to understand the importance of genealogical identification, kinship, and the social implications of the father-son relationship in the ancient world and bring these concepts to bear in interpretation, will result in a failure to understand what the NT authors seek to communicate by using "son(s) of" phrases. An accurate and robust understanding of these "son(s) of" phrases will further our understanding of the thought and theology of the NT authors and help us to appreciate more fully the relationship in which believers participate as sons of our Father in heaven.

Certainly, if every commentator included all their knowledge of each word, phrase, or theological idea that occurred in the text, the shelves of seminary libraries would quickly swell beyond their capacity. As such, it is understood that scholars cannot thoroughly explain every word or phrase in every text. However, this work seeks to elevate the "son(s) of" phrases in the NT into the discussion which is included in even the briefest of commentaries. May they no longer be overlooked and may their discussion be

no longer limited to their dependence or lack of dependence upon a Semitic original. The average reader, and even preacher/teacher, of Scripture depends upon NT scholars to give them the relevant information he or she needs to be able to understand accurately and deeply the biblical text in front of them. The reader needs NT scholars to bridge the gap between his or her own limited domain of reference – that of modern Western society – and the domain of reference of the NT author. This work seeks both to highlight this need and also to address it as it relates to the "son(s) of" phrases in the NT.

**Summary**

Chapter 1 began by arguing along with Bruce Malina that "the understanding and interpretation of any sort of text is ultimately rooted in a social world"[1] Further, "if interpretation of written language of any sort takes place some domain of reference will be used by the reader. This domain of reference will be rooted in some model of society and of social interaction."[2] The problem for the modern reader is that his or her domain of reference differs starkly from the NT author's domain of reference with respect to the "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of helpful attention paid to these phrases in grammatical and lexical works, monographs, and commentaries. Thus, this work was prompted and its plan for addressing this problem was laid out in chapter 1.

Chapter 2 focused on the use of "son(s) of" phrases outside the NT. This chapter included a wide-ranging survey encompassing the use of בֵּן in the Hebrew Bible, "son(s) of" phrases in the LXX, as well as the use of υἱός plus the genitive in Classical

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[1]Bruce J. Malina, "The Social Sciences and Biblical Interpretation," *Interpretation* 36, no. 3 (1982): 229-242, 231.

[2]Ibid., 233.

Greek, the OT and NT apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, other early Jewish and Christian writings, coins and inscriptions, and the papyri and ostraca. This survey showed that "son(s) of" phrases such as those present in the NT writings are found in both texts which have a Semitic background and also those which were not directly influenced by the Hebrew language. The figurative use of "son(s) of" is found in Jewish, Christian, and non-Christian documents written by many different authors.

Chapter 3 provided a survey of the use of υἱός in the NT as it is the noun behind the "son(s) of" phrases. There are 377 occurrences of υἱός in the NT and nearly 80 percent of these occurrences are found in a "son(s) of" phrase. The chapter progressed by surveying each author's use of υἱός. For each author, the usage of υἱός is broken down and categorized. First, the use of υἱός outside of "son(s) of" phrases is considered. Next, the "son(s) of" phrases present in each author's work are examined. This latter group is broken down into three categories: (1) genetic identification, (2) messianic, and (3) figurative uses.

Chapter 4 served two major purposes within the work. First, it sought to explore the father-son relationship in the social context of the NT. In order to provide a proper foundation for this discussion, the chapter initially surveyed major concepts such as kinship, family, and the function and significance of genealogy both in general and in the ancient Mediterranean world. Second, it sought to distill the major features of the father-son relationship as explored in the ancient world into an interpretive framework which can be utilized in understanding what the NT authors seek to communicate in their figurative use of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. It is this framework which can serve as the proper domain of reference in the interpretation of these phrases. The key aspects of

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the father-son relationship employed in this framework as outlined at the end of chapter 4 are Identification, Participation, Submission, Characterization, Succession, Inheritance, and Motivation.

