

КАРПОНОМОН НАНТОН

AN ENQUIRY INTO AN ASPECT OF THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE
EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

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ABSTRACT

The Christology of Hebrews has always been considered complex and difficult. The problem has been to find a single concept which consistently reconciles the numerous elements. The question is whether there is any connection between the Son as First-born, Founder, Lord and Heir? Associated with this problem is that of the relationship of the Son to the "brothers" or the People of God consisting of the believers. The view taken by this thesis is that the key concept that reconciles the various elements of the Epistle to the Hebrews is that of Christ as "Heir of All Things" (Hebr. 1 : 2).

To adequately exegese this concept three questions have been posed by the author. Who was the Heir? What did he inherit? How did he enter his inheritance? Next, to answer these questions, material was gathered from texts, writings and traditions which provided a background to the Epistle. It was realized that Hebrews could not be interpreted in isolation. The Epistle forms part of the early Christian tradition which in its turn was influenced by the OT, Late Judaism and other Semitic cultures as well as by the Graeco-Roman world. Concepts have been studied in terms of this cultural background. This method of study is often referred to as the Kittel method.¹ Further, passages in Hebrews and in the rest of the NT, which have been considered to have a bearing on the subject have been exegetically compared in considerable detail.

The terms "Heir", "First-born" and "Lord" are found to be virtually synonymous terms when applied to the Son. The Heir possesses his inheritance forcefully and maintains it powerfully. As First-born he possesses authority over the family which means

1. The Criticisms of this method contained in J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, Oxford, 1962, have been borne in mind in this thesis, but do not affect its findings.

What he is Lord over all his brothers of whom he is at one and the same time the Leader and the Captain. To then he is Lord. They follow, obey and believe in him implicitly. As the Son of God he also reveals God to them in an exclusive way, so that through mediation of the New Covenant they become the People of God.

Therefore Christ as the "Heir of All Things" inherits divine authority over the People of God. This lordship is due to th. inheritance of the "name", "authority" that is superior to that of the angels and Moses. The inheritance is universal and the term used to describe it is comprehensive giving the Son as Heir and his brothers as co-heirs authority over all orders of existence. This inheritance was an extension of the promise of the land to Abraham and was regarded as the ultimate fulfillment of this promise. He leads his People into a genuine Sabbath day's rest in the land of promise which is their inheritance by faith. Jesus' divine authority makes him worthy of angelic worship due to his unique filial relationship with God.

The basic meaning of Heir in the OT. is of one who forcefully possesses his Inheritance. This Jesus did by means of his incarnation, suffering and death which resulted in his being appointed "Heir of All Things" by God his Father. Thus Jesus possessed his inheritance and those people who put their faith in him may enter after him and share in that inheritance.

(iv)

MEDICATION

TO North for being so patient.

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The subject for this enquiry arose from a discussion in a post graduate seminar on "heirship" and "inheritance" as applied to the christology of Hebrews. At that stage it appeared that this theme might well be the key to the understanding of the christology of Hebrews. This preliminary opinion was confirmed and broadened in the ensuing research programme.

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HERITAGE.

In Heb. 1 : 2 Christ is said to have been made "heir of all things". This phrase, though apparently simple actually conceals a wealth of meaning which is exceedingly complex. This meaning has a profoundly enlightening effect on our understanding of the christology of Hebrews.

We will attempt to unravel the meaning of this phrase by asking ourselves three main questions: who is the heir? what does he inherit? and how does he enter into his inheritance? with a section being devoted to the People of God, the joint-heirs who are urged to go in and possess their inheritance.

Christ, the heir, as person inherits as the Son (of God), the Firstborn (entitling him to a double portion of the inheritance) and as Captain (leader) of the People of God. He himself inherits and leads those who believe in him into an inheritance. These believers in Jesus are then regarded as members of God's household, his sons and heirs who are in the process of entering into the universal inheritance as joint-heirs with Christ, and brothers of the Son.

The inheritance which becomes his is said to be "all things", which includes all material things, but also includes all spiritual beings and realms, granting him possession of both time and eternity, and giving to the Son a universal authority by means of the "name" he inherits which is more excellent than that of the angels. In all cases the development of these concepts is studied from the Old Testament (henceforth OT.) through the intertestamental literature to the New Testament (henceforth NT.). This historical study is not merely a scholastic exercise, but enables us to more fully understand the underlying meaning of the expression in NT. theology and its development.

The possession of the inheritance required an act of God and an act of the heir. The basis of the possession was its original disposal by God; thus Canaan had been allotted to Israel by divine covenant with Abraham, and this allotment meant that juridically Canaan belonged to Abraham's seed, and this inheritance was possessed under Joshua's conquest of the land. Just so the Son had an inheritance de jure, but this universal possession was not yet his de facto. The manner of entering into its possession was extraordinarily difficult. Jesus possessed it by the humiliation of incarnation, and by perfection through suffering and death. This perfection was not primarily a moral perfection but one of maturation. At the moment of death Jesus reached full maturity as the Son of God, and as such became the Firstborn, the Pioneer (captain, leader) and "Heir of all things".

The time of this possession for the Heir was the moment of his death. For the believers, his followers, brothers and co-heirs entrance into this inheritance is effected by faith which in its turn results from the enlightenment of the word of God. These believers in turn become part of the universal inheritance of Christ, the First-born, as he is head over the entire household of God its founder. His jurisdiction over this house is total. Their duty is to believe, follow, obey and enter.

SECTION I THE HEIR.

CHAPTER I "THE HEIR" ΚΑΠΝΟΜΟΕ.

A. The Hebrew root in the Masoretic Text which is translated by κληρονομος in the Septuagint is וָרִשׁ. This word implies the finished act of taking over an inheritance, with a root meaning of "to take possession of" or "to dispossess" or "to inherit". The inheritance which the heir receives is יְרֵכָה, which means basically "that which is given or bestowed" and hence has the meaning of "gift" or "inheritance".¹

וָרִשׁ has the same root meaning in the other Semitic languages. In Aramaic it means "to take possession of", "to be heir to", "to inherit". In Ethiopic, Arabic and Sabaean it simply

1. Cf. note in O. Michel, Der Brief an die Hebräer. Göttingen, 1957, p.43. J. Herrmann, art. יְרֵכָה; יְרֵכָה in AT in Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, Stuttgart, 1933, Vol. III, p.769 (henceforth known as ThWb.); F. Brown, S.E. Driver and C.A. Briggs, "A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Oxford, 1959, pp.439 and 635, (henceforth HDB). Analysis of the number of times Greek words in the LXX are used to translate Hebrew words in the MT. is at the same time useful and suggestive.

- (a) Κληρος - used 129 times in the LXX; 62 times for יְרֵכָה 49 times for יְרֵכָה and 11 times for וָרִשׁ with others of lesser importance. (b) Κληρονομος - used 4 times, always for וָרִשׁ. (c) Κληρονομια - used 163 times; 142 times for יְרֵכָה, 16 times for וָרִשׁ, and 2 times for יְרֵכָה. (d) Κληρονομειω - used 163 times; 111 times for וָרִשׁ, and 27 times for יְרֵכָה and יְרֵכָה. (e) Κατακληρονομειω 59 times; 28 times for וָרִשׁ and 25 times for יְרֵכָה. Thus κληρονομος and κληρονομειω stand closest in the LXX to וָרִשׁ while κατακληρονομειω renders the meaning of יְרֵכָה and יְרֵכָה. With this in view it is difficult to agree with J. Herrmann, ThWb. III, p.769 that: "Theologically ... investigation of the whole group finds its focus in יְרֵכָה and יְרֵכָה" (O.J. Baab, article, Inheritance, in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (IDB), New York and Nashville Vol. II pp. 701f has likewise virtually ignored the root and has not taken its nuances of meaning into account in article Heir. IDB II, p.578, nor does J.D. Heister in Paul's Concept of Inheritance, Edinburgh, 1968. He mentions it on p.4 but then ignores this meaning throughout the rest of his investigations.

means "to inherit".² In the Mesha Inscription³ it means "to take possession of".

This, as we have seen above is the basic meaning of the Hebrew root with the added force of actually "dispossessing" someone who is in unlawful possession. The implication is that one takes possession by conquest of something that belongs to one de jure but not de facto. To the Israelites the de jure part was laid down in God's covenant promises to the fathers. The fulfillment would involve dispossessing those who live in the land de facto but not de jure.

The root W' has a fuller meaning. It can mean the trampling of olives and grapes to press them (Micah 6 : 15), or the consuming of trees and crops by locusts (Deut. 28 : 42). This meaning is transferable to the act of possession of a piece of land. Thus Isaiah 63 : 18 which reads "people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary",⁴ could in the light of the above be better translated as: "for a small thing they have trodden the people of thy

2. RBS p.439.

3. It is also called "the Moabite Stone", cf. J.B. Pritchard ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament*, (ANET) 2nd ed., Princeton, 1955, pp.321f; article by E. Ullendorff in *P. Winter Thomey* (ed.), *Documents from Old Testament Times*, New York, 1961, pp.195-198. It is dated at about 830 B.C. by both the above authorities. Mesha claims to have reconquered some towns which had been wrested from Moabite control by the northern king, Omri. The *se je* is not that of a legal inheritance, but of repossessing an inheritance by conquest. It is interesting to note that the reason for Omri's success was the god Chemosh's anger at his people i.e. they lost the cities through divine allotment and then regained them by divine allotment. But the taking or losing possession of this divine allotment, far from being a passive affair, involved active participation on the part of the one who was taking possession of the inheritance.

4. Tr. Authorized Version (AV.) The New English Bible (NEB.) gives alternative translations: either "Why have wicked men trodden down thy sanctuary", or "For a while they possessed thy holy people".

holiness, our adversaries have trampled upon thy sanctuary".⁵ When $\mathcal{W}$ is used as a verb the object is normally "piece of land", but in the OT. it is usually the land of Canaan. The tribes are said to trample upon the land, i.e. they take possession of it and seize it by trampling it underfoot. When the OT. writers speak of setting foot upon a land they mean taking possession of it by conquest. So when Yahweh promised Abraham the land in Genesis 13 : 17 he said: "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee". It actually means: "take possession of all the land". The Israelites were said to be acutely conscious of this fact in taking possession of the land of Canaan.⁶

In the following passages $\mathcal{W}$ is used and in each one the motif of the taking of the land looms large:

- (a) Gen. 15 : 17f. refers to the promise to Abraham of the possession of the land by conquest.
- (b) Numb. 13 : 30: Caleb exhorts the people to go up immediately to possess the land.
- (c) Numb. 21 : 24f.: Israel dispossesses the Amorites by conquest and takes over their villages.
- (d) Josh. 18 : 3: Joshua asks Israel how long it will be before they go in to possess the land which the Lord their God has promised to them.⁷ In each case $\mathcal{W}$

5. L.A. Snyder, article, Genesis XV. The Covenant with Abram. *Oudtestamentische Studiën*, Deel XII, Leiden, 1956, pp. 267f.

6. Deut. 6 : 23; 33 : 29; Josh. 1 : 3; 14 : 9 et passim.

7. These passages are said to belong to G (Grundlage), a body of material underlying JS in the Hexateuch, which it is claimed goes back to the early period of the judges. This material is to be found wherever J and E run parallel. It antedates the monarchy and goes well back into the period of the judges. Cf. M. Noth, *Überlieferungs-geschichtliche Studien I*, Halle, 1947, pp. 40-44. Other passages which illustrate the abovementioned meaning of $\mathcal{W}$ are Josh. 24 : 4, 6; Judges 11 : 21, 22, 25 and 24; 18 : 9; Deut. 1 : 8, 21, 39; 11 : 31; 17 : 14 and all in all 25 times in Deut.

means to occupy the land (in most cases by force) so that Israel might dwell therein. This meaning may apply to one whole people becoming heir to another people by dispossessing them, cf. Deut. 2 : 12. "And in Beir the Horites dwelt previously and the children of Esau succeeded them in possession after they had destroyed them before them, and dwelt there in their stead; even as Israel did to the land of their possession which Jehovah gave unto them."⁸ It also applies to the taking of a city (II Kings 17 : 24), to an individual possessing a field (I Kings 21 : 15ff.), to houses and wealth (Neb. 9 : 25). So, according to the early traditional use of the word, occupation of one's inheritance, by force if need be, is implied. Semitic thought therefore understood heirship as being dependent on a combination of natural right and abrupt forceful occupation. The heir then inherited the position, name and possessions of the person from whom he inherited.⁹

To summarise *W7* implies the forceful occupation by the heir of his inheritance. This possession is symbolised by the trampling of the conquered territory under foot. It is with this in mind that we proceed to study the Greek equivalent - *κλῆρονομος*.

B. The Greek word *κλῆρονομος* is translated by the English word "heir". It is always related to the term "inheritance". A study of the LXX confirms this relationship.

In the law of Moses "the heir" could only be a member of the family in question. The line of succession was laid down in Num. 27 : 8 - 11. If there were no sons then the daughters inherited provided they married within their own tribes (36 : 8). If there were no children the inheritance was passed on to the deceased man's brothers and if he had no brother then it went to the next of kin. The first-born son

8. H. Sturtevant, "A Translation of the Old Testament Scriptures from the Original Hebrew". London, 1885. Cf. also Deut. 2 : 21, 22; 9 : 1; 11 : 23; 12 : 2, 29; 18 : 14; 19 : 1; 31 : 3 and 58 Num. 21 : 31f.

9. *Snyder*, op. cit., p.269, n.14.

received a double portion of the inheritance. (Deut. 21 : 17). This was probably because it was his bounden duty to provide for his mother, and for his unmarried sisters.¹⁰ Thus the Law of Moses was a closed system as far as the heirship was concerned. It was not necessary therefore for the existence of any legal provisions regarding adoption or regarding a last will and testament. This system prevailed throughout most of the OT period.¹¹

In the Patriarchal period, it was evidently possible for a man without children to adopt a son who might then become his heir. This is so in the case of Abraham and his steward, Eliezer of Damascus, (Gen. 15 : 2-4), which reflected the practice of its day, and has been paralleled by the Hittite tablets.¹² A strange adoption custom is reflected in Gen. 48 : 5 by which Ephraim and Manasseh were adopted by their grandfather Jacob by which act they became full co-heirs with Jacob's other sons of the "inheritance".¹³ Moses must himself have been adopted into the family of Pharaoh's daughter.¹⁴ This although inheritance

10. J.G. Alder, article, *Recht, II Israel*. (*Oudtestamente Rechten*), Kampen, 1937, Vol. II, p.625.

11. This assertion is made against Hester, op. cit., p.11, who maintains that: "There is no conclusive evidence that adoption was practised in the Old Testament". There is conclusive evidence of adoption being practised but the sources are chiefly in Genesis i.e. the patriarchal era, but for most of the OT. Hester's assertion holds good, although a hint of adoption being known in Israel and Judah appears in Isa. 2 : 7.

12. Cf. G.H. Gordon, *Biblical Customs and the Hittite Tablets*, (The Biblical Archaeologist Reader Vol. II), New York, 1954, p.22; W.H. Rosell, *New Testament Adoption - Graeco Roman or Semitic?* J.B.L. No. 72, 1952, pp.233f.

13. A striking parallel to this instance of adoption within the family is to be found from Ugarit. Cf. L. Mandelstam, *A Ugaritic Parallel to the Adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh*, (*Israel Exploration Journal* 9), 1959, pp.190-5.

14. Exod. 2 : 10. This passage is referred to along with Gen. 15 : 2f; Gen. 48 : 5; 1 Kings II : 20; Ruth 2 : 7 as providing evidence of adoption in the OT. Cf. E.J. Charles, "Adoption" in *The Pauline Corpus*. (Evangelical Quarterly 28), 1956, p...

by testament and adoption were not generally practised in the life of Israel, they were not unknown practices in the OT.

There are six and possibly seven instances where the term $\kappa\alpha\tau\omicron\upsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ is used in the Greek OT. They are all translations of the Hebrew root קָנָה . In II Sam. 14 : 7 the meaning is "heir" in the normally accepted sense of the term as a son of a household. This is also true of Sirach 23 : 22. In Jerem. 8 : 10 there is a change of meaning. The land, forsaken during the exile is said to have "new heirs" i.e. here heirah is not dependent on family ties but is purely by the right of occupation.

Perhaps the most interesting passages from the point of view of this investigation are Judges 18 : 7 (Cod. B), Micah 1 : 15 and Jerem. 49 : 1. In each of these references the word "heir" in its Hebrew original and its Greek translation appears to have the meaning of "king" in the idealistic sense as one who maintains law and order and is able to provide protection from enemies. In the first of these references the people of Laish are described as being without proper organisational authority, without a judge and living carelessly. In both the ME. and LXX they are described as being without an "heir", i.e. a "ruler". The translators of the NEB. have rendered it: "with no hereditary king to keep the country under his thumb". Similarly in Jerem. 49 : 1 the reason for Israel's defeat at the hands of Assur was that she had no "heir" i.e. no king sufficiently powerful and able to lead Israel to victory over her enemies. The third passage Micah 1 : 15 refers to the sorry state of the western Judaeon towns. God promises them an heir who will restore the glory of Israel. It is significant that the title "heir" is close in meaning to the function of ancient royalty, implying rulership.¹⁵ This will

15. This compares favourably with Mowinkel's description of the Israelite king as he was ideally presented in especially the Royal Psalms of the OT. This royal ideology was generally Semitic but was at the same time specially Israelite. Cf. S. Mowinkel *He that Cometh* (S.T. by G.W. Anderson), Oxford, 1959, esp. pp.21-95 and 125-154.

assume even greater importance when we come to consider Christ's title in Heb. 1 : 2, as "Heir of All Things".

In Classical Greek κληρονόμος means "heir" whether by natural descent or by being mentioned in the dead man's will. The word is made up of κληρος meaning "lot" or "portion" and νόμος meaning "law", so that an "heir" is one who is legally entitled to a portion of the inheritance. The heir may even be in possession of the "inheritance" before the death of the testator. Then he is known as the heir apparent.¹⁶

In the NT. the "heir" is often associated with the "Son". This is true of Mark. 12 : 7 when the wicked tenants of the vineyard, seeing the Son plot to kill him, saying to each other: "There is the heir, let us kill him and the inheritance will be ours".¹⁷ Jesus appears to have derived this allegory in part from Isaiah 5 : 1-7 in which the vineyard represents Israel and Judah and the owner of the vineyard the Lord of hosts. Thus Jesus interprets the passage to mean that the son of the owner and the heir of the vineyard is the Son of God.

In Gal. 4 : 1 - 11 a metaphorical style is used to explain the position and the role of the "heir". Within the context of 3 : 29 it is evident that the "heir" referred to is the "seed of Abraham". In chapter 3 Paul has gone to great pains to establish that the "seed of Abraham" is Christ. Then in vs. 29 he broadens the understanding of this concept to include all believers in Christ. The metaphor in 4 : 1ff. is that of a property owner who has an immature son. He places him in the care of slaves and under their authority. The heir retains this until he reaches the point of *ᾠδοσσία* which is the time when he reaches maturity. That *ᾠδοσσία* in this context means "mature sonship" rather than "adoption" is further brought out by use of the term "fullness

16. H. Iddell and R. Scott, A Greek English Lexicon, Oxford, 1940, Vol. I, p.959.

17. Cf. also Matt. 21 : 38; Luke 20 : 14.

of time" in vs. 4, for this reason the NEB. has translated $\beta\lambda\omicron\sigma\epsilon\tau\epsilon\alpha$ as "attain the status of sons" i.e. while before they were sons in being children of the father, at the time of saturation they really entered into that status. This means that the immature "heir" in 4 : 1 is a corporate term referring to the God believers before the coming of Christ, through whom the fullness of time and the time of maturity appointed by the Father was brought about. Christ accomplished this act of redemption (vs. 5) by identifying himself with humanity, and also with the immaturity of all men who are bound by the law. Thus Christ, in being "made of a woman, made under the law" (vs. 4) identified himself with the immature "heir" of vs. 1, who had been placed under "guardians and trustees". These "guardians and trustees" symbolize the law which binds all men until they achieve the maturity of freedom through Christ.¹⁸ This voluntary humiliation and subjection of Christ to the Law immediately calls to mind the Christ hymn of Phil. 2 : 5 - 11, esp. vs. 7f. "assuming the nature of a slave. Bearing the human likeness, revealed in human shape, he humbled himself, and in obedience accepted even death - death on a cross" (NEB.) It is also significant that this human immaturity of which Christ partook is mentioned in conjunction with his being named "heir" and also being called "lord of all". It is too much to expect that Paul would use these terms, which immediately call to mind Hebr. 1 : 2 and the use of $\kappa\rho\alpha\tau\omicron\rho\omicron\tau\omicron\kappa\omicron\varsigma$, $\pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\varsigma$, $\mu\eta\tau\epsilon\rho\omega\varsigma$ in Col. 1 : 15 without having some Christological purpose in mind. The "first-born" son carries with him the authority of "lordship" over his family which is his by right of "inheritance". So then these three terms are virtual synonyms, broadening the scope and meaning of the

18. Cf. Max Causer, "Das Erbrecht in Galaterbrief (3, 15-4, 7) Z.N.W.5 (1904) pp.220ff.; O. Eger, "Rechtswörter und Rechtsbilder in den Paulinischen Briefen" Z.N.W.18 (1917/18) pp. 106f.

same concept. So then in Gal. 4 : 1 the "heir" implies sonship but not specifically "the Son". Taken in the context of vae. 1ff. we can see that as Christ identified himself with suffering, immature, bound humanity, so as this humanity, irrespective of race or background, identifies itself with Christ by faith and by baptism (Gal. 3 : 26ff.) so it enters the maturity of full sonship (4 : 5) and in Christ it enters into an inheritance, so that those who believe are called "heirs" (3 : 29; 4 : 7). Those then being by faith and baptism "in Christ" are then Abraham's seed (3 : 29).¹⁹

In Heb. 1 : 2 Christ is called $\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\upsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$ $\kappa\alpha\tau'\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$ the "heir of all things". Here, as in Mark. 12 : 7, the term "heir" is closely connected with the "Son". It is evident from the preceding that to understand the meaning of "heirship" in Hebrews we would need to understand "heirship" in terms of "sonship". In fact in vs. 2 "whom he hath made heir of all things" qualifies and is descriptive of the designation - Son.