Identification refers to the simplest function of a genealogical statement: to indicate who an individual is and who they are not. Participation includes the idea that membership in the patrilineal kinship group (PKG) is transmitted from father to son. As a result, the son's participation in the PKG brings his family either honor or shame. Submission relates to what is an often overlooked aspect of the father-son relationship with respect to these "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. It expresses the expectation of the PKG and also the larger social world that the son will remain loyal, obedient, and respectful to his father. Characterization reflects the ancient world's notion that genealogy represented for an individual, and to the rest of society, what kind of person he was. Succession is focused on the transmission of the father's office to the son. Often, this transmission included his profession and, perhaps, his leadership of the PKG. Inheritance refers to the reality that when a father died, his wealth and property – inheritance – would be passed on to his son. Finally, motivation is comprised of the ancient world's understanding that the son's actions have the power to increase the PKG's collective honor or to bring them shame. He both possesses and also shapes the collective honor of the family. As such, the son would be motivated, and even delighted, to live in a way that brings honor, and not shame, upon his family.

Chapter 5 both employed and also tested the interpretive framework developed in chapter 4. It was shown that the categories of Identification, Participation, Submission, Characterization, Succession, Inheritance, and Motivation provide the reader with a much

greater understanding of what the NT authors seek to communicate through their use of figurative "son(s) of" phrases. The resulting interpretations are not only more thorough and robust than those found in commentaries on these phrases, but they are entirely in keeping with the theological point being made by the NT author in these passages. In fact, they often make the author's point even more impactful because the reader is finally equipped with a more accurate understanding of what the author is communicating with these "son(s) of" phrases. For example, consider again the following sample of points made in chapter 5.

A holistic interpretation of the father-son relationship as outlined in chapter 4, yields a greater understanding of the figurative use of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. It explored more fully Jesus' logic when referring to the "sons of the Pharisees" in Matthew 12:27. Similarly, it explained why the Pharisees were so quick to rush to Paul's defense when he employed the phrase in Acts 23:6. In the case of υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ in Matthew 27:9, it was shown that while this "sons(s) of" phrase is often used literally in the NT, this occurrence indeed functions figuratively. Matthew uses this "son(s) of" phrase to identify figuratively the Jewish religious leaders as those who rejected and sold their brother into slavery. It showed that τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων in Ephesians 3:5 is not simply a stylistic reference to humanity but is instead emphasizing a contrast in sonship woven throughout Paul's letter. In Mark 2:19 and its parallels, it explained that Jesus' description of his followers as οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος is focused not primarily on their close relationship to Jesus, but instead on the "at-handedness" of the Kingdom of Heaven. Their joy is connected to the nearness of its consummation and that its celebration has already begun. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the interpretive framework in chapter 4 assists

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believers in arriving at a deeper understanding of their own sonship to their Father in heaven.

### Implications and Further Study

The first and most obvious implication of this study is that the ancient world's understanding of the father-son relationship must serve as the foundation when interpreting these figurative "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. Even if the framework in chapter 4 is not accepted as presented, these phrases cannot continue to be examined so myopically by interpreters. Broader categories are needed than merely considering these phrases against comparatively simple notions of "sonship as destiny" or "sonship as characterization."

The second implication of this study may be one of its most important contributions – how it might be applied to the Messianic "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. While the scope of this work was limited to the figurative "son(s) of" phrases in the NT, the interpretive categories put forth for their interpretation may be found to be quite helpful in arriving at a more holistic understanding of the "son(s) of" phrases applied to Jesus Christ in the NT.

As a brief example, Jesus is referred to as the "son of God" in the NT. He is closely identified with God as his Father. He participates and shares in a collective honor and glory with God as his Son. In the Gospels, Jesus is seen doing the will of the Father as the perfectly submissive Son. As the Son of God, Jesus receives his character from his Father. He is revealed to be the true Son of God as he demonstrates himself to be perfect even as his Father in heaven is perfect. He is holy as his Father is holy. Succession is

evident when the Son is seen in the Gospels doing his Father's work.[3] The NT authors

make it clear that, as the Son of God, Jesus partakes of his Father's inheritance.[4] Jesus is

seen throughout the NT as the perfect Son who is the exemplar of one who delights to do

his Father's will.

The third implication of this study and similar studies is that there remains in

the NT many other phrases and concepts which merit a corresponding exploration. For

example, this present study would certainly have merit when interpreting similar phrases

such as uses of τέκνον plus the genitive or occurrences of non-human sonship such as

"brood of vipers."[5] In addition, a study exploring more thoroughly the father's side of the

father-son relationship would surely further the believer's understanding of who God has

revealed himself to be to him or her. Likewise, applying this framework to figurative

"son(s) of" phrases in other writings such as the MT, LXX, or Dead Sea Scrolls would

likely yield similar results.[6]

A fourth implication of this study is what it might yield when applied to some

of the more recent debate regarding the topic of sanctification and sonship. At times,

there has seemed to be a wedge being driven between sonship and obedience. This

disconnect is due to the modern interpreter's approach to both sonship and obedience. The

modern world possesses a suspicion of and even resentfulness to authority and, as a

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[3]For example, see John 4:34, 5:17, 10:37, and 14:10.

[4]E.g. Rom 8:17; Heb 1:2.

[5]For example on τέκνον plus the genitive see Rom 8:16, 21, 9:7, 8; 1 Cor 4:14, 17; 2 Cor 12:14; Gal 4:19, 28, 31; Eph 2:3, 5:8; Phil 2:15; 2 Tim 2:1; Phlm 1:10; 1 Pet 1:14; 2 Pet 2:14; 1 Joh 3:1, 2, 10, 5:2; 2 Joh 1:1, 4, 13; 3 Joh 1:4; and Rev 2:23. For "brood of vipers," see Matt 3:7, 12:34, 23:33; Luke 3:7.

[6]A further, more specialized study could even include the application of some of this work's conclusions to the Messianic "son(s) of" phrases in the NT.

result, obedience is not often offered delightfully. Obedience is seen as servitude whereas sonship is seen as a loving, and, especially, liberating relationship. However, this exploration of the father-son relationship as it was understood in the ancient world shows that there was not a disconnect between sonship and obedience in the minds of the NT authors. In fact, they may have employed this relationship with such frequency because it intertwines these two ideas. As mentioned above, "the individual reared in the father-son dominated system will have no resentment against benevolent authority; in fact, he will love it."[7] This understanding of the relationship between sonship and obedience certainly has implications for this debate and further study in this area is needed.

A final implication and need for further study is that this work is limited in that it attempts an exhaustive and simultaneously focused look at the figurative "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. Due to this work's method, further study is needed on both a wide-angle approach and at the microscopic exegetical level. For example, each of the figurative "son(s) of" phrases covered here deserves further exploration and consideration of how the interpretations outlined in chapter 5 connect to the author's overall message and theology in their writings. Additionally, because this study focused on the "son(s) of" phrases as they occurred in constructions using υἱός plus the genitive, it did not explore how the interpretive framework developed in chapter 4 might apply to other uses of the father-son relationship in the NT.[8]

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[7]Francis L. K. Hsu, "A Hypothesis on Kinship and Culture," in *Kinship and Culture*, ed. Francis L. K. Hsu (New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transaction, 1971), 24.

[8]E.g., exploring what this framework, or a similar one, might yield in a discussion of Paul's concept of adoption.

## Conclusion

While at first glance, these "son(s) of" phrases in the NT seem to be simply a style of speaking that is different than that of the modern reader, instead they represent a significant difference of thought. These "son(s) of" phrases are constructed and used figuratively because of the prominence of the father-son relationship in the ancient world and all that comes to the author's mind when it is considered. As a result, this relationship and its nature, dynamics, and implications must serve as the primary background when interpreting these phrases. Without such an understanding, the reader and scholar alike will miss out on what the NT authors are seeking to communicate through their use. This work has attempted to steer readers around that pitfall by presenting a framework which will yield much greater understanding of what the NT authors mean when they use "son(s) of" phrases figuratively.

APPENDIX

LIST OF EVERY OCCURRENCE OF ΥΙΟΣ PLUS THE
GENITIVE IN THE NT

Table A1. All uses of υἱός plus the genitive in the NT

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Matt 1:1 | υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ | son of David | Messianic |
| Matt 1:1 | υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ | son of Abraham | Messianic |
| Matt 1:20 | υἱὸς Δαυίδ | son of David | Genetic |
| Matt 2:15 | τὸν υἱόν μου | my son | Messianic |
| Matt 3:17 | ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός | my beloved son | Messianic |
| Matt 4:3 | υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Matt 4:6 | υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Matt 5:9 | υἱοὶ θεοῦ | sons of God | Figurative |
| Matt 5:45 | υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς | sons of your Father in heaven | Figurative |
| Matt 7:9 | ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ | his son | Genetic |
| Matt 8:12 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας | sons of the kingdom | Figurative |
| Matt 8:20 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 8:29 | υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Matt 9:6 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 9:15 | οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος | sons of the bridegroom | Figurative |
| Matt 9:27 | υἱὸς Δαυίδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Matt 10:23 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 11:19 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 12:8 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 12:23 | ὁ υἱὸς Δαυίδ | the Son of David | Messianic |
| Matt 12:27 | οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν | your sons | Figurative |