To conclude then, in the Law of Moses the line of inheritance laid down in Num. 27 : 8 - 11 could not be circumvented. Pre-Mosaic Hebrews knew of adoption into the family. Those adopted children shared in the inheritance. The Greek word $\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\upsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$ is the Septuagintal translation of the Hebrew וְיָרֵשׁ . This implies a forceful possession. In three instances it appears to imply rulership. Thus in certain circumstances "heir" can be synonymous with "king" or "ruler". In Classical Greek the word means simply heir. In the NT. the notion "heir" is always associated with the designation "Son".

19. Cf. H.E. Shedd, *Man in Community*, London, 1956, pp. 156-8 who points out that the seed of Abraham is a corporate figure including in himself all the true sons of Abraham. Also H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament*, London, 1952, esp. pp. 57ff. in "The Relation of the Individual to the Society". An example of this corporate personality is Hebr. 7 : 9 in which Levi though still unborn is said to pay tithes to Melchisedek through Abraham.

CHAPTER 2. YHWH - THE SON.

Because of this close relationship between sonship and heirship we will not be able to understand the concept of "heirship" properly unless we understand what is meant by "Son", "the Son" and "the Son of God". In this chapter we will chiefly be concerned with the development of these concepts in early Christian tradition.

"Son" is a term of relationship. For this reason it cannot possibly be explained without introducing the term "Father". It is improbable that a relationship like this "the Father" and "the Son" could have been conceived in the early church without it coming originally from Jesus himself.²⁰

The early Christian church consequently spoke of Jesus as "the Son of God" and also absolutely as "the Son". On the surface these two seem synonymous, but as P. Hahn has demonstrated, these terms have come to us from two completely divergent sources.²¹

- A. The Son of God: Is this a development of royal Messianology,²² or of Late Judaism's expectation of a priestly Messiah,²³ or of the concept of the Son of Man,²⁴ or of the Servant of Yahweh,²⁵ or did "the Son

20. W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*. Berlin, 1962, p.34.

21. *Christologische Hoheitstitel*. Göttingen, 1966, pp.281ff.

22. Cf. W. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament I*. New York, 1951, p.50. Also R. Stauffer *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments*. Stuttgart, 1947, pp.113ff.

23. W. Grundmann, op. cit., p.35. cf. also his article: *Sohn Gottes*. *Ein Diskussionsbeitrag*. ZNW47, 1956, pp.113-133. He refers to *Test. Levi* 4:2 "the Most High shall hear thy prayer, to separate thee from iniquity, and thou shalt become to Him a son, and a servant, and a minister of his presence."

24. Mowinkel, op. cit., pp.366ff.

25. J. Jeremias, article *Πατήρ*. *ThWV* V, p.699, and O. Culmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*. Philadelphia, 1959. p.66.

of God" concept develop as a title of honour which emanated from Jesus' personal conviction that God was his Father?²⁶

As a title of honour "the Son of God" concept would appear to have its origin in royal messianology.²⁷ The Israelite Kings were regarded as being adoptive sons of God. (Is. 2:7).

This does not mean that the Cf. regarded the Israelite kings as gods or as divine personages.²⁸ Rather the monarch was adopted as an elect son of God and he was "declared to be a son" by a deliberate decision of Israel's God at his accession.²⁹ There was no question of a physical descent from a god. In fact the kinship rested to a large degree on the willingness and choice of the people and of the elders³⁰ rather than on natural descent.

26. Cf. Grundmann, ZNW 47, pp.113ff, also his, Das Evangelium nach Markus, pp.33f. while in his Das Evangelium nach Lukas. Berlin, 1953, pp.229ff he makes a good case for Jesus' consciousness of the fatherhood of God. Cf. more especially Gullmann, op. cit., pp.280ff.

27. Hahn, op. cit., pp.284ff, "Königlichen Messianologie".

28. This was the position in Egypt where the Pharaoh was considered to be actually physically descended from Re the Sun God. He was the Ka or life force of all his people. Cf. Mowinkel, op. cit., p.29. He points out the difference between the Egyptian concept and that of Mesopotamia where the king was not traditionally the son of the gods, but simply the servant of the gods. In this he follows the critical study made by H. Frankfort, Kingship and the Gods. A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature. Chicago, 1948, pp.1ff, who demonstrates that there were profound differences between Egyptian and Mesopotamian concepts of Kingship. M. Noth, "The Laws in the Pentateuch and other Studies". Edinburgh, 1966, p.156 warns further that it must first be established whether it is possible to speak of the Kingship in Mesopotamia at all.

29. Noth, op. cit., p.172. Psalm 2:7 is the adoption formula. Mowinkel, op. cit., p.67.

30. Saul was "made" king by the "whole people" I Sam. 11:15. The "men of Judah" anointed David king over Judah, II Sam. 2:4a, and over Israel vs. 9. Solomon's coronation is with popular acclasia, I Kings 1:39 ff, and in 12:1, all Israel came together to make Rehoboam king, but when this misfired they made Jeroboam king. I Kings 12:20. Thus a king's reign was largely dependent on his acceptability amongst the people.

The king of Israel was made a son of God by adoption at his accession to the throne.³¹ He was promised perpetuity of reign and victory over his enemies.³² The act of anointing raised him to a special position amongst mortals.³³ In this respect the Israelite kings doubtless were influenced by the royal cult in Jerusalem, but this was a formal influence without introducing to Israel any concept of the king being divine.³⁴

The royal messianology of the OT. provides a terminological background to the divine sonship of the MF. Therefore the concept of the "heir" in Hebrews, especially the "heir" as "Son" appears to follow, as far as its underlying meaning is concerned, a distinctly royal pattern.

31. Psalm 2 : 7.

32. Noth, op. cit., p. 175 proposes an amendment to Psalm 45 : 6 by which the throne of the king is likened to God's throne: "Thy throne is (like) God's (throne), that is, enduring for ever and ever." Concerning his victories over his enemies cf. vs. 5 and Psalm 2 : 8f.

33. He remained a man, but "the anointed man" of Yahweh. Psalm 2 : 2; 18 : 50; 20 : 6; 28 : 8 etc., thus laying the basis for the later expectation of the Messiah, or "Anointed One". Instances of anointing kings occur in I Sam. 10 : 1; 16 : 13; I Kings 1 : 39; 19 : 15f; II Kings 9 : 3-6; 11 : 12; 23 : 30; II Chr. 23 : 11. From these references we may assume that the normal method of initiation to the kingship was through anointing.

34. The Myth and Ritual School have attempted to prove that the Israelite kings conformed to the cultic monarchies of especially Egypt, in which the king becomes the dying and rising god every year at the New Year Festival. Cf. G. Frazer, Myth and Ritual. London, 1933 and "The Labyrinth". London, 1936. Also J. E. Taylor, Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East. Oxford, 1957. This position has been criticised by Noth, op. cit., pp. 145-178.

This becomes immediately obvious when we turn to that primitive Messianic passage which is located in Luke 1 : 32f. Here "the throne of his father David" is referred to together with an "eternal kingship over the house of Jacob", besides his being called "Son of the Most High". These are all to be granted to the coming king by God himself. There is a clear line of connection between these verses and the OT. and Jewish systems of thought.³⁵ The same motif is present in the eschatological hymn in Luke 1 : 68 - 79.³⁶ Further evidence that this tradition was deeply embedded in the NT. can be seen from the primitive confession of faith in Rom. 1 : 3f "Jesus ... made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power ..." It even comes out in Revelation 3 : 7 - "he that hath the key of David" also in 5 : 5 - "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David", and in 22 : 16b the heavenly Christ says: "I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."³⁷ Another passage which shows clearly the connection between messiahship and sonship is Mark. 14 : 61f where Jesus in his trial is asked "Are you the Christ, the son of the Blessed One?" In vs. 62 the Son of Man title is also added. Here we have the title Christ in its original Messianic form. It apparently is very old in the Palestinian

35. Bahr, op. cit., pp.247f and p.298.

36. Cf. H. Gunkel, Die Lieder in der Kindheitsgeschichte Jesu bei Lukas. (Festschrift für Baumack), 1921, pp.45-60, esp. pp.52ff. Also E. Viehauer "Das Benedictus des Zacharias". ZNW. 43, 1952, pp.255-272, who makes a special study of vs. 75-79. Both here and in 1 : 32f there obviously is a connection with Psalm 2 : 7 in which the king was adopted as God's son at his enthronement.

37. This "root" of David has its origin in the prophecy of Isaiah 11 : 1, 10. This passage shows a Messianic expectation which was taken up in late Judaism with the meaning of "offshoot, branch" cf. H. Strack and P. Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch. München, 1961 (henceforth Billerbeck) Vol. II, p.113 and also by the sect of Qumran. cf. 4 Q Natc. Bless. 3f "... until the coming of the Anointed One of righteousness, the offshoot of David"; 4 Q Flor. 11 and II Sam. 7 : 11 - 14 "that is the offshoot of

Christian tradition. So Kessel writes about this saying: "It can therefore be said with considerable certainty that according to a good tradition Jesus, in the course of the hearing before the Sanhedrin after his arrest, gave his assent to the question about his Messiahship and illustrated it by pointing to the future coming of the Son of Man in divine glory."³⁸ It follows that Jesus expected a future entrance into the full Messianic office which would be followed by the judgment.³⁹

Another passage which demonstrates that the teaching that the Messiah was at the same time Son was operative even in Hellenistic Christianity as I Thess. 1 : 9f, especially in vs. 10: "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come". Here Paul is describing the primitive proclamation of the early church.⁴⁰

Like Mark. 14 : 62 this passage reveals an apocalyptic strain of thought which combines the eschatological work of Jesus with the Messianic title of God's Son. The Son of Man tradition is implied by the statement that God's Son will come from heaven (cf. Ex. 62 : 2 - 5; 69 : 27 - 29; Matt. 25 : 31ff; John 5 : 27).

Acts 17 : 31 is taken from the early Christian kerygma. This verse also refers to judgment by God's special elect Man who had the seal of God's approval placed upon him by the

David who will appear in Ed (on at the end of days," and in 4 Q p Is fr. D, 1. The theme of "the Branch" looms large in the prophecy of Zechariah cf. e.g. 3 : 8; 6 : 12.

38. W.G. Kessel, Promise and Fulfillment. London, p.50.

39. Ernst Lohmeyer, "Das Evangelium des Markus". Göttingen, 1967, p. 350f.

40. Rultmann, N.T. Theology I, p.74.

resurrection from the dead.⁴¹ It is permissible to interpret this verse in terms of the son of Man because in Pseudepigraphical writings there is a close parallel between "the Man" and "the Son of Man".⁴²

The next development in primitive Christology was that of the exaltation of Jesus. This development was closely connected with Psalm 110 : 1 by which the titles of honour, Messiah and Son of God were applied to Jesus. We have documentation of this exaltation of Jesus in Mark. 12 : 35ff and in Acts 2 : 36 although in the latter passage the title of honour is "Lord and Christ" (Messiah). Psalm 2 : 7 is applied to the resurrected Jesus in Acts 13 : 33 in Paul's speech to the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, and in Hebr. 1 : 5.

It is in this context that we encounter the references to "the Son of God" in Hebrews. The word "Son" in 1 : 2 is related to "God" in vs. 1 so the contextual meaning is "Son of God". As the pre-existent Son ("through whom he made the worlds"), the historical Son ("hath in these last days spoken to us") and as the exalted Son ("whom He hath made to be heir of all things") he is Heir and Firstborn. The author of Hebrews then interprets three passages of OT. scripture in a Messianic sense, i.e. Ps. 2 : 7; II Sam. 7 : 14 and Ps. 110 : 1 and then proceeds to apply them to Christ's pre-existent, earthly and exalted states.⁴³

Finally this tradition led to a recognition of Christ as being king, and having a kingdom. So newly converted Christians are said to be transferred "into the kingdom of

41. Bultmann, op. cit., Vol I, p.74; E. Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte. Göttingen, 1952, pp.463ff; Hahn, op. cit., p.290.

42. E.H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English. Oxford, 1913, Vol. II, n. on p.616. Cf. IV Ezra 13 : 1 - 58 and I En. 46 : 2; 48 : 2; 59 : 27, etc.

43. Hebrews 1 : 2ff; 1 : 5; 5 : 8ff, i.e.

his dear Son." (Col. 1 : 13). According to 1 Cor. 15 : 25-28 he rules and subdues all enemies until this work is completed. Then the whole work of salvation will be completed and the kingdom handed back to his Father who gave it to him. In this passage the end is said to come when the prophecy in Psalm 110 : 1 is finally and completely fulfilled.

To summarise: The "Son of God" as a title of honour grew out of the OT. concept of the royal Anointed One who was declared to be a "Son" to God. As Christ came to be regarded as the exalted one so the titles of Messiah and Son of God were applied to him in that state so that he eventually was regarded as the king, ruler of God's kingdom.

There was also a development of the Son of God Christology in the Hellenistic Church. In that context there was a tendency to spiritualise Christ so that he became the heavenly man. Christ in this tradition was said to be born of a virgin, having been equipped with the spirit at his baptism, having received power over the demons and being able to cast them out.⁴⁴ This concept developed even further until in the story of the healing of the woman with a haemorrhage by a mere touch, he is one who has power in himself. In this tradition Son of God was regarded as being pre-existent and sent into the world by his Father.⁴⁵

The question of the pre-existent Christ is one which appears in Hebrews. It became an important and decisive aspect of the doctrine of the church, because it expresses the decisive fact that: "The origin and significance of Jesus' person and his fate are not within earthly occurrence, but God acting in them and this action of His took place "when the fulness of time was come". (Gal. 4 : 4)⁴⁶ The maturation

44. Mark. 1 : 25ff; 3 : 22-30; Matt. 12 : 28; Mark. 1 : 9-11; Matt. 4 : 1 - 7 and par., Luke 1 : 26ff; part of the background to Hellenistic Jewish material lies in the early view of "man of God". Cf. Epistle of Ariston 140; Hahn, op. cit., p. 294.

45. Cf. the transfiguration story in Mark. 9 : 2 - 8; the story of the woman with the haemorrhage, 5 : 25 - 34; the miraculous birth, Matt. 1 : 18 - 25.

46. Bultmann, Theology of NT Vol. I., p. 304.

of sonship occurred in this Divine act in Christ.

The basis of the doctrine mentioned in the previous paragraph is the motif of the "sending forth" of God's Son. Gal. 4 : 4 reads: "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law". Note the connection between his "sending forth" and his birth. Rom. 8 : 3 reads: "For the law was impotent by being weak through the flesh, God sent his son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh". Here too a pre-existence is hinted at in the motif of God's sending forth.

"Sending forth" also implies commissioning so that the earthly work of Jesus could be described as a mission. This does not necessarily imply pre-existence.⁴⁷ In Mark 12 : 1-9 we are told that God sent servants to the wicked husbandmen and then he sent his son.⁴⁸ Tradition which gave us this

47. Cf. E.H. Bengtson, Art. ἀποσταλλω, κηρυξ. ThWb I, pp.39ff.

48. In this parable there is a certain degree of allegory. The owner (representing God) sent forth his only beloved son, (Jesus) who was taken and killed. Whether this parable originates from Jesus himself or not has been the subject of much scholarly debate in recent years. 1. Those who deny its authenticity: E. Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Markus. Göttingen, 1959, loc. cit.; E. Bultmann, The History of the Synoptic Tradition, Oxford, 1963, p.191; J.A. Juichner, Die Gleichnisse Jesu, Tübingen, Vol. II, 2nd Ed. pp.385-406 esp. p.406; J.G. Kummel, Promise and Fulfillment - The Eschatological Message of Jesus, London, 1961, pp.82f. in which he summarises the findings of his longer work, Die Gleichnisse von den bösen Weingärtnern. Aux Sources de la Tradition Chrétienne (Mélanges offerts à M. Maurice Goguel). Neuchâtel and Paris, 1950, pp.120ff. These regard it as being an artificial allegorical construction of the early church looking back on to the death of Jesus. Some, e.g. Wolff, believe that a nucleus may go back to Jesus, but Kummel strongly denies this: "the parable in the form handed down to us cannot be traced back to Jesus and we neither know nor can we reconstruct another form". (Promise and Fulfillment, p.83). 2. Those who maintain that Jesus composed it in his last days with his death in view: P. Bruck, Das Evangelium des Markus, (Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen

parable showed an unmistakable similarity in Christology to the pericopes which present Jesus' baptism and his transfiguration. The description of "the Son" in this parable is: *Ὁς ἑστὶν ἀγαπητός* - "one beloved son" and *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ πατρὸς* - "my son", which is a similar description to that given on these other two occasions.⁴⁹ As soon as the

Testament) Berlin, 1951. loc. cit., while in the second "neubearbeiteter Auflage" of the same commentary by F. Grundmann, p.238 it is stated that the discovery of this parable in a non-allegorical traditional form in the Gospel of Thomas strengthens the impression that behind this parable lay an original story of Jesus. Cf. O. Culmann, Christology, op. cit., p.289; E. Lohmeyer, "Die Gleichnisse von den bösen Weingärtnern" *EvTh*, 18 (1941), pp.243-259. G.H. Dodd, "The Parables of the Kingdom", London, 1961, p.98 writes: it "helps to illuminate those sayings of Jesus in which he foretells his own death ... it may be said to 'predict' the death of Jesus and the judgment to fall upon his slayers."; V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, London, 1955, pp.472ff agrees with Dodd and J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, (E.T. by S.H. Hooke, *Studies in Biblical Theology*, 24) London, 1963, pp. 55f who also follows the interpretation of Dodd. J. Sees has tried to reconstruct an original form to the parable: Dodd, op. cit., pp.94ff.; Jeremias, op. cit., pp.55ff; and Taylor op. cit., p.473 agree to the feasibility of a reconstruction. Arguing for the authenticity of this parable Taylor, p.472, regards the basic teaching to be "the astounding patience and long-suffering of God towards Israel and its leaders." Grundmann would agree with Taylor in his describing the form of this parable as a "Straßgespräch", op. cit., p.238. Yet the allegorical elements immediately leap to the eye, as indeed we find these in many of the parables: The owner is God, the son is Jesus, the vineyard is Israel, the husbandmen are the Jewish leaders and the servants are the prophets. It is only part allegory as the rest of the story is not allegorical. It was doubtless used not only to convey general truth, but also as a pointed weapon which, says Grundmann, op. cit., p.247 was an immediate cause of Jesus' arrest. This parable while having an authentic core undoubtedly came down to us through a Hellenistic tradition. Hence the emphasis on "only beloved son" and "the heir" who was to possess the "inheritance". Cf. Hahn, op. cit., p.316.

49. Cf. Matt. 3 : 17 "This is my son the beloved one, in whom I am well pleased"; Mark. 1 : 11 "Thou art my son, the beloved one, in these I am well pleased"; Luke. 3 : 22 "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee" (Cf. Psalm 2 : 7). The heavenly voice repeats this pronouncement at the transfiguration. Matt. 17 : 1 - 5; Mark. 9 : 2 - 10 but Luke again is out of step with the others in 9 : 28 - 36 referring to Christ as "my elect son" or "my son the elect one".

concept of "the sending forth" became associated with the incarnation the door to the doctrine of pre-existence was immediately opened. This is immediately clear in Gal. 4 : 4 where we have "God sent forth his son" and "born of a woman" alongside one another in the same verse and then in Rom. 8 : 3 we are told that: "God sent his son in the likeness of flesh." In this way we are given to perceive the fusion of divine being and human being. In Phil. 2 : 6ff the title Son of God is not mentioned but we use this passage here because as in the Son of God concept it deals with the relationship between Jesus' divine being and his humanity. In fact we have a further development here along the line of understanding Jesus more in terms of divinity and pre-existence and yet possessing a full humanity in the incarnation.⁵⁰ This development of the fusion of the doctrines of pre-existence and incarnation was finally fully developed in John 1 : 14.⁵¹ In John the concept of the "sending forth" of God's Son is very strongly emphasised. The characteristic

50. This is a genuine piece of pre-Pauline Christian material in the form of a hymn of praise to the humiliated and exalted Christ. Cf. for further reading E. Schweizer, *Erniedrigung und Erhöhung bei Jesus und Nachfolgern*. ABANT No. 28, Zürich, 1962, pp.93-102.