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Matt 12:32 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 12:40 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 13:37 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 13:38 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας | the sons of the kingdom | Figurative |
| Matt 13:38 | οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ πονηρου | the sons of the evil one | Figurative |
| Matt 13:41 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 13:55 | ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός | the son of the carpenter | Genetic |
| Matt 14:33 | θεοῦ υἱὸς | Son of God | Messianic |
| Matt 15:22 | υἱὸς Δαυίδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Matt 16:13 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 16:16 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος | Son of the Living God | Messianic |
| Matt 16:27 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 16:28 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 17:5 | ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός | my beloved Son | Messianic |
| Matt 17:9 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 17:12 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 17:15 | μου τὸν υἱόν | my son | Genetic |
| Matt 17:22 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 17:25 | τῶν υἱῶν αὐτῶν | their sons | Genetic |
| Matt 19:28 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 20:18 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 20:20 | τῶν υἱῶν Ζεβεδαίου | the sons of Zebedee | Genetic |
| Matt 20:20 | τῶν υἱῶν αὐτῆς | her sons | Genetic |
| Matt 20:21 | οἱ δύο υἱοί μου | my two sons | Genetic |
| Matt 20:28 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 20:30 | υἱὸς Δαυίδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Matt 20:31 | υἱὸς Δαυίδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Matt 21:5 | υἱὸν ὑποζυγίου | son of a donkey | Genetic |

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| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Matt 21:9 | τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Matt 21:15 | τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Matt 21:37 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ | his son | Genetic |
| Matt 21:37 | τὸν υἱόν μου | my son | Genetic |
| Matt 22:2 | τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ | his son | Genetic |
| Matt 22:42 | τίνος υἱός | Whose son? | Messianic |
| Matt 22:45 | υἱὸς αὐτοῦ | his son | Messianic |
| Matt 23:15 | υἱὸν γεέννης | son of hell | Figurative |
| Matt 23:31 | υἱοί τῶν φονευσάντων τοὺς προφήτας | sons of those who murdered the prophets | Figurative |
| Matt 23:35 | υἱοῦ Βαραχίου | son of Barachiah | Genetic |
| Matt 24:27 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 24:30 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 24:30 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 24:37 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 24:39 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 24:44 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 25:31 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 26:2 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 26:24 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 26:24 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 26:37 | υἱοὺς Ζεβεδαίου | sons of Zebedee | Genetic |
| Matt 26:45 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 26:63 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Matt 26:64 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Matt 27:9 | υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ | sons of Israel | Figurative |
| Matt 27:40 | υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Matt 27:43 | θεοῦ υἱός | Son of God | Messianic |
| Matt 27:54 | θεοῦ υἱός | Son of God | Messianic |

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Matt 27:56 | τῶν υἱῶν Ζεβεδαίου | the sons of Zebedee | Genetic |
| Mark 1:1 | υἱοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Mark 1:11 | ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός | my beloved Son | Messianic |
| Mark 2:10 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 2:19 | οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος | sons of the bridegroom | Figurative |
| Mark 2:28 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 3:11 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Mark 3:17 | υἱοὶ βροντῆς | sons of thunder | Figurative |
| Mark 3:28 | τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων | the sons of men | Genetic |
| Mark 5:7 | υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου | Son of the Most High God | Messianic |
| Mark 6:3 | ὁ υἱὸς τῆς Μαρίας | the son of Mary | Genetic |
| Mark 8:31 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 8:38 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 9:7 | ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός | my beloved Son | Messianic |
| Mark 9:9 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 9:12 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 9:17 | τὸν υἱόν μου | my son | Genetic |
| Mark 9:31 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 10:33 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 10:35 | οἱ υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου | the sons of Zebedee | Genetic |
| Mark 10:45 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 10:46 | ὁ υἱὸς Τιμαίου | the son of Timaeus | Genetic |
| Mark 10:47 | υἱὲ Δαυὶδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Mark 10:48 | υἱὲ Δαυὶδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Mark 12:6 | τὸν υἱόν μου | my son | Genetic |
| Mark 12:35 | υἱὸς Δαυίδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Mark 12:37 | αὐτοῦ υἱός | his son | Messianic |
| Mark 13:26 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mark 14:21 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 14:21 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 14:41 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 14:61 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ | Son of the Blessed | Messianic |
| Mark 14:62 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Mark 15:39 | υἱὸς θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Luke 1:16 | τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ | the Sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Luke 1:32 | υἱὸς ὑψίστου | Son of the Most High | Messianic |
| Luke 1:35 | υἱὸς θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Luke 2:7 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς | her  son | Genetic |
| Luke 3:2 | τὸν Ζαχαρίου υἱὸν | son of Zechariah | Genetic |
| Luke 3:22 | ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός | my beloved Son | Messianic |
| Luke 3:23 | υἱός Ἰωσὴφ | son of Joseph | Genetic |
| Luke 4:3 | υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Luke 4:9 | υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Luke 4:22 | υἱός Ἰωσὴφ | son of Joseph | Genetic |
| Luke 4:41 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Luke 5:10 | υἱοὺς Ζεβεδαίου | sons of Zebedee | Genetic |
| Luke 5:24 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 5:34 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τοῦ νυμφῶνος | sons of the bridegroom | Figurative |
| Luke 6:5 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 6:22 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 6:35 | υἱοὶ ὑψίστου | sons of the Most High | Figurative |
| Luke 7:34 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 8:28 | υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου | Son of the Most High God | Messianic |
| Luke 9:22 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 9:26 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 9:35 | ὁ υἱός μου | my Son | Messianic |