51. For the development of the Christian tradition until the composition of the prologue to the fourth gospel, cf. E. Käsemann, *Aufbau und Anliegen des Johannischen Prologs*. (Libertus Christiani, Festschrift für Friedrich Delmon) Beiträge zur Evangelischen Theologie 26 (Theologischen Abhandlungen.) München, 1957, pp.75-99 esp. pp.82ff and also R. Schnackenburg, *Logos-Hymnus und johanneischer Prolog*, Biblische Zeitschrift Neue Folge I, 1957, pp.69-109 of. esp. pp.88f and 96ff. If we take John 1 : 14 - 18 as belonging to the same context then we find a definite connection between the "Word" as the "only begotten Son" and the "inimate one". Cf. R. Bultmann, "Das Evangelium des Johannes", KEANT II, Göttingen, 1953, pp.35f.

phrase is that of the Son "coming down from heaven". (John 6 : 38f.)⁵²

Therefore we conclude: 1. There was a connection between the motif of the "sending forth" of the Son, the "descent of the redeemer" from heaven and his appearance on earth. 2. That the Christian idea of incarnation was associated with pre-existence and special revelation and that these were held in primitive Christian tradition as a denial of all Hellenistic docetic ideas of Christ. Thus the theology of the Christian church developed its own independent form and yet was able to justify its claim in the Hellenistic world that God had genuinely revealed himself in Jesus Christ.⁵³

52. For religio-historical material cf. G.P. Wetter, *Der Sohn Gottes. Eine Untersuchung über den Charakter und die Tendenz des Johannesevangeliums.* (FRIANT NF9), Göttingen, 1916, pp. 82ff. and also Bultmann, *N.T. Theology* Vol. II, pp.33ff.

53. The method that has been presented here is opposed to that of J. Biesack, *Sohn Gottes als Christusbezeichnung der Synoptiker.* ATANT No. 21, Zürich, 1951, pp.45ff. Biesack fails to differentiate between "the Son of God" and the absolute term "the Son". All the synoptic references have been pressed to fit into the scheme of Jesus' majesty and obedience. He does not recognise the special view-points of the authors nor take into account the original purpose of their quotations from the OT. Servant of God passages. He presents as thesis and antithesis the "kerygma" and the manner of speech of a decadent sign seeking generation. This seems to be a primitive method which scarcely comes to grips with the problem of sonship. He discounts any Hellenistic influence on the synoptics describing them as presenting a "completely un-Greek picture" of the Son of God. p.54. Gullmann, *Christology*, pp.275ff. takes a similar position to Biesack, but is critical of his extreme position. Gullmann accepts the fact that Jesus was conscious of his Sonship, maintaining that this consciousness began at his baptism, pp.66f.

B. "The Son of God" and the Epistle to the Hebrews:

A study of the term "the Son of God" in Hebrews is revealing. Wherever this title is used it is in conjunction with Christ's exaltation and high priestly work.⁵⁴ The author appears to have two objectives in referring to Christ as Son. The one objective is to describe what he is while the other objective is to describe who he is.

The only book in the NT. which describes Jesus as plain "Son" or "a Son" is Hebrews. This designation within the context of the book, though surprising, is necessary. The author informs us that in time past and in fragmentary fashion God spoke through prophets (Hebr. 1 : 1). This partial disclosure of God has given way to a unique revelation, which is complete and final; since the One who had spoken through the prophets has now spoken through "a Son". The question asked by the author is not, "Who is the Revealer," but "What is he?"⁵⁵ He is a Son, and as a Son he spoke with God his Father's authority, with complete knowledge of His will and purpose. He is the "heir" inheriting a universal property and an exalted authority as "Heir of All Things" (1 : 2). As Son he is the royal leader ἀρχηγός

54. Hebrews 4 : 14; 6 : 5; 7 : 3 and 10 : 29. We are not at this stage considering the instances where Jesus was called "my Son" etc. in quotations from the OT.

55. W.F. Moulton, The Epistle to the Hebrews, in A Bible Commentary for English Readers. Ed. by C.J. Ellicott, Vol. VIII, London (no date) p.283. F.F. Bruce, "The Epistle to the Hebrews" NIGHT, London, 1964, p.l.n.2 on Hebr. 1 : 2 suggests a translation to bring out the meaning of "in (one who is) Son" or "Son-wise". O. Michel, Der Brief an die Hebräer, KEKNT. Göttingen, 1960, p.34 gives an almost identical translation to that of Bruce: "durch einen, der Sohn ist."

and founder of, and therefore, possessed of rulership over, the household of God's people. (2 : 10; 3 : 6). In 5 : 8, the essential being of Jesus as "a Son" is brought out by the references to his sonship and his suffering which together made him the "originator" of eternal salvation (5 : 9). In 7 : 28 Christ's essence as a Son and a priest after the order of Melchizedek is again contrasted with the imperfections of the Aaronic priesthood. He is the perfected Son who as the perfect priest offered up the perfect sacrifice when he offered himself on the cross. Thus when the term "a Son" is used in Hebrews it designates what Jesus was and is.

On the other hand when Christ is described as "the Son of God" in Hebrews it identifies who he is. It is used here as a title of exaltation. In 4 : 14 the reference is to the high priest who has passed into the heavens and as the exalted high priest he is called: "Jesus, the Son of God". Again in 5 : 6 and 10 : 29 the absurdity and grave danger of backsliding from faith in Christ can only be understood if we understand "the Son of God" as referring to Christ's exalted position. This warning was emphasized by the impossibility of any second crucifixion and the extreme danger of shaming the crucified one.⁵⁶ In 7 : 3 "the Son of God" is described as an eternal priest of whom Melchizedek is a type. This again is evidently reference to the exalted Christ.

What is intrinsically striking is the connection between "the Son of God" and his position as high priest. There is no reference to a priestly Son in the OT. The relationship between the exalted Son and the high priest is not really brought out in any other NT. tradition. A possible source is that this teaching emanates from a further development of the high priestly Messianic concept of the Sect of Qumran.⁵⁷

56. Michel, op. cit., p.150 refers to the use being made in this passage of "die Würde des Sohnes Gottes".

57. First proposed by E. Yadin, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Epistle to the Hebrews. (Scripta Hierosolymitana, Vol.IV. Jerusalem, 1957, pp.36ff.

It is interesting to note that Jesus in 3 : 1 was called ἀποστολος καὶ ἀρχιερεὺς i.e. the "one sent forth and high priest".⁵⁸ We know that there was a strong connection between the concept of "sending forth", "incarnation" and "pre-existence".⁵⁹ Therefore it is possible to understand "apostle" as referring to the pre-existent eternal Christ in Hebrews. Kosmala suggests that the reference to ἀποστολος in Hebr. 3 : 1 points to the messenger of Yahweh in Mal. 3 : 1. "Look, I am sending my messenger who will clear a path before me. Suddenly the Lord whom you seek will come to his temple ..." Here the one who is sent and the Lord coming to his temple are used in the same context. Associating the messenger with the "sent one" of the NT. and with the high priest of Hebrews 3 : 1 is only one step away.⁶⁰ In fact in Mal. 2 : 7 it is the priest in his ideal position who "is the messenger of the Lord of hosts". This ideal priest is described in 2 : 4 as Levi.

A further development of Levi as the ideal priest is to be found in The Testament of Levi.⁶¹ In 4 : 2 the angel told Levi that: "the Most High hath heard thy prayer, to separate thee from iniquity, and that thou shouldst become to Him a ucn. And a servant, and a minister of His presence". What

58. Cf. the study made on the use of the title Son of God in Hellenistic Christianity in the previous sub-section.

59. Cf. Gal. 4 : 4, Rom. 8 : 3 and John 1 : 14 - 18.

60. Hans Kosmala, *Hebräer-Essener-Christen, Studien zur Vorgeschichte der Frühchristlichen Verkündigung*. (Studia Post Biblica Vol. 1). Leiden, 1959 pp. 76ff.

61. From: "The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs" translated by R.H. Charles in "The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English," with introductions and explanatory notes to the several books. Edited in conjunction with many scholars by R.H. Charles, Vol. II. Pseudepigrapha. Oxford (1933 reprinted 1964) pp. 307ff.

is significant here is that Levi is described as - priest, son, servant and minister. In order that he might attain to these offices the Lord God would separate him from iniquity. This compares remarkably with Hebr. 7 : 26 "Such a high priest does indeed fit our condition - devout, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, raised high above the heavens." In Test. Lev. chapters 2 and 3 we are told how Levi visited the various heavens until in chapter 4 he is assured of being: "A son and a servant, and a minister of His presence," i.e. being raised above the heavens into the presence of God himself. A further connection between the prophecy of Malachi and the Testament of Levi is to be seen in Test. Lev. 8 : 14f where a new priesthood was described in which one would arise "as a prophet of the Most High" cf. Mal. 2 : 7 "For men hang on the words of the priest and seek knowledge and instruction from him, because he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts." In Test. Lev. 17 reference is made to the jubilees or periods in the history of Israel, each jubilee lasting forty-nine years, each jubilee having its own priesthood. The priest in the first jubilee is described as being "great" and "shall speak to God as to a father" vs. 2. There is said to be seven priesthoods and after the last one "Then shall the Lord raise up a new priest, And to him all the words of the Lord shall be revealed;" i.e. he will be a mediator of the revelation of God himself (28 : 2). Cf. Hebrews 1 : 1f: "When in former times God spoke to our forefathers, he spoke in fragmentary and varied fashion through the prophets. But in this the final age he has spoken to us in the Son". While the bulk of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs is seemingly Christian in origin, the author based his work on an older Testament of Levi, written in Aramaic, copies of which have been found at Qumran.⁶² Thus the allusions to the priestly "Son" may be taken as a genuine half-way house in the development of this teaching - between

62. J.E. Millik, Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judea (Fr. J. Strugnell). London, pp.34f writes that the

Malachi and Hebrews. He is described as priest and at the same time a prophet, the revealer and interpreter of the Divine will, and as such is the Son of God.

In the writings of the sect of Qumran the high priest is not referred to as "the Son of God", but in 1 QS^ai, 12 - 14 we read of the very important position the high priestly messiah was to take: "The (high) priest, as head of the entire community of Israel, is to come first, and the heads of the Aaronid priestly families and the dignitaries - that is, the men eligible for summons to meetings of the general council - are to take their seats before him in order of rank."⁶³ This is also the teaching of the Book of Jubilees. In 31 : 15 Isaac specially blesses Levi above his brothers. Speaking about Levi's descendants he says: "And they shall be judges and princes, and chiefs of all the seed of the sons of Jacob."⁶⁴ The Sect expected two Messiahs, the Messiah of Aaron and the Messiah of Judah (David), with the priestly figure taking precedence over the other. Kosmala suggests that the designation of the high priest as "the head of the entire community of Israel" has been taken over by the Church with Christ fulfilling this role as "Head of the Church."⁶⁵ According to Hebr. 3 : 6 Moses was faithful in that household (the Church) but Christ as Son was faithful over that household. This is apparently a development of the Qumranic doctrine.

Aramaic Testament of Levi is considerably longer than the Greek version.

63. F.H. Gaster, "The Scriptures of the Dead Sea Sect. in English Translation", London, 1957 p.287.

64. Translation, Charles, op. cit., p.60

65. Op. cit., pp.24f. Cf. Eph. 1 : 22; 4:15; 5 : 23; Col. 1 : 18.

Thus the background to "the Son of God" who is at the same time the heavenly high priest in the Epistle to the Hebrews is somewhat complex. There appears to be a connection between the "apostle" in Hebr. 3 : 1 and the messenger in Mal. 3 : 1 who in 2 : 7 is described as a priest and in 2 : 4 has his identification narrowed down to Levi. This leads us on to the Testament of Levi where God is said to adopt him as a son. (Test. Levi 4 : 2.) Then in Jubilees and in the writings of the Qumran Sect the priestly Messiah is said to rule the community of Israel. This certainly is reflected in the NT concept of the rulership of the exalted Christ.

This is especially true of Hebr. 10 : 21: "And having a high priest over the house of God" (AV). As in 3 : 6 Jesus Christ the high priestly Son is said to have authoritative power over the church. The "over" does not refer to the high priest's position in a spatial sense, but in the sense of his having authority.⁶⁶ The Greek rendering is not ἀρχιερεὺς but ἑσπερ μέγας. This is the literal translation of the normal Hebrew title for the high priest - "the great priest". This title implies the relative position of the "high priest" as being "great" with regard to the other, ordinary priests "his brethren". Hebr. 10 : 21 is reminiscent of Lev. 21 : 10 which may be literally translated as "the priest that is great above his brethren".⁶⁷ If the reference to Lev. 21 : 10 was intentional on the part of the author of Hebrews then the inference would be that Christ's title of high priest (or great priest) referred to his exalted position above other priests in the same way as in Hebrews the first-born inherited a superior position of authority over the many brothers. The relationship between the Son as high priest and as first-born is clearly brought out in Hebr. 2:17

66. Cf. Michel, op.cit., p.230.

67. Cf. Bruce, op. cit., p.249, also Numb. 35 : 25, 28.

"he had to be made like those brothers of his in every way, so that he might be merciful and faithful as their high priest before God, to expiate the sins of the people." So then in Hebr. 10 : 21 the household over which the Son exercises his high priesthood is the community of God's people over which he also has divine authority as the Son (cf. 3 : 6).

Likewise in Hebr. 4 : 14 "Jesus the Son of God" is described as the exalted high priest. Whereas in 10 : 21 Jesus is described as ἱερεὺς μεγάλῃ in the place of ἀρχιερεὺς ; in 4 : 14 both terms are combined to give Jesus a position of superlative authority in "the heavens". There he is described as ἀρχιερεὺς μεγάλῃ the "great high priest". Unlike earthly priests his work transcends that of earthly priesthoods. His Holy of Holies is not an earthly temple, but "the heavens" where he exercises his high priestly ministry.⁶⁸ The person of this great high priest is at the same time the earthly Jesus and the eternal son. The humanity of Jesus created the possibility of suffering, death and the high priestly self sacrifice. The divinity of the Son gave this sacrifice infinite worth. Therefore the great high priest is described as "Jesus the Son of God", with the two terms in juxtaposition.⁶⁹ As high priest, the Son is said in Hebrews to have passed "through the heavens" (4 : 14) and to be "higher than the heavens" (7 : 26), and in 8 : 1 "he has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of Majesty in the heavens". The author is not concerned here with celestial geography. Rather his concern is with the exalted state of the high priest, Jesus the Son of God, who is in the very presence of God, in the position of authority over the household of God, those believers who constitute the People of God.

68. Bruce, op. cit., pp.84f; J. Montefiore, Hebrews, p.90 who refers to a similar reference in Philo de Somniis 1, 219; Michel, op. cit., pp.120ff says that "heavens" is merely a translation of the Hebrew word for "heaven" שָׁמַיִם, but this explanation is too simple, especially in view of the seven fold "heavens" of the ancient cosmology.

69. Montefiore, op. cit., p.90.

This brings us back to the concept of Christ as heir. As the ruler of Israel the Anointed Messiah of the Qumran Sect was certainly heir: along with the other sectarianism of the "Promised Land",⁷⁰ and "goodness"⁷¹ and "the whole earth".⁷² But as the ruler over the group which is a "collective heir" he would doubtless have been "heir" along with the other true Israelites, but in a special sense. According to Hebr. 1: 2, 4 the pre-existent Son had in fact been appointed "heir". He was "heir" as the exalted Son of God who had been appointed head of the household of God.

G. "The Son" in the NT.

"The Son" used in the absolute sense was a term which referred to Christ in the NT writings. This term may well have exercised an influence on the concept of sonship and therefore also of heirship in Hebrews.

This filial title had its origin in Jesus' claim that God was his Father. This description of God as Father occurs often in the New Testament.⁷³ Jesus spoke to God as his Father in a specific intimate and exclusive sense, and not merely in the sense that God is the Father of mankind in general. Jesus used the term אבא when speaking about God. This Aramaic word which is an intimate household term was children's endearment language in Palestine and could best be rendered by "daddy" in English. Such language in prayer for adults

70. Gen. 7; III, 7; VIII, 15; XIX 27 et passim in other works;

71. 1 QS IV, 16 und 24.

72. I QM X, 15.

73. Cf. Gottfried Quell and Gotthold Schrenck, Art. Πατήρ ThW 5, pp. 945-1024, esp. pp. 983ff and also H. K. P. von Irschel, 'Der Sohn' in den synoptischen Jesuswörtern: Christusbezeichnung oder Selbstbezeichnung Jesu. (Supplements to Novum Testamentum, 3). Leiden, 1961, pp. 93ff.

was unthinkable in the orthodox Judaism of the time.⁷⁴ It was not a coincidence that the Christian Church continued to use this Aramaic word "abba" after Jesus' death (Rom. 8 : 15; Gal. 4 : 6). Eventually it was translated into Greek as *πάτερ* in Luke 11 : 2 while Matthew's "our Father" and "which art in heaven" is secondary material taken from the liturgy.⁷⁵

Jesus also spoke of God as "my Father". He also spoke of God as "your Father" which was not used in prayer but rather in statements about God which in the post-resurrection liturgy became "our Father". The fatherhood of God is a genuine teaching of Jesus to his disciples about God.⁷⁶ Much of the "my Father" material in the synoptics is a formulation of the early church's liturgy or catechism and is therefore referred to by the scholars as secondary.⁷⁷

74. Cf. Joachim Jeremias, article *q88a* in Th. IX.79 (1954) pp.213f, not only "q88a" but also "my Father" was unthinkable in Judaism until well into the Middle Ages. Cf. also Grundmann, *Lukas*, op. cit., pp.229f, excursus *q88a*. He suggests that Jesus got the appellation from some Jewish children's prayers. He refers to a story of Rabbi Chanin Hanachia, known as the one who prayed for rain (S. Tan 23b). Some scribes sent some children to him. They took hold of the seam of his cloak and said "Abba give us rain". Thereafter Chanin prayed: "Ruler of the world, kindly do it for the sake of those who cannot yet differentiate between an *abba* who can give rain, and an *abba* who cannot give rain". Grundmann suggests "der Glaube des Mannes darf kein Anderer sein als der des Kindes" cf. Mark. 10 : 13 - 16, i.e. Jesus was re-emphasizing the necessity of coming to God as does a child.

75. Cf. Hahn, op. cit., p.520.

76. Günter Bornkamm, "Jesus von Nazareth", Stuttgart, 1960, p.118 remarks on the fact that while Jesus taught his disciples to say "our Father", yet he himself is never included in the "our", he only speaks of "my Father" or "your Father".

77. For further discussion of Scripture references of Hahn, op. cit., p.321 who considers the following references to be secondary- Luke 2 : 49; 22 : 29 and 24 : 49; Matt. 16 : 17; 18 : 10.

One verse which deserves special attention is Matt. 11 : 27 and par. Luke 10 : 22. This verse is not only decisive for the determining of the authenticity of "my Father", but also of "the Father" and "the Son". It reads: "Everything is entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son but the Father, and no one knows the Father but the Son and those to whom the Son may choose to reveal him." (NBS)

In the previous verse Jesus has addressed God as Father. Vs. 27 starts with the God-given authority over "all things" which runs into a statement about knowledge and revelation, ending with the invitation to the distressed. Concerning the origin of vs. 27 there has been considerable disagreement amongst scholars. Some accept it as a genuine word of Jesus, 76 others as a product of the earliest Palestinian church, 79 and yet others that it came out of the Hellenistic Christian church. 80 In fact vs. 27 has so many difficulties that the documents show many variants as copyists have tried to simplify the verse. 81 Even in relatively modern times many changes of text have been suggested. 82 However, amendments to the

76. Theodor Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, Hrg. v. Theodor Zahn). Leipzig-Kriegen, 1922, pp.441f; Adolf Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus. Seine Sprache, sein Ziel, seine Selbständigkeit*. Stuttgart, 1929 (1959) pp.303ff. Bieseck, op. cit., pp.75ff.; Cullmann, op. cit., pp.286ff.; van Iersel, op. cit., pp.151ff.

79. Erik Sjöberg, *Der Verborgene Menschensohn in den Evangelien*. Lund, 1955, pp.187ff and 230ff.

80. Wilhelm Bouquet, "Kyrios Christos. Geschichte des Christusglaubens von den Anfängen des Christentums bis Irenäus". (BRIANT, NF 4), 1921, pp.45ff; Kummel, *Promise and Fulfillment*, p.41 refers to it as "an idea of Hellenistic mysticism quite foreign to Judaism." Ulrich Wilkens, *Welcheit und Torheit*, Tübingen, 1959, pp.196ff. By the same author, article 10094 *EWB VII*, pp.517a.