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|-----------|--------|-------------|----------|
| Luke 9:38 | τὸν υἱόν μου | my son | Genetic |
| Luke 9:41 | τὸν υἱόν σου | your son | Genetic |
| Luke 9:44 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 9:58 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 10:6 | υἱὸς εἰρήνης | son of peace | Figurative |
| Luke 11:19 | οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν | your sons | Figurative |
| Luke 11:30 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 12:8 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 12:10 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 12:40 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 15:19 | υἱός σου | your son | Genetic |
| Luke 15:21 | υἱός σου | your son | Genetic |
| Luke 15:24 | ὁ υἱός μου | my son | Genetic |
| Luke 15:25 | ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ | his son | Genetic |
| Luke 15:30 | ὁ υἱός σου | your son | Genetic |
| Luke 16:8 | οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου | sons of this age | Figurative |
| Luke 16:8 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τοῦ φωτὸς | sons of light | Figurative |
| Luke 17:22 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 17:24 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 17:26 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 17:30 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 18:8 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 18:31 | τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 18:38 | υἱὲ Δαυίδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Luke 18:39 | υἱὲ Δαυίδ | Son of David | Messianic |
| Luke 19:9 | υἱὸς Ἀβραάμ | son of Abraham | Genetic |
| Luke 19:10 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 20:13 | τὸν υἱόν μου τὸν ἀγαπητόν | my beloved son | Genetic |
| Luke 20:34 | οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου | sons of this age | Figurative |

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|-----------|--------|-------------|----------|
| Luke 20:36 | υἱοί θεοῦ | sons of God | Figurative |
| Luke 20:36 | τῆς ἀναστάσεως υἱοὶ | sons of the resurrection | Figurative |
| Luke 20:41 | Δαυὶδ υἱόν | Son of David | Messianic |
| Luke 20:44 | αὐτοῦ υἱός | his son | Messianic |
| Luke 21:27 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 21:36 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 22:22 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 22:48 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 22:69 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| Luke 22:70 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεου | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Luke 24:7 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 1:34 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| John 1:42 | ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου | the son of John | Genetic |
| John 1:45 | υἱὸν τοῦ Ἰωσὴφ | son of Joseph | Genetic |
| John 1:49 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| John 1:51 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 3:13 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 3:14 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 3:18 | τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ | the only Son of God | Messianic |
| John 4:5 | υἱῷ αὐτοῦ | his son | Genetic |
| John 4:12 | οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ | his sons | Genetic |
| John 4:46 | οὗ ὁ υἱὸς | whose son | Genetic |
| John 4:47 | αὐτοῦ τὸν υἱόν | his son | Genetic |
| John 4:50 | ὁ υἱός σου | your son | Genetic |
| John 4:53 | ὁ υἱός σου | your son | Genetic |
| John 5:25 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| John 5:27 | υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου | Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 6:27 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| John 6:42 | ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ | the son of Joseph | Genetic |
| John 6:53 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 6:62 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 8:28 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 9:19 | ὁ υἱὸς ὑμῶν | your son | Genetic |
| John 9:20 | ὁ υἱὸς ἡμῶν | our son | Genetic |
| John 9:35 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 10:36 | υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| John 11:4 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| John 11:27 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεου | the Son of God | Messianic |
| John 12:23 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 12:34 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 12:34 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 12:36 | υἱοὶ φωτὸς | sons of light | Figurative |
| John 13:31 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |
| John 17:1 | σου τὸν υἱόν | your son | Messianic |
| John 17:12 | ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας | the son of destruction | Figurative |
| John 19:7 | υἱὸν θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| John 19:26 | ὁ υἱός σου | your son | Figurative |
| John 20:31 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Acts 2:17 | οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν | your sons | Genetic |
| Acts 3:25 | οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ τῆς διαθήκης | sons of the prophets and the covenant | Figurative |
| Acts 4:36 | υἱὸς παρακλήσεως | son of encouragement | Figurative |
| Acts 5:21 | τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ | the sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Acts 7:16 | τῶν υἱῶν Ἑμμὼρ | the sons of Hamor | Genetic |
| Acts 7:23 | τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραήλ | the sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Acts 7:37 | τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραήλ | the sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Acts 7:56 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | the Son of Man | Messianic |

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|-----------|--------|-------------|----------|
| Acts 9:15 | υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ | sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Acts 9:20 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Acts 10:36 | τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ | the sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Acts 13:10 | υἱὲ διαβόλου | son of the devil | Figurative |
| Acts 13:21 | υἱὸν Κίς | son of Kish | Genetic |
| Acts 13:26 | υἱοὶ γένους Ἀβραὰμ | sons of the family of Abraham | Genetic |
| Acts 13:33 | υἱός μου | my son | Messianic |
| Acts 16:1 | υἱὸς γυναικὸς Ἰουδαίας | son of a Jewish woman | Genetic |
| Acts 19:14 | Σκευᾶ ἑπτὰ υἱοὶ | seven sons of Sceva | Genetic |
| Acts 23:6 | υἱὸς Φαρισαίων | son of Pharisees | Figurative |
| Acts 23:16 | ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀδελφῆς Παύλου | son of Paul's sister | Genetic |
| Rom 1:3 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ | his Son | Messianic |
| Rom 1:4 | υἱοῦ θεοῦ | Son of God | Messianic |
| Rom 1:9 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ | his Son | Messianic |
| Rom 5:10 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτου | his Son | Messianic |
| Rom 8:3 | τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν | his own Son | Messianic |
| Rom 8:14 | υἱοὶ θεοῦ | sons of God | Figurative |
| Rom 8:19 | τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ θεου | sons of God | Figurative |
| Rom 8:29 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ | his son | Messianic |
| Rom 8:32 | τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ | his own Son | Messianic |
| Rom 9:26 | υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος | sons of the Living God | Figurative |
| Rom 9:27 | τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ | the sons of Israel | Genetic |
| 1 Cor 1:9 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ | his Son | Messianic |
| 2 Cor 1:19 | ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ υἱὸς | the Son of God | Messianic |
| 2 Cor 3:7 | τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ | the sons of Israel | Genetic |
| 2 Cor 3:13 | τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ | the sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Gal 1:16 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτου | his Son | Messianic |
| Gal 2:20 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gal 3:7 | υἱοί Ἀβραάμ | sons of Abraham | Figurative |
| Gal 3:26 | υἱοὶ θεοῦ | sons of God | Figurative |
| Gal 4:4 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτου | his Son | Messianic |
| Gal 4:6 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτου | his Son | Messianic |
| Gal 4:30 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς | her son | Genetic |
| Gal 4:30 | ὁ υἱὸς τῆς παιδίσκης | the son of the slave | Genetic |
| Gal 4:30 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἐλευθέρας | the son of the free | Genetic |
| Eph 2:2 | τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας | the sons of disobedience | Figurative |
| Eph 3:5 | τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων | the sons of men | Figurative |
| Eph 4:13 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Eph 5:6 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας | the sons of disobedience | Figurative |
| Col 1:13 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ | his beloved Son | Messianic |
| Col 3:6 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας | the sons of disobedience | Figurative |
| 1 Thess 1:10 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτου | his Son | Messianic |
| 1 Thess 5:5 | υἱοὶ φωτός | sons of light | Figurative |
| 1 Thess 5:5 | υἱοὶ ἡμέρας | sons of day | Figurative |
| 2 Thess 2:3 | ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας | the son of destruction | Figurative |
| Heb 1:5 | υἱός μου | my Son | Messianic |
| Heb 2:6 | υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου | son of man | Genetic |
| Heb 4:14 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Heb 5:5 | υἱός μου | my Son | Messianic |
| Heb 6:6 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Heb 7:3 | τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ θεου | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Heb 7:5 | τῶν υἱῶν Λευι | the sons of Levi | Genetic |
| Heb 10:29 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Heb 11:21 | τῶν υἱῶν Ἰωσὴφ | the sons of Joseph | Genetic |
| Heb 11:22 | τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ | the sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Heb 11:24 | υἱὸς θυγατρὸς Φαραω | son of Pharaoh's daughter | Genetic |
| Heb 12:5 | υἱέ μου | my son | Figurative |