81. Cf. the study of Paul Winter, *Matthew xi.27 and Luke x.22 from the First to the Fifth Century. Reflections on the development of the text*. Nov. Test.1, 1956, pp.142-148.

82. Julius Welhausen, "Das Evangelium Matthaei". Berlin. 1914, pp.57f; Winter, op. cit., pp.129ff and 145ff.

text would appear unnecessary due to the large degree of agreement between Matthew and Luke.

We notice an immediate difference between the three parts of vs. 27 in 27a, 27b and 27c. The verse starts with a statement in the first person, "my Father" and then it switches to the third person - twice speaking of "the Father" and three times speaking of "the Son". This immediately reminds us of Matt. 28 : 18f. In 11 : 27 Jesus is "given everything". In 28 : 18 "all power is given" to him, and here too it is followed by "the Father" and "the Son". The "power" referred to here is not the normal "authority" attributed to Jesus in the synoptics.⁸³ It is a power which becomes part of his nature and is expressed in his miracles. From this point of view it appears superficially as if in 11 : 27a "my Father" would be unauthentic as an original word of Jesus; yet when we compare it to the second part of the verse, "my Father" finds its origin and meaning explained in terms of 27b and c.

Before we discuss the titles "the Son" and "the Father" we must consider the themes "knowledge" and "revelation" which are introduced in this verse. The concept of "knowledge" is by no means foreign to the OT. and Judaistic traditions.⁸⁴ From this point of view it is not necessary to turn to Hellenism for the origin of this logic, but we are presented here with a mutual recognition of Father and Son for which many analogies may be drawn from Greek literature and in fact have been used to illustrate similar statements in Pauline writings.⁸⁵ On the other hand there are also

83. Cf. Bornemann, op. cit., pp.52ff.

84. Cf. Rudolf Bultmann, Art. γινωσκω ThWb I pp.696-715, esp. pp.696ff.

85. Gal. 4 : 8f; 1 Cor. 8 : 3; 13 : 12. Cf. Bousset, Kyrios Christos, op. cit., pp.48ff; Bultmann, ThWb I, op. cit. 709f.

parallels in Judaism.⁸⁶

The main purpose of this verse is revelation. With this in mind we see that Jesus' knowledge of God is associated with the desire of "the Son" to reveal "the Father", and this revelation can only be presented by "the Son". The fact that the Father "knows" the Son indicates that the Father chose him and legitimised him. The opposite also holds good. The recognition of the Father by the Son indicates that the Son alone truly knows the Father. At this point we must acknowledge the influence of the underlying meaning of the Hebrew word ya'.⁸⁷ It is only within the context of that concept that the clause "to whomsoever the Son will reveal" is made clear. This revelation depends on the peculiar legitimisation of the Son, because the knowledge of God can only be given to people by the revelation of the Son. This idea of revelation has its roots in the OT., which in its turn introduced it to Christian tradition,⁸⁸ that God approaches man in the Son and in him guarantees them forgiveness and salvation. The Biblical concept of revelation is

86. Julius Schniewind, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*. NFD No. 2, Göttingen, 1950, p.152.

87. Cf. the interpretation of the concept of knowledge in Reginald H. Fuller, *Mission and Achievement of Jesus*. (Studies in Biblical Theology, No. 12), London, 1954, pp.92f which on the one hand means "authoritative" and on the other hand "obedience". He takes Jerem. 31 : 34 as his starting point and refers to Jesus' knowledge as "eschatological knowledge".

88. The idea of divine revelation is foreign to Greek religion. It was only in the Hellenistic period that, through oriental influence, this concept began to become meaningful to the Greeks. Cf. Albrecht Dörke, Art. αποκαλυψω *EWb* III pp.571ff. In the mystery religions there was esoteric knowledge associated with initiation in which any kind of revelation through a person was strictly forbidden. The Gnostic sects came closer to an idea of revelation, in that the individual was called to salvation; but this revelation only uncovered what was already inside that person. So revelation was actually superfluous and its place was taken by the "gnosis".

unique in that revelation of the Divine Being belongs to and is vitally concerned with that which man in himself does not possess. When "knowledge" of God is "revealed" it means that this knowing and recognizing of God takes place only at that place at which God draws near to man. On this basis vs. 27b becomes clear in that no one other than the Father knows the Son. Here we have election and authorization that simply is independent of man. In vs. 27c as well the Son's act of revelation is aimed solely at God and at mediating the knowledge of the Father, the experience of his saving acts and the perception of his glory. If one were to take the Greek concept as the background to this verse an immediate difficulty would arise over the concealment of the revealer.⁸⁹ The actual point of contact between the Son and the Father was their unity of will which was seen in the complete subordination of the Son to the Father,⁹⁰ and so as his Father's representative, he was possessed of full authority.⁹¹ In this light we can interpret and understand vs. 27a.

89. This problem with interpretation of Matt. 11 : 27 in the light of Greek religion was first pointed out by Johannes Weiss, Das Matthäus-Evangelium. (Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments neu übersetzt und für die Gegenwart erklärt, hrsg. v. Johannes Weiss bzw. v. Wilhelm Bousset u. Wilhelm Heitmüller I), Göttingen, 1907 pp.322f; Schlatter, Matthäus, op. cit., pp.382f writes: "Da die Gelehrten unwillig sind, Kapernaum unbefähigt bleibt und die Weisen sich ihm widersetzen, ist er der Unerkante, der allen Unverstandlichen. Gott kennt ihn, Gott allein ... Sein Ziel ist nicht der eigene Verherrlichung, sondern die Offenbarung des Vaters". Schniewind, op. cit., p.151 speaks of the "Vollmacht im Verborgenen" which he ties up with the Messianic secret. Also Bischoff, op. cit., pp.62f follows this interpretation. All of these defend the authenticity of this verse. Eiberg, op. cit., pp. 168f interprets the concealment of the Son in the light of the Son of Man concept. He suggests that the Son of Man belongs to the heavenly mysteries and that the concealment of the Father should be interpreted in the light of the theosophical secrets of the apocalypses rather than in Hellenistic religion.

90. This subordination of the Son to the Father is especially demonstrated from Mark. 13 : 32 in which Jesus states that the Son's authority and knowledge is limited.

91. At this stage we need to consider the alternate reading for εντ' υμῶν viz. ἐγὼ the former being perfect pre-

With these considerations in mind we turn now to seek to explain the terms: "the Son", "the Father" and "my Father". "My Father" is related in the closest possible way to "the Father" and "the Son". This is especially so in Matt. 11 : 27. The two terms "the Father" and "the Son" are normally found together and in relationship to one another. "The Son" is Jesus whose origin is in "the Father". "The Father" is God whose fatherhood comes through "the Son". This unique sonship must be understood in terms of his delegated authority. His relationship with God is total, his consecration to God is total. Therefore he and only he can reveal God and mediate the knowledge of God. At the same time there is a conscious contradiction when Jesus speaks of "your (or thy) Father" to his disciples. In this there is a narrowing down of the concept. Originally anyone could call God "Father", but now admittance to this relationship is through Jesus. The fatherhood of God, his love, forgiveness and involvement in human affairs, as these had been appropriated from the beginning of mankind are revealed in the authority of "the Son" alone. For this reason the "knowledge" of the Father is totally joined to the act of revelation by the Son.⁹²

The question of the origin of "the Father" and "the Son" in Matt. 11 : 27 and Mark 13 : 32 is not an easy one to answer. Some interpret it in the light of the Son of Man who figures in some of the apocalyptic writings of the pre-Christian era.⁹³

sent and the latter aorist. Bousset, op. cit., p.47 n.1 refers to $\epsilon\gamma\omega$ as heretical. The former reading is to be preferred. The meaning of the present perfect tense emphasises the continuing dependence of the Son on the Father, which means that this expression implies a perpetual relationship between the Father and the Son.

92. Cf. Bohn, op. cit., pp.327f.

93. Cf. Stühner, op. cit., pp.187f., Lehmann, Markus, op. cit., pp.283 regards Mark 13 : 32 as an authentic word of Jesus, used in the same context as his Son of Man utterances, coming from his position in apocalyptic circles which he describes as: "dießem Mutterboden urchristlichen Glaubens."

The Father-Son relationship and the idea of authority are said by others to come from the OT. Messianic teachings.⁹⁴ It is significant that in the references which speak of "the Son of God", there is no recognizable mention of Jesus' being joined to the Father, nor is anything made of the fatherhood of God.⁹⁵ The concept of authority in Matt. 11 : 27 and Mark 13 : 32 is different because it is associated with revelation which we do not find elsewhere in the Messianic tradition of the synoptics. We are left with the only other apparent solution, to the origin of the absolute terms "the Son" and "the Father", and that was Jesus' characteristic reference to God as "abba".⁹⁶ This is a very old, independent tradition of the primitive church. In fact it goes back to Palestinian tradition and even to Jesus himself.

The Johannine writings, however, used that designation "the Son" most often in the NT. In that corpus "the Father" is normally used alongside "the Son".⁹⁷ In 1 and 2 John the confession or denial of "the Son" is the equivalent of a confession or a denial of "the Father"; but on the other hand the one who confesses Jesus has both "the Father" and "the

94. 2 Sam. 7 : 14 is usually the point of reference. Cf. Schuyfing, *op. cit.*, pp. 151ff. Bommar, *op. cit.*, p. 205 appears to regard Messianology as the background but his point of reference is Psalm 2 : 7.

95. These two designations of Jesus - "the Son" and "the Son of God" developed in parallel but independent traditions. It is only later that the two came together. Cf. Hahn, *op. cit.*, p. 329 n.1.

96. Cf. Grundmann, Lukas, *op. cit.*, pp. 229f; Blouca, *op. cit.*, pp. 32ff, 56ff and Oulmann, *Christology*, *op. cit.*, p. 278, 286ff; cf. discussion on "abba" at the beginning of this chapter.

97. John 3 : 35; 5 : 19 - 23 (7 times), 26; 6 : 40; 14 : 13; 17 : 1, a preferred variant in 1 : 18. "the Son" alone is in 8 : 55f and associated with God in 5 : 16f; 9 : 35.

Son".⁹⁸ In John the Father loves the Son and has entrusted to him judgment and the impartation of life because the principle of life is in him even though he can do nothing that God himself does not do.⁹⁹ For this reason the Son should be feared. He should be believed in. The Father glorifies him and the Son glorifies the Father.¹⁰⁰ These verses in John go a step further than Matt. 11: 27. They provide us with a picture of the Son alongside the Father, neither deriving from the glory of the other in the mind of the believing Christian.¹⁰¹ As in Matt. 11: 27, so in John 10: 15, there is a mutual knowledge of the Father and the Son. Again in John the mediation of the knowledge of the Father was limited to the Son. An element that we find in the Johannine tradition, but not in any other source is that of the knowledge of the Son which belongs to the believer.¹⁰² Yet this element appears to have become welded together with the "Son of God" tradition in John's gospel.¹⁰² Then there is the characteristic life-giving sacrificial ministry of the

98. 1 John 2: 22 - 24; 5: 12; 2 John 9.

99. Cf. John 5: 35; 5: 20 - 22, 26; 5: 19.

100. Cf. John 5: 23; 3: 36 and 6: 40; 14: 13 and 17: 1.

101. This confession has maintained its Semitic form. Terms such as "to know", "to see", "to trust in" helped to fight Greek influence (14: 9; 17: 8). Cf. Bultmann, *ThWb.* Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 711ff, who emphasizes the Hellenistic components in John also Bultmann art. *Review* *ThWb.* VI, pp. 228ff. When John writes of a "knowledge" of the son (e.g. 14: 7, 9; 16: 3) then it belongs together with the divine sonship, because the fact that the Father sent him and is "in him" (10: 38; 17: 8, 23 etc.) goes hand in hand with the statements about pre-existence.

102. We find "the Son of God" referred to in John's Gospel at: 1: 34, 49; 5: 18; 5: 25; 10: 36; 11: 4, 27; 19: 7; 20: 31.

Son.¹⁰³ Often Jesus refers to himself in the first person and then "the Father" is mentioned.¹⁰⁴ In this way we can see how this tradition which began in the synoptics has been further developed in the Fourth Gospel.

A further development in the tradition of "the Son" associates him with the heavenly reign of Christ. In I Cor. 15 : 28 we see the sovereignty of the exalted one who subjects himself to God, so that in that verse we have a joining together of the Son of Man with the Son of God tradition.

Finally we have Matt. 28 : 18 - 20 in which the concept of authority in vs. 18 is expressed while in vs. 19 the Father-Son relationship is recognisable. The authority of the Son is extensive, being "in heaven and on earth". The association of Father and Son here may have developed from the trisadic formula in II Cor. 13 : 13. In vs. 19 they are told to baptize in "the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost". This formula eventually developed into the trinitarian doctrine of the church and was expressed in the Nicene Creed.

D. "The Son" and the Epistle to the Hebrews:

It is in the context of the preceding that we must interpret the use of the term "Son" in Hebrews. From that context it will be possible to draw conclusions as to the meaning of the word "Son" as well.

In Hebrews the word "Son" is used without relating it to "Father", except in a single cf. citation.¹⁰⁵ The lines of distinction between "the Son" and "the Son

103. John 3 : 16 - 18; I John 4 : 14. This applies to Johannine thought in general.

104. Cf. Alfred Schneller, *Handkonkordanz zum griechischen Neuen Testament*, Stuttgart, 1968, pp. 391 and 392.

105. Cf. Hebr. 1 : 2, 8; 3 : 6; 5 : 8; 7 : 28 and the citation of II Sam. 7 : 14 in Hebr. 1 : 5.

of God" have been lost in Hebrews and they are used interchangeably. There is a further association of the concept of "Son" with the doctrine of the High Priest.¹⁰⁶ The idea of "the Son" and "the sons" is given a broader meaning in Hebrews. This will be discussed more fully later in this enquiry.¹⁰⁷ With regard to Jesus' sonship, his exaltation and enthronement also play a part, but Hebrews certainly regarded the earthly Jesus as "Son", even though he suffered and died.

We can see a direct line from Matt. 11 : 27 and Mark 13 : 32 to Hebrews. In these the earthly (historical) Jesus is also considered as "the Son" possessing divine authority. We have already referred to the use of "Son" in Hebrews without the article as referring to not the "who" of Jesus, but the "what" he is.¹⁰⁸ He is Son and the Son of God. Just as in Matt. 11 : 27 the Son and the Father know and reveal one another, just so in Hebrews, Jesus is Son and as the Son he reveals God his Father in a special way. There is a superiority about Jesus which is illustrated in 7 : 26 where Jesus, the High Priest is described as "separated from sinners". Discussing this phrase Bauer¹⁰⁹ maintains that this

106. Cf. Hebr. 4 : 14; 6 : 6; 10 : 29 and the OT. citations in 1 : 5a, b; 5 : 5.

107. Cf. also Ernst Kaesemann, *Das wandernde Gottesvolk. Eine Untersuchung zum Hebraeervolk.* (FRANT NF. No. 57), Göttingen, 1957, pp. 58ff; *Unter Bornbaum*, *Sehnsucht und Leiden.* (Judentum-Jehesentum-Kirche, Festschrift für J. Jeremias). Beihefte zur ZNW und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, Berlin, 1960, pp. 188-198.

108. Cf. the discussion above in the sub-section "The Son of God" and the Epistle to the Hebrews".

109. Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (translated and adapted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich). Cambridge, 1957, p. 898. He mentions Herodotus 1 : 172; 2 : 92 and Epictetus 2 : 9, 2 : 2 : 10, 2; 4 : 11, 1 who use *υιός* with this meaning in mind.

separation of Jesus is not only to be understood in a physical sense i.e. Christ's exaltation, from the world of sinful men "being made higher than the heavens" (7 : 26a), but it must also be understood in a qualitative sense i.e. in the light of the descriptive words of Jesus' character which precede - "holy", "innocent", "unfettered", Thus his separation from sinful men means that he is completely different because of his sinlessness (cf. 4 : 15). This qualitative difference is used in chapter 7 of Hebrews to demonstrate the superiority of the priesthood of Melchizedek, represented in Hebrews by Jesus, to that of the earthly high priest, represented by Aaron and Levi. The qualitative superiority of Jesus as a high priest is part of his argument about Jesus' mediating the perfect covenant. This new covenant was rendered specially plausible because in this case God did not operate through sinful men - prophets, kings (Joshua and Moses) and priests - but entirely and only through his Son - a man apart, different, superior and therefore "separate from sinners", a man "without sin" (4 : 15).¹¹⁰ So chapter 7 reaches its climax by informing

110. So also Bruce, op. cit., pp.156f; William Manson, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (The Baird Lectures). London, 1951, p.116f defines Jesus as "in a different class from sinful men". John Brown, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, London 1964 (reprint of edition in 1862) interprete "separate from sinners" as "not belonging to that class of moral beings" p.354. On the other hand some commentators interpret this passage strictly in terms of physical separation. So Theodore H. Robinson, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, London, 1946 (reprint of 1935 edition) p.104, who with Michel, op. cit., p.179 and A.M. Stibbe, *Hebrews in The New Bible Commentary Revised*, edited by D. Guthrie and J.A. Motyer, London, 1970, p.1204 sees Yom 1 : 1 as the background to this verse "One isolates the high priest from his home to the presidential hall seven days before the Day of Atonement". Cf. Billerbeck Vol. III p.696. Cf. also Text. Levi 4 : 2 "Therefore the Most High hath feared thy prayer, To separate thee from iniquity, and that thou shouldst become to Him a son, and a servant, and a minister of His presence". Michel writes of this: "Dies 'Abandonment' geschieht in Gessetz durch Menschen, in Hb durch Gott selbst". H. Montefiore, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, London, 1964, p.130 criticises this position because "our author is interested not in rabbinic prescriptions but in biblical exegesis".

the readers in vs. 28 that the reason for the superiority of Jesus over Levi was because Jesus was "Son": "but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for ever". It is not the revelation that is different or superior but the one who is used as the means by which God's revelation is transmitted. This revelation is most effectively rendered by "the Son" rather than by the prophets (1 : 1 and 2).

Thus the "hoir" of Hebr. 1 : 2 is at the same time "Son" and "Son of God". As such he has the authority of sonship which is transmitted to him in the "name" which he has inherited. As Son he is different from all other mediators of the divine revelation.

In the first chapter of Hebrews the author states "seven facts about the Son of God which bring out his greatness and show why the revelation given in Him is the most complete that God can give."¹¹¹

111. Bruce, op. cit., p.3. There seems to be some significance attached to the number seven in Hebrews. Seven ways in which Christ shows his superiority are listed and seven series of admonitions are given. There appears to be a further significance in the fact that Christ institutes the eschatological Sabbath or the year of Jubilee, leading his people to rest and freedom, once more on the seventeenth day of the forty-ninth year (i.e. 7 x 7). R.A.H. Gunner, "Number". (The New Bible Dictionary), London, 1952, p.898 writes about the number seven. "Seven has an eminent place among sacred numbers in the Scriptures, and is associated with completion, fulfillment, and perfection". This number is closely associated with the Day of Atonement which is most important in the teaching of Hebrews. It took place in the seventh month (Lev. 16 : 29); the bullocks blood was to be sprinkled seven times (Lev. 4 : 6) and seven lambs were needed for the burnt offering (Numb. 28 : 11). Seven also seemed to be connected with cleansing: the cleansed leper was sprinkled seven times (Lev. 14 : 7) and Naaman had to dip seven times in the river Jordan (2 Kings 5 : 10) et passim. In the view of Christ as the bearer of the full revelation of God, Matthew introduces this scheme to his gospel in which Christ is the new Moses. So in the Mattaian genealogies there are 14 generations from Abraham to David; 14 from David to Babylon and 14 from Babylon to Jesus i.e. 6 x 7, with Christ bringing the 7th. Hebrews also makes symbolic use of the number seven to add further emphasis to the completeness of Christ's work, and of the revelation of God that he gave.

- A. He has been "made heir to the whole universe" or "been appointed heir of all things". He, the Son, has been appointed as heir over a limitless inheritance. The main theme of the Epistle to the Hebrews is "the heir", and how he possessed the inheritance to which God had appointed him, with the believers sharing in his triumph.

The time of this appointment was the time of Jesus' exaltation. If the precreation Christ were meant, the author would have used the pluperfect tense instead of the aorist which implies that as a specific moment of time the appointment to be "heir" took place. This would have been at the time that Christ obtained victory over death "to liberate those who, through fear of death, had all their lifetime been in servitude".¹¹² The nature of the inheritance, what it was, wherein it consisted, will be discussed at a later stage of this paper.

- B. It was through him that God "made the worlds". Christ's instrumentality in creation was a second reason for his being made heir of all things. Firstly we have the divine initiative - God placed him in that position. He was the divine ideal or intention. He was the plan in the mind of God. Then God created he made all things in accordance with the plan he had in his mind.¹¹³ Although there are signs of Philonic teachings here, the ultimate Biblical source would have been Prov. 8 : 22ff where Divine Wisdom was God's companion at the creation, and also an old Christian hymn (probably originating in the Sect of John the Baptist),¹¹⁴ called the prologue of the Gospel of John i.e. John 1 : 1 - 14 where Christ,

112. Hebr. 2 : 15.

113. Cf. Philo's teaching of God's work in creation through the instrumentality of the Logos - de Sacerdot.

114. Baltmann, Johannes, op. cit., pp.1 - 5.

the Word, the wisdom of God, was instrumental in the creation of the world.¹¹⁵ The question of mediators at creation was a point of discussion in the synagogue. They recognised the Word of God, the Wisdom of God, and the Torah¹¹⁶ while Philo added the Logos. For Paul, John and the author of Hebrews only one mediator was recognised and that was Jesus Christ.¹¹⁷ The mediation was between God and *you* *alone*, "the worlds" (*AV*) "all orders of existence" (*NHB*). This term was commonly used in late Judaism. When the Hebrew word *olam* was used it referred not only to the area of worldly time, but also to what was contained in the world, and to the worlds themselves. The same form of speech is to be found in the Mandaeen book *Ginza*.¹¹⁸ It is interesting that this word is never used in the singular in Hebrews.¹¹⁹ In rabbinical Judaism the plural form is always maintained. Thus the Midrash on Psalm 18 : 15 speaks of a "plurality of worlds ... from which you learn that he had many worlds ..." In some places the opinion is expressed that the Holy One created many worlds and destroyed them because he found no pleasure in them before he created the present world.¹²⁰ So Christ was instrumental in the creation of these worlds. They were his inheritance. By acting decisively in history Jesus possessed his inheritance which he had been instrumental in creating.

- C. As Son, Jesus is also the "effulgence" (*Abglanz*) of God's glory. The word *anavayana* means the radiance

115. Paul too regarded Christ as the 'Wisdom of God' 1 Cor. 1 : 24.

116. *Billerbek*, loc. cit.; *Michel*, op. cit., p.36.

117. *Michel*, op. cit., p.36.

118. *Ibid.* p.37.

119. It is used in this sense only in two places in Hebrews 1 : 2 and 11 : 3 cf. *Schneller*, op. cit., p.21.

120. *Genesis rabba* 3 on 1 : 5; *Beresith rabba* 1 : 23 Cf. *Billerbek* III, p.571.

emanating from a source of light whether it be direct radiance or indirect reflection. Philo uses this word with regard to the Logos' relationship to God. He says that what God breathed into the first man was "an effluence ἀγρυψαῖα of his blessed, thrice blessed nature!"¹²¹ The Alexandrian Book of Wisdom also uses the term. It writes of Wisdom: "For she is a breath of the power of God, and a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty ...; an outflowing from everlasting light and an unspotted mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness!"¹²²

Being concerned as the author of Hebrews was, about contrasting the unfulfilled types of the OT. with the fulfilment in Christ, he might well have had some OT. revelations of the effluence of God in mind, e.g. the glory seen by Moses in the bush, the pillar of fire that conducted Israel from Egypt, the theophany on Mount Sinai and the glory of the Lord in the Tabernacle and in the Temple within the Holy of Holies.¹²³ This is the reason for Paul writing about Israel and saying: "there is the splendour of the divine presence!"¹²⁴ The point the author of Hebrews is making is that in Christ's suffering, death and exaltation there is the reflection, radiation and transmission of God's glory.¹²⁵ This is the fullness of revelation through the Son whereas the revelation of

121. *de Specialibus Legibus* 4 : 123 Cf. *de Factoto Verbi*, 146; *de Plantatione* 50. Cf. Bruce, *Hebrews*, op. cit., p.5 and J. Moffatt, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. 100, Edinburgh, 1924, p.6.

122. *The Wisdom of Solomon* 7 : 25f Tr. Samuel Holmes in Charles, op. cit., Vol. I p.547. The Right Glisan also has a parallel in III, 91: "A beloved Son comes who has been brought up in the bosom of the brightness". Cf. Michel, op. cit., p.38 n.1.

123. *Exod.* 3 : 2ff; 13:21f; 19 : 18; 24 : 16; 40 : 34f; *I Kings* 8 : 10f.

124. *Rom.* 9 : 4 cf. Brown, op. cit., pp.29f.

125. Bruce, op. cit., p.5; Michel, op. cit., pp.38f who judges the prologue of Hebrews to be taken from an early Christian hymn which he describes as "with orthodox Christianised" consisting of four parts: 1. The Son as the effluence of the glory and the impress of God's nature. 2. He

the old covenant was partial. As the sun gives light, warmth and life to the earth, so the Son shines into the hearts of men transmitting God's glorious light and life.

D. The Son is the stamp or impress of God's very being. The word *ὑπόστασις* has two meanings which supplement one another in our understanding of the Son.

(1) A meaning not very different from effulgence which comes from a rabbinical source. So Bereshith rubba 52 : 3 on Gen. 21 : 2 reads: "hence we learn that he (Isaac) was the splendour of his (father's) face, as like as possible to him".¹²⁶

(1s) That just as the face and writing depicted on a coin correspond to the die, so the Son of God "bears the stamp of God's very being". (NEB) Bauer translates it as "an exact representation".¹²⁷ This stamp or representation is of God, which means "the essence" or "the very being of God".¹²⁸ I, the same way as the Son was the revelation of God's glory by being its effulgence, so he exactly represented the divine nature. Once again this divinity was not revealed only in a passive or in a metaphysical sense, but the attributes of the divine nature stand fully revealed by the life and death of God's Son who by this life and death possessed His inheritance.

E. The Son sustains the universe by his word of power. The writers of late Judaism taught that God supported and sustained the world. Thus he writes: "The soul bears the body and God bears His world" (I. E. 46 : 4). So the soul, which bears the body, wishes to come and worship God who bears His world", or as another writer puts it: "The dwelling place of God was from the be-

was related to the world through his support of the universe by his mighty word. 3. The historical Jesus effected purification of sins and was, 4. Exalted to the right hand of the majesty on high.

126. Moffatt, op. cit., p. 7.

127. Op. cit., p. 884.

128. Ibid. pp. 254ff. cf. Montefiore, op. cit., p. 35 "The exact representation ... of what it is that makes God to be God".

ginning and below the arm of His power which bears the world".¹²⁹ Thus Hebrews, in quoting this older piece of traditional liturgy, is making this claim of the Son who supports all things by the word of his power. The implication is not of an Atlas supporting the world¹³⁰ but rather of a providential rule of the universe.¹³¹ Having created the universe with the Son as the divine instrument, the sustaining of this universe is also performed by him. In Col. 1 : 17 Paul expresses a similar view: "He exists before everything and all things are held together in him". For this reason R.A. Knox has translated Hebr. 1 : 3 by "all creation depends for support, on his enabling word".¹³²

An interesting point comes from the author's choice of the word *ῥῆμα* instead of *λογος*. He appears to be bending over backwards to avoid speaking of "the word" used in creation or providence as the *λογος*. Philo often used the term *λογος* in his writings and the author of Hebrews is very careful in his use of the word lest he be misunderstood. In Hebrews *λογος* is used only when referring to divine speech or revelation, especially as it is presented in the preaching of the gospel.¹³³ It is significant that in 11 : 3 where one would expect *λογος* to be used, there again the word used is *ῥῆμα*.¹³⁴ It is possible that this is because our author was an Alexandrian, deliberately reacting against Philo's teachings.¹³⁵ He is seeking to prevent his

129. *Leviticus rabba* 4 (107d) and *Targum Yerushalmi* I Deut. 33 : 27. Cf. *Billerbeck* III, p.673 and II, p.320.

130. R.F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. London and New York, 1889, loc. cit.

131. *Montefiore*, op. cit., p.35.

132. G. Bruns, op. cit., p.6, n.29.

133. *λογος* is used in Hebr. 2 : 2; 4 : 2, 12, 13; 5 : 11, 13; 6 : 1; 7 : 28; 12 : 19; 13 : 7, 17.

134. *ῥῆμα* is used in Hebr. 1 : 3; 6 : 5; 11 : 3; 12 : 19.

135. G. Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux* (Études Bibliques). Paris, 1952, Vol. I Introduction pp.25-91 has made a special study of the relationship of Hebrews to Philonic thought and

readers from identifying the content as well as the form and framework with the $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ teaching of Philo.¹³⁶ The author of Hebrews is taking pains to point out that God's revelation to man does not come through the eternal Logos, but through the man Jesus of Nazareth who made redemption through his death.

- F. The Son brought about the purgation of sins. Here we are reminded of the historical Jesus whose life's story centres on his passion. The sacrificial death of Jesus was central to the earliest traditions of the Christian church. It was presented by Paul,¹³⁷ by Luke and Peter¹³⁸ and even by Jesus himself.¹³⁹ The author

writes: "It is even possible that he (our author) had personally known him and had been influenced by him (Philo)" p. 89. So Montefiore, op. cit., p. 9 agrees with Spicq's citation of Menegoz's conclusion that our author was "a philonian converted to Christianity". Montefiore, following Luther suggests that the only person who could adequately fulfil these requirements is Apollon of Alexandria.

136. For Philo the $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ was an impersonal principle of mediation between God and his creation. But Philo illogically uses personal terms to describe this impersonal principle. The Logos is said to be the first-born Son (Quod Deus sit immutabilis 31). He is the image of God (de Confusione Linguarum, 97) and God's agent in his creation of the universes (de Speculibus Legis 1 : 61). The Logos is the image of God, the angel of God, as parhelion is to the sun. He is the sun's ray (de Somniis 1 : 239), the exact representation of the divine power (Quod Deterius Potiori Insidiari solent 83) Cf. Montefiore, op. cit., p. 36.

137. Paul understood the death of Christ as a means of extinction of sins Rom. 3 : 25, as a sacrifice for sin 8 : 3. Christ is the pasover 1st Cor. 5 : 7. In his, by means of his death our release is secured and our sins forgiven Eph. 1 : 7, because he gave himself on our behalf as a sacrifice and an offering 5 : 2.

138. The Church is referred to as that "which he won for himself by his own blood", Acts 20 : 28. The price of redemption was Christ's blood, 1 Pet. 1 : 19.

139. Mark 10 : 45; 14 : 24.

of Hebrews is not merely concerned with developing a theory of atonement for sin. His primary concern is to show how God's Son, the first born, the heir entered into his inheritance so that believers may follow in his foot steps. As such Christ's passion forms the climax of the history of God's saving acts. The typology used is that of the Day of Atonement. In Christ all features of this festival day come together. He is the priest. He is the sacrifice. On completion of this perfect sacrifice he is made heir and is exalted to the highest heaven.¹⁴⁰ Such was the humiliation, such the suffering which brought "purification of sins". This "purification" was a vital part of the reality of God's overall plan.¹⁴¹ So in his death Jesus did what none other could do, a scene so dramatically portrayed in Rev. 5 : 3ff.

- G. He took his seat at the right hand of Majesty on high. The term "Majesty on high" is a periphrastic phrase for "God".¹⁴² The location "on high" was accepted in the OT as being the dwelling place of God. So Psalm 95 : 4 speaks of "the Lord on high" being mightier than the noise of many waters.¹⁴³ Thus the

140. Cf. Montefiore, op. cit., p.37; Bruce, op. cit., p.7; Moffatt, op. cit., p.8; Michel, op. cit., p.42.

141. G. Purdy, Hebrews (18. Vol. XI). New York, 1955, p.602.

142. Hebrew מְלִיכָא in late Judaism - מֶלֶךְ הַבָּיִת was a well known characteristic of God. (1 Chron. 29 : 1; Psalm 145 : 3, 6; 150 : 2; Wisdom 18 : 24 et passim) but a comparison of Hebr. 1 : 3; 8 : 1 and 12 : 2 is sufficient to show that in Hebrews it is simply a synonym for God. Cf. Billerbeck I, pp.1006f.

143. Likewise Psalm 113 : 5 or Isa 57 : 15: "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place ..."

purgation is associated historically with the death of Christ, followed by the exaltation, the latter taking place historically after the former and because of it. The clause "He took his seat at the right hand of the majesty on high" is related to Jesus entering into his inheritance. The very highest honour that heaven could afford was his, by eternal right, and after his exaltation as a reward for his expiatory sufferings. Jesus Christ is exalted to the very highest conceivable station of dignity and authority.

This doctrine has its roots in Psalm 110 : 1 in which we have the exaltation of the anointed Israelite king. He was regarded as God's viceroy and sat on the throne provided by God.¹⁴⁴ The author of Hebrews as an Alexandrian, might have had the co-rulership of the brothers Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VII in mind.¹⁴⁵ No material location is meant by "right hand". This was well understood by first century Christians as it is by us. They knew that God has no physical right hand or material throne upon which Christ would be seated. The "right hand of God" is representative of the Son's authority and of his special relationship to God as "a ministrant in the real sanctuary" (: 2), and as head placed over the household of the faithful people of God (3 : 6).

Thus in sevenfold fashion the greatness of the Son, the perfection of the New Covenant and the completeness of the revelation in him is established. He alone has acted for the redemption of his people, to possess his own inheritance and that of the heirs of the promise, the saints of God. Hebrews not only refers to Jesus as Son but also as First-born *πρωτοτοκος* and as Founder *αρχινομος*.

144. Mowinkel, op. cit., pp. 81f.

145. S.B. Hoening, art. "Ptolemy" *IEB* III, p. 966. They reigned jointly from 170 - 164 B.C., with Ptolemy VII being seated at the right hand of his brother, Ptolemy VI.

146. Bruce, op. cit., p. 8.

CHAPTER 3. THE HEIR AS FIRST-BORN AND FOUNDER

A. The Heir as First-born πρωτοτοκος

The word πρωτοτοκος is one of the keywords of the epistle to the Hebrews. It has an extremely complex legal and religio-historical background.

In early Semitic cultures the first-born had special privileges as the first strength of his father. He was usually the eldest son, although in Akkadian, Hittite, Ugaritic and Palestine the parents could choose from any of their sons one who should be their firstborn.¹⁴⁷ He would obtain a double portion of the inheritance and have a position of authority second only to the pater familias.¹⁴⁸ This was also so in the OT. The Hebrews gave a special distinction to the first-born son. He acted with authority, felt a greater responsibility (e.g. Reuben, Gen. 37 : 22) and received preferential treatment (Gen. 43 : 33). As his birthright he could claim the special family blessing (Gen. 27 : 1 - 4, 35 - 37) and receive a double portion of the family inheritance (Deut. 21 : 17). This inheritance could be spiritual as we see Elisha requesting that he be Elijah's spiritual heir by receiving a double portion of his Spirit. (II Kings 2 : 9). A father could choose his first-born,¹⁴⁹ but custom frowned on this practice and eventually it was banished (Deut. 21 : 15 - 17).

The term first-born is also used figuratively. As such Israel is called Yahweh's first-born. In Exod. 4 : 22 this special relationship between Israel and Yahweh is

147. I. Mendelsohn, On the Preferential Status of the Eldest Son. (BASOR No. 156). December 1959, pp.38-40.

148. That was in the more rural areas - Assyria (apparently had different practices in city and rural areas), Hittite, Palestine, Ugaritic and Akkadian. On the other hand, the Code of Lipit-Ishtar and the Code of Hammurabi provide for equal division amongst the sons. In the places of industrial and economic concentration the role of the eldest brother was diminished. Cf. Mendelsohn, op. cit., pp.39f.

149. Isaac (Gen. 17 : 19 - 21); Ephraim (Gen. 48 : 13 - 20);

emphasized to lend weight to Moses' request that Pharaoh might let Israel go. So Yahweh says: "Israel is my son, even my first-born". As Father to Israel Yahweh cares for His people: "I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born." In Psalm 89 : 27 "Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth," the first-born son mentioned above is the Davidic king who is made Yahweh's son (Psalm 2 : 7).¹⁵⁰

The rabbinical writers, Philo and the Apocalypists use chiefly Psalm 2 : 7; 89 : 27 and II Sam. 7 : 14 as the basis of their comments on this subject. Amongst the rabbis the maxim held good "what is loved has preference over the others".¹⁵¹ Thus the Messiah, as first-born is a special object of God's love. Exodus rabba 19 (81c) reads: "Sanctify me as first-born" and Ra'bi Nathan wrote (160): "God spoke to Moses" As I have made Jacob to be first-born, as it is written: "My first-born son is Israel" (i.e. Jacob) Exod. 4 : 22, so I will make the King, the Messiah to become first-born, as it is written: 'Also I will make him my first-born' Psalm 89 : 28".¹⁵² Philo calls the Logos the πρῶτος, γωστός θεός. Here we have the coming together of diverse traditions. When referring to the Logos as the first-born he applies the term to the Logos as the first-born, the Logos as the oldest angel, or as the archetype of the re-deemed.¹⁵³

Solomon as king (I Kings 1 : 32 - 37; cf. II Sam. 3 : 3; II Chron. 21 : 3); Shimi as clan chief (I Chr. 26 : 10). Cf. V.H. Kooy, art. "First-born", *IES* II, pp.270 - 272.

150. In the OE. "first-born" is a translation of πρῶτος which can be translated by "first-born" or "early" it is also used of "firstling" animals. It is a legal designation of the son who is chief heir of Deut. 21 : 16ff. Cf. L. F. Lehmann and V. Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, Leiden, 1953, p.127. It indicates a special relationship to God.

152. *Millorbrook III* p.258 and D.K. Riggensbach, *Der Brief an die Hebräer*. Leipzig, 1913, p.20 n.39.

153. Philo, *de Confusione Linguarum*, 48 and 63.

The first-born also features in the apocalyptic writings. The Psalms of Solomon 17 : 4 writes of Israel as Yahweh's first-born and therefore as the special object of His affection: "Thy love is toward the seed of Abraham the children of Israel. Thy chastisement is upon us as (upon) a first-born only begotten son". Also IV Ezra 6 : 58: "we, thy people whom thou hast called, thy first-born, thy only begotten, thy beloved". It is also used in III Enoch 44 : 10 "Abraham, my beloved, Isaac, my chosen one, Jacob, my first-born". By the time of the NT. the first-born of Yahweh was well understood to refer to Israel, as a person or as a nation. It was also used of the Messianic king, the son of David, though this usage was not as common.

Before we can understand the concept in which "the Son", "First-born", "High Priest" and "Sacrifice" were all concentrated in one figure, we need to consider the problem of the sacrifice of the first-born in the OT.

Before they entered the land of Canaan the Israelites had acknowledged the male first-born as belonging to God,¹⁵⁴ as titular head of the people and owner of the land.¹⁵⁵ The firstlings of male domestic animals and the first-fruits were offered to Yahweh.¹⁵⁶

In ancient Semitic religion the idea behind this offering was that it was an act of paying tribute to the God, the quickener of the soil, the activator of all life. As sender of rain and fertility the God claims such as his due. It was regarded as a dividend on his investment and to withhold this

154. Exod. 22 : 29b - 30a; 34 : 19 - 20f; cf. 13 : 1 - 2P.

155. Psalms 24 : 1; 50 : 10, 12.

156. Specified redemption was paid on the first-born of unclean animals and man. cf. Exod. 13 : 11 - 16; 34 : 19 - 20; Lev. 27 : 26f; Num. 18 : 15 - 17; Deut. 14 : 23; 15 : 19. To God belonged also the first fruits: Exod. 22 : 29. 23 : 19; 34 : 26; as well as the first portion of all grain, must, oil and newly shorn wool: Lev. 23 : 10; Num. 18 : 12f; Deut. 18 : 4 cf. Neh. 10 : 37; and of all courses meal: Num. 15 : 20f.

sacrifice was to embarrass him of his due and to invite retribution.¹⁵⁷

Human sacrifices and therefore also the sacrifice of the first-born were officially prohibited. It was abundantly present in early Palestine. This is evident from the biblical denunciations of the practice.¹⁵⁸ In fact Jeremiah and Ezekiel are especially critical of this practice taking place amongst the backslidden people of Judah. The exile was seen by these men as Yahweh's retribution for human sacrifice. In Jeremiah 7 : 31 we read: "They have built the high place of Tophet to burn in the fire their sons and daughters" or 32 : 35 "They have built high places of Baal to cause to pass through their sons and daughters to Molech" (cf. 19 : 5), in each case the accusation concludes with: "which I did not command, nor did it enter my mind". Also in Ezekiel 16 : 15 - 21 we read: "You took your sons and your daughters whom you had borne to me, these you sacrificed to them (the idols) to be devoured ... my sons you slaughtered ... to cause to pass through to them. (cf. 20 : 1 - 31 and 23 : 36 - 39 which adds "to cause to pass through to them for food").¹⁵⁹

In Israel Yahweh asserted his right to the first-born

157. For parallels in the ancient world to the Israelite sacrificial code cf. F.H. Gaster, art. "Sacrifices" in IEB IV pp.147-159 esp. p.149. He writes that analogous offerings are attested in Mesopotamia, in Phoenician sacrificial tariffs and in South Arabic inscriptions amongst the Semites. There are also references to them in Hittite, Greek and Roman literature. Basic to this offering is the belief that the surrender of a prime part will protect the rest from hurt and blight.