| Reference | Phrase | Translation | Category |
|---|---|---|---|
| Jas 2:21 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτου | his son | Genetic |
| 1 Pet 5:13 | ὁ υἱός μου | my son | Figurative |
| 2 Pet 1:17 | ὁ υἱός μου | my Son | Messianic |
| 1 John 1:3 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ | his Son | Messianic |
| 1 John 1:7 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ | his Son | Messianic |
| 1 John 3:8 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| 1 John 3:23 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτου | his Son | Messianic |
| 1 John 4:9 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτου | his Son | Messianic |
| 1 John 4:10 | τὸν υἱὸν αὐτου | his Son | Messianic |
| 1 John 4:15 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| 1 John 5:5 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| 1 John 5:9 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ | his Son | Messianic |
| 1 John 5:10 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεου | the Son of God | Messianic |
| 1 John 5:10 | τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ | his Son | Messianic |
| 1 John 5:11 | τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ | his Son | Messianic |
| 1 John 5:12 | τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| 1 John 5:13 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεου | the Son of God | Messianic |
| 1 John 5:20 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεου | the Son of God | Messianic |
| 1 John 5:20 | τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ | his Son | Messianic |
| 2 John 1:3 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς | the Son of the Father | Messianic |
| Rev 1:13 | υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου | son of man | Messianic |
| Rev 2:14 | τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ | the sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Rev 2:18 | ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ | the Son of God | Messianic |
| Rev 7:4 | υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ | sons of Israel | Genetic |
| Rev 14:14 | υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου | son of man | Messianic |
| Rev 21:12 | υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ | sons of Israel | Genetic |

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ABSTRACT

THE FIGURATIVE USE OF "SON(S) OF" IN
THE NEW TESTAMENT

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The figurative use of "son(s) of" phrases in the NT represents the author

employing the father-son relationship, and what this relationship represents in the ancient

world, as a tool to illustrate and explain various concepts and ideas in NT thought. As a

result, the father-son relationship in the ancient world must be employed in the

interpretation of these figurative "son(s) of" phrases. Failing to understand the importance

of genealogical identification, kinship, and the social implications of the father-son

relationship in the ancient world and bring these concepts to bear in interpretation, will

result in a failure to understand what the NT authors seek to communicate by using

"son(s) of" phrases.

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to this topic and a history of how linguists

and commentators have approached these phrases in the past. There are very few scholars

who have sought to employ the father-son relationship in their interpretation of these

phrases and their figurative use.

Chapters 2 and 3 survey the use of these phrases inside and outside the NT.

Chapter 2 includes the use of בֵּן in the Hebrew Bible, "son(s) of" phrases in the LXX, as

well as the use of υἱός plus the genitive in Classical Greek, the OT and NT apocrypha and

pseudepigrapha, other early Jewish and Christian writings, coins and inscriptions, and the papyri and ostraca. Chapter 3 surveys the use of υἱός in the NT.

Chapter 4 explores the father-son relationship in the social context of the NT in order to distill the major features of the father-son relationship into an interpretive framework which can be utilized in understanding what the NT authors seek to communicate in their figurative use of "son(s) of" phrases. Chapter 5 employs this framework in the interpretation of the figurative "son(s) of" phrases in the NT. Chapter 6 concludes the work, discusses its implications, and recognizes the need for further study in certain areas.

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