158. Lev. 20 : 2; Deut. 12 : 30f; II Kings 16 : 3; 17 : 21; 23 : 10; Psalm 106 : 37f et passim.

159. For discussion of these passages cf. R.J. Thompson, *Penitence and Sacrifice in Early Israel* outside the Levitical Law, *A Examination of the Fellowship Theory in Early Israelite Sacrifice*. Leiden, 1963 pp.186ff and 195ff.

and required as redemption a ram, and later five shekels.¹⁶⁰ The infancy narrative of Samuel is suggestive of the fact that at an early stage first-born sons in some instances were presented to Yahweh as his own.¹⁶¹ This probably is the source of the OT. appellation of the Levites as Yahweh's special possession. It is probable that the first-born had to be redeemed after the Levites had become an established order of priests.¹⁶² This situation was that which was known to the authors of the NT. The Levites were the priests and for the first-born sons redemption money had to be paid to the temple since all first-born sons belonged to Yahweh by right.

The NT. use of the word "first-born" as applied to Jesus Christ is chiefly based on Psalm 89 : 27 "Also I will make him first-born, higher than the kings of the earth". It is used in this sense by Paul, John and the author of the Hebrews.

Psalm 89 originally consisted of two psalms. The one in which vs. 27 falls is called Psalm 89B, i.e. vs. 2 - 5 and 20 - 53.¹⁶³ It was composed during a time of great national distress characterized by military reverses. This could have been the final destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar¹⁶⁴ or some distressing reversal of fortunes

160. Gen. 22 : 9 - 13; Num. 3 : 47; 18 : 16P.

161. 1 Sam. 1 : 11, 22.

162. Koger, op. cit., IDB II p.271 who suggests that the replacement of the first-born sons as the priests of the Lord by the Levites might be recorded in Num. 3 : 46P; 18 : 15 - 16.

163. So Moses Buttenwieser, The Psalms Chronologically Treated with a New Translation. Chicago, 1938 pp.239P; H.O.B. Gasterley, The Psalms Translated with Text Critical and Exegetical Notes, S.P.C.K., London, 1939 Vol. II pp.396ff suggests three psalms; while G.V. Anderson, The Psalms (Peake's Commentary of the Bible), ed. M. Black and E.H. Rowley. London and Edinburgh, 1962, p.432 sees the psalm as a unity.

164. Buttenwieser, op. cit., p.245.

before that time.¹⁶⁵ The author cries out in an agony, asking why God had forsaken his covenant with his son, his first-born, the highest of earthly kings. So in this context the son¹⁶⁶ and the first-born refer to the Davidic king on whom God's favour and promise rest, and who has been raised by divine power to a position of universal authority.

So when the word "first-born" is used in the NE. it is with this OE. understanding, referring to the one on whom God's favour specially rests and the one endowed with divine authority. It refers to the "Son of David" who was understood in the NE. to be Jesus of Nazareth. The word ἄριστος is used in Rom 8 : 29; Col. 1 : 15 and then Hebr. 1 : 6.

Rom. 8 : 29b. "So that his Son might be the eldest (or first-born) of many brothers". In this passage God's purpose is explained as being that of predestinating, calling and saving many to whom also God gives His spirit. This spirit is called the "Spirit of Adoption" ver. 15f. So Jesus does not remain alone as "the Son of God" but through this act of God he becomes the "first-born among many brethren".

First-born in this context may mean "pre-eminence" of Christ over his brethren,¹⁶⁷ or it could mean that he was the

165. So Oesterley, op. cit., p.397 who dates vs. 27 in Josiah's reign but vers. 39 - 53 in the reign of Jehoiachin. Anderson dates it anywhere between the reign of Josiah and the final destruction of Jerusalem. He suggests that the psalm as a royal psalm may refer to a cultic ritual humiliation of the king, who as the suffering servant of Yahweh is given deliverance from all his enemies. If this is true, and especially in view of Cumtants influence the date of the psalm could be in the 10th century B.C. p.432.

166. Anderson, op. cit., p.432 and Oesterley, op. cit., p.402 suggest the influence of II Sam. 7 : 9ff.

167. So John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, (tr. and edit. by John Owen). Grand Rapids, 1948, p.510. Also John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, Grand Rapids, 1959 Vol. I, p.320.

first to rise from the dead¹⁶⁸ or in the Platonic sense of Christ being the archetype of what men ought to become.¹⁶⁹ In view of the prologue of *Romans* (1: 1-7) and its teaching of the pre-eminence and lordship of Christ, the Son (cf. also *Rom.* 10: 9) the first of these three interpretations is preferable. The word "first-born" reflects his priority and supremacy. "His unique sonship and the fact that he is the first-born guard Christ's distinctiveness and pre-eminence, but it is among many brethren that his pre-eminence appears."¹⁷⁰ Here again we are reminded of the close bond between Christ and his church. He is its head, its founder.¹⁷¹

Col. 1: 15, 18: "the first-born of all creation".

This has always been a problematic phrase to students of the NT. The problem can even be seen in the textual history. Isidorus Pelus followed by Erasmus amended the text by moving the accent so that in stead of *πρωτότοκος* "first-born" it became *πρωτοτόκος* "first bearer". The Christological problem posed by *Col.* 1: 15 is that the possibility is apparently allowed of Christ being the first created being.¹⁷²

168. W. Sanday and A.C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. Edinburgh, 1902, p.218. This view is doubtful as the resurrection of Jesus is nowhere under discussion in *Rom.* 8.

169. Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer*. Göttingen, 1955 p.192. Paul does not show the dependence on Plato and Philo which would be implicit in this interpretation.

170. Murray, op. cit., pp.519f.

171. Cf. *Eph.* 1: 22f; 5: 27 f; *Hebr.* 1: 2; 3: 5f; 10: 21 et passim in the NT.

172. Cf. Nestlé-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*. London, 1969, loc. cit. Isidorus Pelus who died 449-50 was a champion of christological orthodoxy. He opposed the Nestorian heresy which taught the total humanity of Jesus. Cf. H. Leclercq, art. *Isidore de Pelusium* (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*). Vol. VIII. New York, 1913, pp.185f and John Chapman, art. *Nestorius and Nestorianism*, (*Catholic Encyclopedia*). Vol. X, pp.755-759.

It is evident that this verse textually has been handed down to us in an uncorrupted form and that the variations have had an exegetical or a doctrinal motivation. The Arians in the early Catholic church saw this verse in Paul as a proof text against the trinitarians to prove that Christ was the first created being. In this sense Christ would be the eldest or the first created being. It has been argued against this that if Paul was intending to convey this meaning he would have used the word "first-created" instead of "first-born".¹⁷³ Most commentators suggest that in this place $\kappa\alpha\tau' \alpha\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$ means that the Son was born first and that creation followed afterwards vs. 16 "for in him all things were created" i.e. vs. 16 precludes associating Christ with being the first of the "all things" which were created. Justin Martyr interpreted it as: "first-born of God and before all creation". (Dialogue 100) He is followed by many modern commentators.¹⁷⁴ Others consider that the concept of time is completely absent, i.e. that the "first-born" as in many instances in the OT refers to the one having pre-eminence and rulership over all created things.¹⁷⁵ Others again

173. A.S. Peake, *The Epistle to the Colossians*. (The Expositor's Greek Testament). London, no date, Vol. III p.503 suggests that if this were Paul's intention he would have used $\kappa\alpha\tau' \alpha\rho\chi\eta\varsigma$. So also J. van Andel, *Paulus' Brief aan de Colossenzen*. Kampen, 1907, p.26.

174. Ernst Lohmeyer, *Die Briefe an die Kolosser und an Philemon*, EKM, Göttingen. 1953, p.56. B.F. Scott, *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians*. London, 1950 (1959) (The Moffatt New Testament Commentary), p.22 refers to the meaning as: "He as prior to (before) all (things) not merely in point of time but eternally". D.H. Hoffmann, *Die Briefe Pauli an die Kolosser, Thimotheus Ausgelegt in Bibelstudien*. Leipzig, 1910, p.8. C.F.D. Moule, *Colossians and Philemon*. (Peake's Commentary on the Bible). London and Edinburgh, 1962, p.291 is uncertain and leaves the reader to make up his own mind between this and the next interpretation.

175. Peake, op. cit., p.503; F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Colossians*. (in Vol. XI), Nashville, 1951, p.164 who considers that "first-born" in this instance should be interpreted in terms of Psalm 89: 27 "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth".

understand the passage as a restatement in slightly different form of the λόγος doctrine of the Johannine prologue or of a non Christian understanding of the Logos and Sophia.¹⁷⁶

The interpretation which best suits the meaning is to take a combination of two of those mentioned above. Firstly, the primary meaning of ἀρωτοτομος is that of "first-born" i.e. one who is born earlier in time than others. At the same time this idea of "first-born" also carried with it the idea of worth. This second concept of primacy or pre-eminence went hand in hand with being in a temporal sense "first-born". As we have seen above, all male "first-born" children were specially dedicated to Yahweh. The eldest was both religiously and legally the head of the family and had to preserve and protect the people for whom he was responsible. Thus "first-born" and "ruler" are inseparable. The second meaning explains the meaning of the first more fully. In a temporal sense "first-born" explains what kind of being. The second meaning explains his worth, works and sovereignty.¹⁷⁷ So Jesus as the "first-born" of all creation, preceded creation. This fact gave him an automatic right, the right of the "first-born" to rule all that followed after in the work of creation. This is why in Heb. 1 : 2 he is declared to be "heir of all things".

This interpretation is brought out very clearly in Col. 1 : 18b "he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent". Here the meaning is similar to Rev. 1 : 5 "Jesus Christ ... the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth". There are two basic interpretations. Is this passage in Col. 1 :

176. Cf. Moule, op. cit., p.991: "It is (in all but the actual term) a Logos christology". E. Eberling, in his *Kolossener Ephezer und Philonen*. (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament), Tübingen, 1927, p.7 feels that parts of this excursus in Colossians chapter 1 were not specifically Christian but were originally used in relation to Logos or Sophia. Peske, op. cit., p.503 criticises this view maintaining that: "There seems to be no real affinity with Philo's doctrine of the Logos as ἀρωτοτομος."

177. Lohmeyer, Kolossener, op. cit., p.56.

18b to be understood in a temporal sense or in one of the sovereignty of being "first-born"? Actually there is no problem, for, as stated above, the one carries the meaning of the other with it by implication.

Peake¹⁷⁸ once more ignores the temporal meaning altogether. He suggests that "the meaning is that from among the dead He has passed to his throne where he reigns as the living Lord who has overcome death". Peake seems to be splitting hairs, and stretching the meaning of the word "first-born", for unless one wishes to discount the resurrection as an event in time, one has to concede that "first-born" refers to Christ as the first resurrected being.

In vs. 18 πρωτοτοκος is used in relationship with Christ as κεφαλη and αρχη. As κεφαλη he is head of the body, the Church, the People of God. As αρχη he is also the first cause of the church's foundation. As πρωτοτοκος he is described as the "first-born" from the dead. This latter phrase is doubtless synonymous with 1 Cor. 15: 20, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept". Here also Christ's sovereignty and his being the first resurrected one guarantee a later, eschatological, general resurrection of the dead.¹⁷⁹

It is interesting to note that the connection between αρχη and πρωτοτοκος was old before it came into the NT.¹⁸⁰ We must also remember that πρωτοτοκος while meaning "first-born" also carries with it the meaning "paramount chief". Previously the kingdom of death opposed and frustrated the rule of God. It came into the world as an anti-divine power but with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead as the "first cause" of divine supremacy, death has been

178. Op. cit., pp. 506. He argues from the context of the verses as a whole that Christ is head of the church. He therefore interprets αρχη purely as "leader" whereas it obviously also carries with it the meaning of "beginning" and "first cause", Cf. Bauer, op. cit., p. 111.

179. Bauer, op. cit., p. 170.

180. Gen. 49: 3; Deut. 21: 7 etc. passim.

defeated.¹⁸¹

Schweizer maintains that this rulership which the new head, originator and first-born obtained was not understood as being over the church alone. He suggests that for Hellenists the $\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ was and had always been regarded as a divine body. And so to write to Greeks saying that Christ was "head of the body" was immediately to invite the understanding of Christ as "head of the $\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$,"¹⁸² which again is synonymous with Hebrews 1 : 2 which describes Christ as "Heir of all things". This seems to point in the direction of interpreting Col. 1 : 15 and 18b wholly in the light of Jesus' sovereignty, but the element of primacy in time enters in, and the sovereignty of Jesus over the Kosmos flows from the fact that he is "first-born".

Boers has drawn up an interesting comparison between the Christ hymn in Col. 1 : 15 - 20 and the Prologue to Hebrews, showing that the same basic elements are present. In both cases the divine sonship is unfolded in a description of the person and work of Christ.¹⁸³

Colossians

Hebrews

God has translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love.

God has spoken to us in his Son

1. in whom we have redemption ... the forgiveness of sins

who ... by himself purged our sins

2. who is the image of the invisible God

who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person

181. Lohmeyer, op. cit., p.63; Scott, op. cit., p.24

182. Edmund Schweizer, Entstehung und Entwicklung bei Jesus und seinen Nachfolgern. (AFANT No. 28). Zürich, 1962, pp.108ff, 157.

183. Op. cit., p.162

- | | |
|--|--|
| 3. the first born of all
creation | appointed heir of all things
... the first born |
| 4. for in him all things
were created | by whom also he made the
worlds |
| 5. and by him all things
consist. | upholding all things by
the word of his power. |

There is a further parallelism between Col. 1 and Hebr. 1 in the Son's exaltation above all angelic beings. In Hebrews they are called "angels". In Colossians they are classified in ranks as "thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers" (vs. 16). In both cases they belong to the "all things" over which Christ has been made heir, given supremacy and in whose creation he was instrumental.

Hebrews 1 : 6: The word ἁγγέλους is used here in the context of the sovereignty of the Son over the angels. "And again, when he presents the first-born to the world, he says, 'Let all the angels of God pay him homage!'"¹⁸⁴ So the Son is declared to be worthy of the homage of the angels. This worship of the Son is a distinct part of his

184. Deut. 32 : 43 from LXX text which is not found in the M.T. Pittenger (cited by H. Braun, Quaran und das Neue T. Testament I, Tübingen 1966, p.343) points out that the Hebrew text of this expanded version has been discovered in 4 Q. Braun considers this argument to be irrelevant as the author of Hebrews evidently used the text of the LXX and was also influenced by Psalm 97 : 7. Still it is important to know that the LXX text used here had a Hebrew original, see F.M. Cross, The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies, New York, 1958, pp.135f. The question may rightly be asked: Why is Deut. 32 : 43 here applied to Jesus when in the original it applied to Yahweh whom the angels were to worship? In rabbinic tradition when Adam (understood in a certain sense as God's first-born of Luke 3 : 38) was created (or "introduced into the world"), God invited the angels to worship him, but at Satan's instigation they refused. Cf. Brugge, op. cit., p.16. Also in Philo, Vita Adae et Eve 13f: "God the Lord spoke: Here is Adam. I have made thee in our image and likeness. And Michael went out and called all the angels, saying: Worship the image of God as the Lord God hath commanded. And Michael himself worshipped first." For discussion on this point cf. G.H. Dodd, The Bible and the Greeks, London, 1954, pp.156f. The author of Hebrews would not have found his thinking very different from the author

enthronement and comes as a result of his successful completion of a life and death, humiliation and suffering for the sin of mankind. The ancient Kyrie hymn speaks of it,¹⁸⁵ the writer of Revelation sings of it: "Then as I looked I heard the voices of countless angels. These were all around the throne and the living creatures and the elders. Myriads upon myriads were there, thousands upon thousands, and they cried aloud: Worthy is the Lamb, the Lamb that was slain, to receive all power and wealth, wisdom and might, honour and glory and praise."¹⁸⁶

Worship as a part of the exaltation became an important aspect of gnostic mythology. In these speculations the Lord remained concealed when he came down to earth but he was praised continually as he ascended through the different heavens. The subjugation of all enemies was a part of the process.¹⁸⁷ However, since our earliest sources of gnostic writings and teachings go back to the second century and since the early heterodox gnostic sects of Christianity, on which we base much of our knowledge of gnosticism, were known to make wide-spread use of Paul's epistles, it is impossible to tell whether or not gnostic ideas influenced Paul or whether it was his writings that influenced gnostic speculations; besides, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has given us a source from which Johannine and Pauline ideas could well have originated.¹⁸⁸

Some commentators have interpreted Hebr. 1 : 6 in the light of Jesus' second coming to earth. The word "again",

of the Fourth Gospel in John 5 : 23 "It is his will that all should pay the same honour to the Son as to the Father." True Christ as the second Adam would be worthy of worship to an even greater degree than the first Adam.

185. Phil. 2 : 6 - 11.

186. Rev. 5 : 11ff.

187. Cf. Eph. 1 : 22 "He put everything in subjection beneath his feet". Also Hebr. 1 : 13; 1 Cor. 15 : 24ff.

188. R.M. Grant, article: "Gnosticism", *IEB* Vol. II, pp. 404ff. This is said against Ernst Kasemann, *Das Werden des Gottesvolks, Eine Untersuchung zum Hebräerbrief* 4th Edt., Göttingen, 1961, pp. 68ff and O. Michel, *op.cit.*, p. 51.

if taken together with "presents", would then be translated as: "When he presents the first-born to the world a second time."¹⁸⁹ Michel thinks it might mean either the birth in Bethlehem or the second coming but prefers the latter.¹⁹⁰ The natural flow of the passage however seems to indicate that the "again" simply introduces a further quotation setting forth the superiority of Christ over the angels. It would indeed be strange to have a reference to the parousia interposed here to break the sequence.¹⁹¹

The angels of God worship Christ as the "first-born". When our author uses this term he does so with all the undertones of sovereignty, pre-existence and messiahship. It is as much a statement of the Son's position as the titular phrase "Heir of All Things" is in 1 : 2. Keesmann reminds us (although I believe he takes his valid point too far) that a Christological point is never made without it having an application to the Church, which he calls "The Pilgrim Church" (*wandernde Gottesvolk*).¹⁹² So in Hebrews "the first-born Son" gives rise to many brethren who are called the "assembly of the first-born citizens of heaven" (12 : 23).

Within the context of Hebr. 1 : 6 "first-born" means simply "the heir" (cf. vs. 2). It supports the view that Jesus was heir in a prophetic sense from the beginning of his earthly life, waiting for his hour to come (John 2 : 4) and when his hour came, claiming with power the rights of the "first-born" and "heir". This expectation was based on

189. So Biggach, Keesmann, Westcott, Moulton and Michel. Westcott cites Wisdom 1 : 14 in support of this interpretation.

190. Op. cit., p. 51.

191. Cf. Bruno loc. cit., Hans Windisch, *Hebräerbrief Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Tübingen, 1911 loc. cit. and all the main translations RB9, AV, RSV and JB support the above interpretation.

192. Op. cit., pp. 58ff.

Psalm 89 : 27 in which God promised the Davidic anointed one (cf. vs. 20 and 51): "Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth". This first-born heir is none other than the exalted Jesus before whom the angels are bound to bow down and worship.¹⁹³ Thus "first-born" is used as a title in Hebr. 1 : 6, a Messianic and a filial title of Jesus' position over the household of God. The conferring of the title happens at the same time as his enthronement and exaltation over the inhabited universe, the οὐκουμένη. This includes the angelic realm. The angels accordingly pay him homage because it is to him and not to the angels that the οὐκουμένη has been subjected.¹⁹⁴ They recognise him as the "first-born" who has been made "heir of all things" and who obtained by inheritance a more worthy name.

There is one other reference to the "first-born" in Hebr. 11 : 28. This is a reference to the redemption of the first-born in Egypt. It is possible that our author used το πρωτότοκος here not haphazardly but realizing the significance of the word. In that case the significance would lie in a reversal of roles. At the Passover feast the first-born children were redeemed by the killing of unblemished lambs. In the sacrifice of Christ it is the archetypal "first-born" Son of God who offers himself, thus giving rise to the full redemption and purification of "the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven", the "heirs"

193. Cf. art. by Kocq, op. cit., *THE* Vol. II pp.270ff; special note in Michel, op. cit., pp.52f and on the gnostic parallels cf. Vassermann, op. cit., p.71.

194. Cf. Hebr. 2 : 5 "For it is not to the angels that he has subjected the world to come, which is our theme". Note how in Rev. 5 : 6ff when the Lamb appears before the throne of God to claim his inheritance as the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah", the heavenly beings fall down before him, and do him the same honour as they would to God.

(12 : 23 RSV). It is this humiliation and sacrifice which unites the Son to the rest of the household of God. At this stage it is necessary for us to study a further word which demonstrates the close tie between the "first-born" and the "first-born sons", the "heir" and the "heirs". This word is ἀπὸνυός.

B. The Son as ἀπὸνυός :

Hans Rindisch¹⁹⁵ writes that the meaning of this term is "many sided" (mehrdeutig). The reason for this is its long history, even in the NT. This word is used twice in Hebrews: "pioneer" or "author of their salvation" (2 : 10) and "pioneer and perfecter of our faith" (12 : 2).

In classical Greek ἀπὸνυός had a three-fold meaning:

1. The hero of a town, who was considered to have founded it, given it a name, and who was its protector. (e.g. The protector of Athens was Athena).
2. Along with that meaning went that of "author" and "founder". This meaning was to be found in philosophy, religion (e.g. Apollo was called the author of piety) and in everyday speech.
3. As "captain" or "leader". We find all three meanings in the Bible. In the LXX the meaning is normally the third, used of the elders (the leaders) of Israel. Often it has a military inference, i.e. referring to the captains in the army. In Micah 1 : 13 the second of the abovementioned meanings applies. The city of Lachish is said to have led the way in a national back-

195. Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, Hebr. 2 : 10 loc. cit. For literature on ἀπὸνυός cf. Bauer, op. cit., p.112; G. Delling, art. ἀπὸνυός ThWb I pp.495f; Schweizer, op. cit., II p; Michel, op. cit., pp.75ff; O. Eulke, op. cit., Vol. II, pp.36f; Müsemann, op. cit., pp.75-82; B. Lohm, Martyrer und Gottesknecht (MIAW). Göttingen, 1955, p.154; J. Hofstet, op. cit., pp.30ff; Bruce, op. cit., p.43.

sliding.

Phil uses the related word ἀρχηγέτης. He applies this title chiefly to the Patriarchs, or to Adam, or to Noah. With considerable nationalistic pride he refers to Abraham as being the ἀρχηγέτης of the Jews.¹⁹⁶ In one place he uses the word metaphorically of God as the creator and father of all.¹⁹⁷

In the NT. Christ is called ἀρχηγός. The author of the Acts of the Apostles applies it to him:

1. In the sense of being "the pioneer" of the full life of the new dispensation, as in 3 : 15 "and killed the author (or pioneer) of life" or "and killed him who has led the way to life."

2. As "captain" or "leader", cf. 5 : 31 "His hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour" (AV), which infers rulership. This is preferable to RSB "as leader and saviour".

In Hebrews the meaning of ἀρχηγός is similar to that of the book of Acts. In 2 : 10 the meaning is that of both pioneer and captain (or leader) of our salvation.

This is related in meaning to 6 : 20 where Christ is described as ἀποδρόμος; or forerunner.¹⁹⁸ It is also related to αὐτοῦς in 5 : 9 in which he is called "source of eternal salvation". With this in mind Bruce calls Christ "the Pathfinder and Pioneer of our salvation". It was he who prepared the way so that the many sons of the Pilgrim Church could proceed along it and be brought to glory. He entered beyond

196. de Abrahamo 4 : 276; de Vita Moysi Liber I, 7.

197. de Ffrietate 42 Cf. Delling, op cit., EvWb.I pp.485f.

198. Meaning of. Bauer, op. cit., p.711. Note the affinity to Philo. Christ is called ἀποδρόμος within the context of writing about Abraham (cf. n.196 and Philo's ref. to Abraham). He may well be referring to the superiority of Christ as ἀποδρόμος to Abraham as ἀρχηγέτης.

the veil of death so that the pathway his followers would tread would be not only a new way but a living one. As the fore-runner he has gone ahead to secure the entry of all his brothers.¹⁹⁹ Yet this analysis of Bruce is insufficient because he has left out an essential element of interpretation which is obtained from the context, and that is that Christ as ἀρχηγός is such as the representative of the human race. That is why in vs. 17 we are told that the incarnation was necessary so that he might identify himself with mankind and so become their "leader". Also in the wider context of Hebrews Christ is the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (6: 20). A priest is man's representative before God. So this priestly "leadership" is to be seen in his sacrificial substitutionary death (vs. 9) in that through this death the way to God has been opened. Furthermore the one who enables the believers to pass along this pathway is God. They are led by Christ. The possibility of getting on to that pathway is provided by the redemptive work of Christ, but the one who enables the sinner to believe is God. Thus any one of the English words used to translate is inadequate i.e. "leader", "pathfinder" or "pioneer". If anything the word in the AV "captain" captures the sense better. Klossmann uses the word "Führer" which can mean "leader" or "captain", combining the nuances of meaning of both words.²⁰⁰

In vs. 10 the Greek words ἀρχαὶς and αὐτοῖς belong together. Here we have an ingressive aorist.²⁰¹ The implication of the aorist tense of the verb is that God began to bring the sons at a specific historic time. The time at which this process started can only be at Jesus' death and resurrection, when the way was opened by the new Joshua,

199. Bruce, op. cit., p.43 is prepared to leave the interpretation at that. So also Delling, op. cit., p.486.

200. Op. cit., p.82.

201. Schweizer, op. cit., p.138 n.511. "zu führen begann"; Lohse, op. cit., p.164 n.3.

Jesus Christ, who at that time began to lead the way over the Jordan of suffering and death.

There is a strong affinity of feeling between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Book of Joshua, especially with regard to the concept of the "Leader". In Josh. 5: 14f Joshua is confronted with an angel or heavenly man who calls himself יְהוָה or in the Ἰσραηλιστικῶν of the armies of Yahweh. He informed Joshua that the battle was Yahweh's and that the Israelites would see the armies of heaven fighting for them in a remarkable way to bring them into their promised inheritance. Joshua was only, in the opinion of the Deuteronomist (the author of Joshua), the earthly symbol of this heavenly leader who actually obtained the victory for Israel. In like manner a heavenly Ἰσραηλιστικῶν was needed to bring the Righteous Ones of the new covenant into their promised rest. He demonstrated God's power, especially when he endured the suffering of death.²⁰² The way of humility and suffering by means of which God enabled His Son to enter his inheritance, is also the way by which the same privilege is accorded to the redeemed. The reason for this is given in the verse which follows: "For a consecrating priest and those whom he consecrates are all of one stock; and that is why the Son does not shrink from calling men his brothers".

Yet this relationship is not the physical relationship of the Gnostic system. The one from whom the redeemed people of God stems is not Adam, but God himself. As Christ is "the Son", so by the power of creation they are made "sons". Yet our entire letter maintains the unique sonship of Christ. He is not contradicting himself in referring to the many "sons". It is the Son and he alone who consecrates men to become his brothers. It is by this work of the ἀρχηγός the "captain" that they are made brethren and therefore also sons.²⁰³ ²⁰⁴ Kissemann interprets the usage

202. Spicq, op. cit., Vol. II, p.39.

203. Schweitzer, op. cit., p.139.

204. Op. cit. pp.80ff.

of ἀρχηγός in Hebrews in terms of Gnostic mythology. He writes: "Damit sind wir wiederum auf den Gnostische Mythos gestoßen". His point of departure is the formulation of Philo: ἀρχηγὸς τῆς νέας ἀνθρώπων σποράς in Je Abraham 46. This he sees as having roots in the Primitive Man myth. He mentions other parallels from Gnostic sources. When Hermes is identified with the Adam of the Manesaeon sermon²⁰⁵ ψυχηγὸς καὶ ψυχολογός καὶ ψυχῶν ἀττός he maintains that it parallels the christology of Hebrews from beginning to end. Likewise in this writing as well as in the Mandaeon writings the "Redeemer" was given the title "Leader". In the Mandaeon Book of John, Jacobar Ziwa was called "leader". So also in the Odes of Solomon 14 : 4 the faithful pious one implores: "Grant me Lord thy righteousness at all times and be to me a Leader to the end". Often in these writings this "leader" is referred to as the "guide" or as the "companion in the way" without losing anything of the above meaning. The Redeemer knows the way only in that he goes first. He alone knows this way, so he is addressed as ὁδός or ἀετσοδός τῆς θύρας. Likewise the Corpus Hermeticum has a figure of redemption or καὶ θοδηγός the one who dares to redeem. The Acts of Thomas has a similar figure τεμεδουνηζοιστορός who redeems from the "land of mistakes", αὐθῆγων καὶ εὐθύνων τοὺς εἰς αὐτὸν πιστεύοντας. Again in the Acts of John he is the one who "releases me from the present delusion and shows me the way into eternity". In the Acts of Thomas 156 (II, 265) we read: "Haven and port for wanderers through the land of Archon, thou risest with great glory and gatherest all those who flee to thee, thou preparest a way and in thy footsteps tread all those whom thou dost redeem". This is associated with ἀρχὴν as the following sentence shows:²⁰⁶ referring to the one who acts on our behalf in

205. For the text of the Sermon of Reisenstein-Schneider, Studien zum antiken Synkretismus aus Iran und Griechenland. Leipzig, 1926, pp.167-173.

206. Klugeborn, op. cit., p.81.

many battles and who permits us to be victorious in all things.

Klaesmann argues that Hebr. 2 : 10 should not be interpreted in terms of the Greek city "hero founder", but rather in the light of the abovementioned Gnostic writings and in that it should be seen as being synonymous with Hebr. 6 : 20, *vis* *κρῶσπορος*. O Michel²⁰⁷ regards the position taken by Klaesmann as being too extreme. He points out that it is not a case of either/or, but rather that Christ is at one and the same time pioneer and author and yet he is the finisher and goal of the faith as well. He himself comes and leads others towards the goal. Michel agrees that there must be a basic connection between *αρχηγος* and *τελειου* (*τελειωτης*). In both Hebrews 2 : 10 and 12 : 2 these terms are associated with one another within the same context. He considers that the genitive construction points to these formulations having been used in the church's liturgy. This liturgy might have used as its form of expression an Oriental-Hellenistic expectation of a redeemer which was analogous with the Son of Man doctrine in Hebr. 2 : 6 - 8. The Primitive Man expressed in this doctrine was expected to create a new humanity.²⁰⁸

Edvard Schweizer²⁰⁹ gives us a cautionary reminder not to base too much on a Gnostic background to Hebrews, especially with regard to the "Seelenführer" myth. One of the basic presuppositions of the Gnostics was the pre-existence of the human soul. Nowhere is this taught or even presupposed in Hebrews. Thus although the Gnostics might have provided the form and some of the vocabulary, we should be careful not to fill this form with their doctrinal content. Nevertheless two facts are outstanding: 1. Christ our captain, leads

207. Op. cit., p. 75.

208. Cf. "all" 2 : 9; "many" 2 : 10; "all" 2 : 10; "all" 2 : 11.

209. Op. cit., p. 139

the way from death to life and has gone before. 2. Those who believe in him, and follow him are enabled by God's grace to continue along the path which brings them to their heavenly abode.

To conclude *πρωτοτοκος* means first-born. In ancient Semitic culture he was normally the eldest son, but the parents might appoint another to be "first-born". With this position went authority, responsibility, preferential treatment, a special family blessing and a double inheritance. This inheritance in the OT. was normally understood in a material sense, but also in a spiritual sense under certain circumstances.

In the OT. this term was used figuratively of Israel or of the Davidic king. (Exod. 4 : 22 and Psalm 89 : 27). The Rabbinical writers, Philo and the Apocalyptists continued with this figurative understanding of the "first-born" as the one on whom God's favour rested.

In the OT. the first-born was regarded as belonging to Yahweh in a special sense. First fruits were offered to God. The first-born clean animals were sacrificed. Human sacrifices were prorogued. The "first-born" sons were presented to Yahweh as priests. Later they paid redemption money to free them from this obligation and a special priestly tribe was substituted - the Levites.

In the NT. Christ is described as first-born in Rom. 8 : 29b, Col. 1 : 15, 18 and Hebrews 1 : 6. In these the term "first-born" means firstly primogeniture but also carries with it the implications of authority, this authority extends over not only the church, i.e. the household of God's family, but is overall creation. Thus Christ as "first-born" is "heir of all things".

Αρχηγος is a complex term. It could be used of the hero of a Greek town who founded it, gave his name to it and looked after it. It was also used of a captain or leader. The latter meaning was widely used in the Gnostic mythology of the heavenly Redeemer. Thus the interpretation of this

term in the NT. is complex. The crux interpretum is whether we can take Gnosticism as a background to the NT., especially to Hebrews. It provides some of the vocabulary, but the NT. writers and Hebrews fill these words with a specific Christian content.

In Hebrews it is defined by two terms: 1. Source and 2. Fore-runner. Both meanings mentioned above apply to Christ as ἀρχηγός - he is "source" and he is the "leader" for the people of God, i.e. he is "author" of eternal salvation and he is the "captain", the "commanding officer" to lead them along the way to God.

Both terms, "first-born" and ἀρχηγός have implications as far as the church is concerned. The "first-born" implies other sons over whom the first has authority. These younger sons make up the household of God. "Captain" implies that there are others under his command whom he is leading to life.

CHAPTER 4. THE HEIR AS LORD.

The term $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ is another title given to Christ in Hebrews. It is used of God and of Jesus in the epistle. The author of Hebrews had Ps. 110 in mind when he wrote and thus the idea of two "Lords", God and Jesus, would not have been strange to him because Ps. 110 vs. 1 reads: "The Lord says to my lord" (RSV). So in Hebrews the title "Lord" could be used as referring to Yahweh, Israel's covenant God, or it could refer to Jesus "our Lord", the Lord of the church. Our task is to determine the meaning of "Lord" as applied to Jesus in Hebrews, and its relationship to the concept of "heir of all things".

In Classical Greek $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ had as its root meaning "having power" from which a legal meaning of "one authorized" or "having legal power" was derived.²¹⁰ With the emphasis on the "sovereignty" and "authority" nuance of meaning, $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ was differentiated from $\delta\epsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\tau\iota\varsigma$. The $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ was the one having the power of disposal of property, whereas the $\delta\epsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\tau\iota\varsigma$ was the owner. As time went on so the two meanings converged until $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ virtually replaced $\delta\epsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\tau\iota\varsigma$ because more emphasis was placed on the legal element of ownership in the Hellenistic period, while the word $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ still retained its original meaning of power of disposal.²¹¹ $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ implies power. The element of power is wedded to a law which transcends what is natural or what is merely useful. The authority of the ruler is vested in his superior strength. So subordination of servants to their master ensues. He requires of them obedience and responsibility. This ultimate strength or mastery finds its ultimate realization in God, who created in absolute power, and is the one before whom all creation must needs be subject. Thus the concept of $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ finds its logical

210. W. Foerster, Art. $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ ThWb III, p.1047; J.H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Edinburgh, 1905, p.365; H. Friisk, Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch, Band II, Heidelberg, 1970, p.55.

211. Foerster, op.cit., ThWb III, p.1045; Thayer, op.cit., p.365.

conclusion in the revelation of the Bible.²¹² It is with this understanding that we must seek to interpret *κύριος* in Hebrews, and its application to Jesus. We must firstly understand this term in its NT. usage.

In I Cor. 1 : 2 the members of the Christian Church are called those who "call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ". Here we simply have a statement of objective fact. The characteristic of Christians is that they call on the name of the Lord.²¹³ In Rom. 10 : 9 a requirement of salvation is the confession that "Jesus is Lord". This confession is again associated with "all who call on the name (authority) of the Lord" in vs. 13. The implication of this "calling" is made clear in vs. 12 which reads: "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him". This means that Jesus is Lord of the Church (vs. 9) and that as such he has the power of bestowal of riches to those whose subjection is evidenced by calling on his name whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

Bousset writes: "Es ist für ihn selbstverständlich, das der *κύριος* in diesem Zusammenhang der Herr Christus ist".²¹⁴ The whole congregation united in this act of calling on the name of the Lord. They confessed his name. Calling on his name they were baptised. They met around the table of the Lord Jesus hoping for his return, crying out "Maranatha", "Come, Lord Jesus!" They met on the Lord's Day, the first day of the week to remember him. In very truth they were the *κύρια* and the *ἐκκλησία* as their *κύριος*.²¹⁵

It is thus that the confession: "Jesus Christ is Lord" in Phil. 2 : 11 must be understood. For as in the OT. Yahweh presided over the cult in Jerusalem and was Lord of Israel.

212. Forster, op. cit., p. 1040.

213. Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, p. 85.

214. *Ibid.*

215. *Ibid.*, p. 88, cf. Col. 1 : 18; 2 : 19 *inter alia*.

God's covenant people, so in the NT. this attribution of lordship is transferred to Jesus Christ. He is the Lord before whom "every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father". He has been exalted over the church, so that as its Lord he, having obtained gifts for men, might be able to give them to the members of his church. (Eph. 4 : 8ff) The early church accepted John the Baptist's prophecy that the Coming One would baptize the faithful with Holy Ghost and with fire. They believed that through the Spirit's operation in the church the gifts were made available to individual members for the benefit of the whole church. Thus whenever the Holy Ghost is said to descend in Acts it is always on a group of believers or a church i.e. Christ the Lord disposing of the riches of his grace on his church. This disposal of the gift of the Spirit was made to the disciples in John 20 : 23. On the Day of Pentecost Acts 2 : 1ff the Spirit descended on the church. In Acts 4 : 31 the Spirit descended again on the church to enable them to preach the word of God with boldness; similarly the Spirit came upon the groups at Caesarea, 10 : 44ff. and Ephesus Acts 19 : 1 - 7. It is significant that nowhere (apart from Jesus' baptism) are we told of the Spirit descending on an individual. They receive and are filled with the Spirit but the Spirit descends only on the church, the body of Christ into which each member is baptized by the Spirit (I Cor. 12 : 13). Individualism is discouraged in I Cor. 14 where the gift of prophecy which benefits the congregation is said to be of much greater value than the gift of tongues which benefits only the individual. Once again it is Christ as Lord disposing of these gifts for the growth and edification of the church.

In Philippians the evidence of the Spirit is best to be seen in an attitude of humility and mutual respect of the believers one for the other (2 : 3f) and of a complete self-denial culminating in being made conformable unto Christ's death (3 : 10). The purpose of this complete self-denial is that the lordship of Christ in the church might be absolute.

Then he in his turn in lordly fashion gives "the power of the resurrection" to his people (3 : 10), so that by this voluntary existential death leading to resurrection, God the Father might be glorified (Phil. 2 : 11).

That the confession "Jesus is Lord" is associated with the gift of the Spirit is especially demonstrated in I Cor. 12 : 3, where it is expressly stated that "no one can call Jesus Lord except by the Holy Spirit". This Spirit is imparted to the congregation as an act of Christ's Lordship, who also imparts gifts of the Spirit for the benefit of that church, each gift filling a different need in the church (vss. 14 - 30), but the chief gift is that of complete submission to and recognition of Jesus as Lord, culminating in following the Lord in choosing charity (αγάπη) rather than more spectacular gifts.

As in the rest of the NT. when κυριος is used in Hebrews it refers to the lordship of Christ over his church. When the Son was made "Heir" (1 : 2) he was at the same time "First-born" (1 : 6), having by inheritance obtained a "name" (1 : 4), being found faithful as a Son placed "over" the household of God while Moses was faithful as a servant "in" the household, becoming then the "source" of salvation to all believers (cf. Col. 1 : 18, 28; 2 : 13). All of these terms have nuances of meaning which also belong to the word κυριος in Hebrews. We will now go over to an exegetical study of the individual instances where κυριος in Hebrews refers unequivocally to Jesus.

The first occurrence of κυριος in Hebrews is in 1 : 10 as part of a quotation from Ps. 102 : 25 - 27. In its original context the psalm referred to Yahweh. In the psalm there is reference to Yahweh's rulership and the eternity of his name (vs. 12). Yahweh is Lord over Israel (vs. 13ff) supplying her needs (vs. 16). In Hebrews the term κυριος is applied to Jesus and would carry these attributes of lordship with it by implication from Ps. 102. In Hebr. 1 : 10 - 12 it is quoted to emphasize Jesus' authority derived from his part in creation and

also his unchanging nature. His pre-existence and his immutability are emphasised in contrast to the changing universes.²¹⁶ The justification for using this Psalm and applying it to Jesus is to be seen simply as the recognition that as Yahweh was covenant Lord under the old covenant, so Jesus is Lord of the church, the new People of God in the new covenant. Therefore in the mind of the author of Hebrews the transfer of the psalm to refer to Jesus would be justified.²¹⁷

While in 1 : 10 the reference is to the pre-existent and eternal Son who is described as Lord, in 2 : 3 and in 7 : 14 the reference is to the historical Jesus as "the Lord" and as "our Lord". Hebr. 2 : 3 refers to the "word" of "salvation" which was declared by the Lord and was "attested to us by those who heard him". On the human and historical level this demonstrates the lordship of Jesus of Nazareth over his church. He is the source of the word of salvation. From him it went to his hearers and from those hearers to the present generation ("to us").²¹⁸ Therefore this word is trustworthy and is effectual in its power (Hebr. 4 : 12f). So then the faith of believers finds its origin in this word emanating from the Lord. In Hebr. 7 : 14 the reference is again to Jesus "according to the flesh" who did not come from the tribe of Levi, but of Judah. Here Jesus is spoken of as "our Lord". Here the reference is doubtless to the primitive Christian assertion that Jesus was descended from David.²¹⁹ Thus the earthly Jesus was not dissociated from his heavenly lordship, but was regarded as "the Lord" and as "our Lord".

216. Spicer, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 20f; Bruce, op. cit., p. 21 and Montefiore, op. cit., p. 48 refers to Phil. in de Puga at Inventiones, 110 where the Cosmos is said to be the mantle of the Logos.

217. Montefiore, op. cit., p. 48 suggests that this transfer took place within the church. Michel, op. cit., p. 58 associates it with the Logos doctrine of Jn. 1.

218. Michel, op. cit., p. 65; Cf. I Cor. 1 : 6; II Cor. 1 : 21; Phil. 1 : 7.

219. Rom 1 : 3 Cf. Michel, op. cit., p. 171.

In 13 : 20 the reference is also to the historical Jesus as "our Lord Jesus" who had been "brought again from the dead" i. e. "the God of peace". Once more he is the "Lord" of his people, those who believe in him, subject themselves to him and derive their every good from him. That is why vs. 21 tells us that God equips us with everything good that we may do his will "through Jesus Christ". Thus as God performed his original creation through the Eternal Son, so now he performs his new creation (II Cor. 5 : 17) by Jesus Christ the Lord of the Church and the Shepherd of the sheep.

In Hebr. 13 : 6 it is difficult to determine whether the word Lord refers to Jesus or to God, although the evidence seems to point primarily to God.²²⁰ That passage is an almost exact quotation from Ps. 118 : 6. "The Lord is my helper" refers again to Yahweh's lordship over the covenant people Israel (vs. 2), over the house of Aaron (vs. 3) and over "those who fear him" (vs. 4). He is the source of strength to his people. In the same way Christ is the Lord of the Church and to those who believe in his high priestly work he is the sovereign helper of the tempted ones (2 : 17f), the source of their eternal salvation (2 : 10; 12 : 2) and the one who opens the way to the "throne of grace" for those who believe in him and follow him. Thus in 13 : 6 while God is the ultimate source of succour to the believers, yet this help is mediated by the Lord of the Church who is at the same time the sympathetic High Priest, Jesus Christ our Lord.

In this section we have observed an amazing synonymy between $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$, $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\tau\omicron\chi\omicron\varsigma$ and $\kappa\upsilon\omicron\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$. It is evident that these three key terms are expressing the same idea with regard to the person of Christ. As "Son" he proved his faithfulness through humiliation and thus was made "heir of all things", being called God's "first-born" with all the privilege and authority implied by that title, which led him

²²⁰. Other passages in which $\kappa\upsilon\omicron\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$ refers only to God in Hebrews are: 7 : 21; 8 : 2, 8-11; 10 : 16; 10 : 30; 12 : 5f; 12 : 14.

to be known by the church as "our Lord Jesus", over whom he had authority and to whom he became the means of divine strength and heavenly succour, being "the great priest set over the household of God" (HEB. 10 : 21).

SECTION II.CHAPTER 5 THE HEIRS.

In Hebrews the whole object of the presentation of Christ as the perfect one, the Son of God, the first-born, the heavenly leader and high priest was so that the People of God, to whom our author wrote, might appreciate their highly privileged position. Through Christ they were sanctified, enlightened, and made sons. As sons of God they were heirs, brothers of Christ and in a very special sense became his partners. Through obedience they demonstrated their faith and trust. These enlightened, trusting, obedient, sanctified ones formed a new people - the People of God. They had Christ as their founder, Christ as their captain. He had gone before. He would lead them into their inheritance, their promised possession - the Promised Land.¹

A. The Seed of Abraham as Heirs:

Paul describes this People of God as being "the Seed of Abraham" (Gal. 3 : 16 - 29 and Rom. 4 : 13ff). Paul understands the word "seed" in both a singular sense referring it to Christ (Gal. 3 : 16) and in a collective sense, referring to the children of Abraham (Gal. 3 : 29). The concept of the People of God being the Seed of Abraham does not begin with Paul, but has its roots in the OT.

Thus in Isaiah 51 : 2 we read: "Look to your father Abraham and to Sarah who gave you birth: when I called him he was but one, I blessed him and made him many". (HES) or again in 41 : 8f: "But you, I have called you, Jacob whom I have chosen, Isaac of Abraham my friend, I have taken you up, have fetched you from the ends of the earth, and summoned you from its farthest corners, I have called you my servant, have chosen you and not

1. Cf. Hebr. 2 : 10 - 18; 3 : 1, 6, 14; 4 : 3, 9f; 5 : 9f; 6 : 17, 20; 10 : 19f; 12 : 5 - 11, 22 - 24, 28.

cast you off". Israel's election of God is because of Abraham's election. Neither Abraham nor his children were worthy of this election. It was a work of God's free grace. The fact and the realization of this election made of Israel a great spiritual nation.²

The fruit of this election was Yahweh's covenant with Abraham, and with Abraham's seed. As the covenant was repeated and renewed year by year so it became the people's response to divine grace.³ This covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel was presented in various images.⁴ The image of the divine - human relationship which chiefly concerns us here is that of the Father - Son relationship.

In Exod. 4 : 22 the Yahwist calls Israel Yahweh's son: "Israel is my first-born son. I have told you to let my son go that he may worship me" (NAB). The sense is as realistic as Pharaoh's family relationships,⁵ although physical descent of Israel from Yahweh is not implied. Jeremiah regards this fact as providing hope for the future (30 : 9, 20): "For I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my eldest

2. H.H. Rowley, *The Biblical Doctrine of Election*. London, 1950, p.19.

3. *Ibid.*, pp.48f.

4. Edmund Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament*. (Eng. tr. A.V. Heathcote and F.J. Alcock), London, 1958, pp.202ff, suggests 6 basic figures of Yahweh's covenant relationship with Israel: Marriage union; Father and son; the clay and the potter; the vineyard and owner; owner and inheritance; the shepherd and the flock.

5. *Ibid.*, p.202. For further references to Israel's divine sonship of G.B. Smith, *The Bible Doctrine of Man*. London, 1951, pp.121ff; Th. G. Viezen, *Hoofdlijnen der Theologie van het Oude Testament*. Wageningen, 1962, pp.404ff; G. von Ud, "Theologie des Alten Testaments", Band I, *Die Theologie der geschichtlichen Überlieferungen Israels*. München, 1957, pp.48f; G. Vos, *Biblical Theology Old and New Testaments*, Grand Rapids, 1948, p.129; R.H. Pfeiffer, *Religion in the Old Testament - The History of a Spiritual Triumph*. London, 1961, pp.147ff and Georg Fohrer, art. B. Altes Testament on 610c. in *ThWb VIII*, pp.340-355, esp. pp.352ff.

son ... "Is Ephraim still my dear son, a child in whom I delight? As often as I turn my back on him I still remember him: ... I am filled with tenderness towards him". The prophet Isaiah uses this as full proof of Israel's rebellion: (1 : 2) "I have sons whom I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me". So Yahweh called his son from Egypt (Hos. 11 : 1), gave him a pleasant land and allowed Israel to call him Father. (Jerem. 3 : 19).⁶

In the same way as the whole nation was given the collective designation "son", just so the individual members of Israel were Yahweh's sons and daughters.⁷

In Hos. 2 : 4 they are the offspring of Yahweh as husband and Israel as bride and in Ezek. 16 : 20 God's children by Jerusalem. Though apostate they are children nevertheless (Jerem. 3 : 14, 22; 4 : 22). So the Israelites came to call God their "Father".⁸ The fact of this realization placed upon them a burden of personal responsibility with regard to Yahweh. So Israel was at the same time regarded as Yahweh's servant to carry out His will on earth.⁹ It also resulted in Israel developing a specific understanding of her place in the sun: 1. They were a religious people, bound by a spiritual relationship to one another rather than a blood relationship. 2. The God who called them into existence, who punished them by the exile would not leave them. So their faith in God as their Father gave them hope for the future. 3. Therefore Israel was preserved when her political state was destroyed. Her spiritual nature transcended the political and secular.¹⁰ This sense of the fatherhood of God grew as Israel entered the Inter-testamental period of

6. Cf. Fohrer, op. cit., p.352.

7. Deut. 14 : 1; 32 : 5, 19; Isa. 43 : 6; 45 : 11; Hos. 2 : 1.

8. Fohrer, op. cit., ThWb Vol. VIII, p.352; Pfeiffer, op. cit., p.147. Smith, op. cit., p.122.

9. Fohrer, op. cit., p.353.

10. Vriesen, op. cit., pp.404f.

her history.

In the popular religion of the OT. period God was also regarded as the Father of the individual (apart from the king). This can be seen in some personal names e.g. the name Eliab (I Sam. 16 : 6f) meaning "God my Father", but it was only in the inter-testamental period that it came to become spelled out in the writings of the Jews. So Ben Sira in 23 : 1, 4 writes "O Lord, Father and Master of my life" and "O Lord, God and Father of my life". In the Book of Wisdom 2 : 16 the unrighteous Gentiles are depicted as mocking the pious Jew because "he vaunteth that God is his Father". We should note here that God was considered as Father not of all Jews but only of the pious Jews. This is similar to Paul's 103 : 13 where God like a father has "compassion on all who fear him". Here too it is the God-fearing Jews who know the compassion of the Lord. In Wisdom 11 : 9f God's actions are seen as his punishment of his wayward children. In II Esdras we read that while God has pleaded with Israel over the centuries so that he might be their Father, yet the time had been reached when they would be cast out. Thus God was Father to every Jew but the impious Jews forfeited this privileged relationship.¹¹

11. II Esdras 1 : 28 - 32, cf. Smith, op. cit., p.123. With regard to Jeremiah 17 : 5 - 10 and 31 : 31 - 34 these passages cannot be adduced to prove the Fatherhood of God over the individual Israelite. In fact they showed the trust of the individual in God, and that God is the God of the individual, but this is a very old concept in Israelite religion going back to the Mosaic covenant and the 10 commandments: "I am the Lord your (sing.) God". This is contra Weitzel, op. cit., p.142. For further references on the Sonship of pious Jews cf. Ethiopic Book 62 : 11; Ben Sira 36 : 11; IV Ezra 6 : 58; In Pseudo Philo, Antiquitates Biblicas 32 : 10; Ascension of Moses 10 : 3; Book of Jubilees 1 : 24f; 2 : 20; Testamentum Judaic 24 : 3. This concept is also to be found in rabbinic writings: Rabbi Agiba came to this conclusion from Deut. 14 : 1 in Abba 3 : 14; also Rabbi Johanan ben Shalom in Deut. rabba 7 : 23; 1. cf. Billerbeck, Vol. I, p.220. We find this conditional sonship very clearly expressed in J. Quidāshkin 1 : 8 (Slo 34f): "If the Israelites do God's will they are called sons; but when they do not do God's will they are not sons". Cf. Ed. Löhr, art. "Palästinisches Judentum" under $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\theta$ ThNB VIII, pp.358-363, esp. p.360.

It is in this context that we must understand the prayer which begins with the words: "Our Father". In this case too sonship of God was considered to be conditional on personal piety. It was the disciples who learned to pray in this way. Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount took this piety to include one's attitude to and behaviour towards any member of the human race: "Love your enemies and pray for your persecutors; only so can you be children of your heavenly Father, who makes his sun to rise on good and bad alike, and sends the rain on the honest and the dishonest". (Matt. 5 : 44f).

This is why Paul considers the seed of Abraham to be the People of God, the heirs of the promise, but his definition of what makes one a child of Abraham differs from that of late Judaism and even from Matt. 5 : 44f. It is not the keeping of the law but faith which qualifies one to be Abraham's seed. In the writings of Paul, God responds to faith by adopting the believer as His child.

Galatians 3 : 16 - 29:

Paul starts off his argument in vs. 16 with an assertion that appears on the surface to be very weak indeed. He refers to "the seed of Abraham" as being not plural "seeds" but singular "seed". He applies this singular "seed" to Christ. Paul must have known that the word for "seed", *σπέρμα* could be, and was normally used in a collective sense, but here Paul was dealing with Judaizing Christians and so for his method of argument he reverted to his rabbinical training.

The rabbis laid stress on the oneness of God, the oneness of Adam who was father of all, and the oneness of mankind. So Deube writes: "As the rabbis laid stress on the oneness of Adam, father of all, so Paul lays stress on the oneness of Jesus, who, on the strength of the old promise, gathered up in himself all the redeemed."¹²

12. D. Deube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism*. London, 1956, p.442.

The rabbis would have understood the reference to Abraham's seed in this singular sense. They applied it to Isaac.¹³ Isaac was the seed of Abraham through whom physical descent could be traced, so the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham went through Isaac to his descendants. So it was not a question of all "seeds" inheriting, since only Isaac was chosen while Ishmael was rejected. Likewise Jacob was chosen and Esau rejected.¹⁴ The fact that Paul probably had these rabbinic writings in mind is demonstrated by his reference to Sarai and Hagar in 4 : 21 - 26. Sarai was the bearer of the true seed. That Isaac did not bring about the fulfillment of this promise was obvious to Paul and his readers. In fact many of the writers of Late Judaism had seen fit to place the fulfillment of this promise in the World to Come. Paul's message was that this had already taken place in the coming of the Messiah, and so the promise to Abraham was already fulfilled.¹⁵ For in Christ there is a new humanity, and just as the rabbis regard Adam as one and therefore mankind as one, so in Christ, the second Adam, there is a redeemed, united, spiritual community owing its origin to the one and only Jesus Christ.¹⁶

So Paul refers to the Christians in 3 : 29 as the "seed of Abraham". They are Abraham's seed because they are "one in Christ Jesus" (vs. 28b). All those in Christ are Abraham's seed irrespective of their race.¹⁷ For Paul therefore the "heir" or "heir" of the covenant consists of those united in Christ. Inheritance of the covenant and the promise is therefore Christocentric. Christ, the Seed, re-

13. Cf. B.T. Sanhedrin 59b, Nedarim 31a; H. Freedman and M. Simon, Midrash Rabbai: Vol. I Genesis. London, 1939, pp. 464, 466 and 471.

14. Hester, op. cit., pp. 48f.

15. Cf. A. Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle. (Ed. by W. Montgomery and F.O. Burkitt), London, 1931, pp. 210ff.

16. Cf. C.K. Barrett, From First Adam to Last - a Study in Pauline Theology. New York, 1962, pp. 76f.

17. A. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 211; T.W. Manson, The

presented the Many. In the Church the process is reversed and it is the privilege of the Many, in Christ, the heirs by promise, to represent Christ.¹⁸

In Gal. 3 and Rom 4 Abraham is declared to be the father of the household of faith; firstly because he is symbolic of religion which is based on faith, and secondly because at a point of historical time he was the first to receive the promise. He believed that promise and was justified. So began the history of man's salvation by justification, election and faith. He became the first heir of the promise and the historical founder of God's people.¹⁹ There is no real difference in meaning between Gal. 3 and Rom 4. Both chapters contend that Christians are descendants of Abraham (Gal. 3 : 29; Rom. 4 : 16f) and that Abraham is symbolic of faith, and of one who is justified by faith.²⁰

So then descendants of Abraham are those people who have the same kind of faith as he had. This qualification is apart from physical descent and race. "The seed of Abra-

Teaching of Jesus - Studies in its Form and Context.
Cambridge, 1943, pp.137f.

18. Cf. J.A.F. Robinson, *The Body - A Study in Pauline Theology*. London, 1957, p.61. Cf. 1 Cor. 12 : 4-31; Rom. 12 : 3-8; Eph. 4 : 1-6.

19. Hester, op. cit., pp.52ff; G. Klein, *Heil und Geschichte nach Römer IV.* (NTS13). pp.43-7 argues against Paul having any concept of "Heilsgeschichte", and that all that Paul was interested in in Abraham was that he personified "hope" and "faith". Klein, however, is arguing from the modern point of view that historical figures are unimportant. Paul as a Jew most certainly regarded Abraham as an historical figure and as the literal father of the believing ones. Cf. H.J. Schoeps, *Paul. The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History.* (Ed. by H. Knight) London, 1961, p.204.

20. Gal. 3 : 6, 9; Rom. 4 : 11f, 17-22.

ham" is not a physical seed but a spiritual one. Faith, election and relying on the promise designate this spiritual seed.²¹ Therefore it is not confined to Israel. Abraham is the father of many nations (Gen. 12 : 3; 17 : 4f.). This multinational blessing is centred in Christ.²² Jews believed they had a special advantage, but Paul maintains that they cannot rely on this physical descent from Abraham, because only those in Christ have become the true seed and as such heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3 : 29).²³ Therefore it is not physical descent from Abraham which makes one an heir but spiritual regeneration through faith in Christ. This spiritual regeneration is accompanied by a new sign, baptism, which replaces circumcision (Col. 2 : 11f.). Those who fall into this category comprise Abraham's seed.

B. The Christians as Heirs:

Paul calls Christians heirs four times: Gal. 3 : 29; 4 : 7; Rom. 4 : 13f; 8 : 17. It is always associated with those who believe in and trust in Jesus Christ. Throughout his epistles Paul argues that no one can be a child, a son or an heir of God without having faith in Christ.²⁴

Rom. 4 : 13f:

The basic thought behind this passage is the antithesis between law and grace. The "law" consists in commandment of what is and what is not to be done according to the revelation of God's will.²⁵ Law commands and when it is disobeyed it evokes the anger of God (vs. 15), knowing no mercy. On the other hand "the promise" gives assurance of God's unwritten gracious favour; it is a free gift. So Paul asserts emphatically that the promise to Abraham did not come through his

21. E. Lohmeyer, Grundlagen paulinischer Theologie. (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, no. 1), Tübingen, 1929, pp. 34, 159.

22. O. Cullmann, Christ and Time. (St. F. Pileon), Philadelphia, 1950, pp. 110 and 118.

23. A. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 218.

24. O. Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, Göttingen, 1955, says that in the Pauline vocabulary, *θεός* and *κέρυον* are synonymous, loc. cit. Rom. 4 : 15f.

25. While Paul had primarily the 10 commandments and the law codes of the Pentateuch in mind, the oral tradition of the rabbis is not to be ignored. This later became codified by the pupils of Rabbi Johanan ben Zakcai in the treatises called

keeping of commandments, but rather through the righteousness which comes through faith.²⁶

In vs. 14 "grace" is shown to those people, true spiritual descendants of Abraham, who are dependent on the divine promise. Paul makes his point negatively, by writing that it is not those "that are of the law" that are heirs. By implication the antithesis is true - those who live by faith in the promise and in dependence on divine grace are heirs of the promise. Abraham's seed according to Paul's interpretation in vs. 13, refers to all believers.²⁷ If the right to heirship of Abraham's seed depends on the keeping of some legal system then it could not possibly have been associated with "the promise" or with "faith in that promise". Then faith and promise would be pushed aside. These cannot be discarded because the heirs are those who are *such* by faith in the promise and not by means of the law.²⁸

Rom. 8 : 17.

This verse is within the context of the adoption of the believer into the family of God through the instrumentality of the Spirit. The Spirit of God which possesses the believer giving him a sense of assurance that he is a child of God, and as a child also an heir (vs. 14 - 16). At the same time adoption is not based on merit, but on election, an election which began with God's fore-knowledge (vs. 29). This fore-knowledge does not imply that God foreknew the believer's good works and faith and on the basis of that fore-knowledge elected him. Rather it implies that in a far more

Yoma, Tamid and Middot of. W.D. Davies, *Law in First-century Judaism*, art. *TDN III*, pp. 89 - 95 esp. p. 92f.

26. John Murray, op. cit., p. 141.

27. So James Denney, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*. The Expositor's Greek Testament Ed. by W. Robertson Nicoll, Vol. II, London, 1908, p. 618; Murray, op. cit., p. 141.

28. Cf. Sanday and Headlam, op. cit., p. 111.

intimate sense of fellowship "God knew his own before ever they were". (WEB). These were foreknown, fore-ordained ones are the ones who are called, justified and glorified (vs. 30). Further they are not only declared to be adoptive sons of God, but as Jesus was in a special sense "the Son" so believers become his brothers, "that he might be the eldest among a large family of brothers". (WEB).

With this in mind we turn back to verse 17 where those who have identified themselves with Christ are said to be children of God (cf. vs. 16), and as such "heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ". In this verse we can see that Christ is "the heir", that Christians are joint heirs and that the one who has appointed them heirs and joint heirs is God who also assures the possession of their inheritance.

Christians therefore are given the privilege of "adoption" (vs. 15). Adoption gives them the right to call themselves children of God. This *δοξασμα* is a legal term referring to a legal act. Amongst the Romans the power of the father of a household was absolute. A son was held under his power as a slave is under his master. As long as his father lived the fealty to the father could only be broken by a formal legal act called *mancipatio* - which was used of freeing a son or a slave. A person could not be adopted into another family unless this transaction had taken place. It was regarded as a type of sale by which the person who wished to adopt paid a certain amount as a deed of transfer to the original father. If the son was free and independent (*sui iuris*) he could then only be adopted by a solemn act of the sovereign people, meeting and acting in their religious capacity as the *comitia curiata*. The reason for this was that each family in Roman society had certain religious rights and obligations to fulfil. The one to be adopted had first to be freed by the *comitia curiata* from these obligations before he could assume a similar responsibility towards another family. The assumption of these obligations was called *arrogatio*. The taking of such a son into his family by an heirless man was called *adoptio*.

This had to be attested by witnesses, which placed the adopted son in every respect in the same position as a son by birth. He possessed the same rights and owed the same obligations.²⁹ Adoption in the Greek world was also for the preservation of the family cultus and adoption could only take place with the approval of the state.³⁰

In Romans 8 : 17 "adoption" should be interpreted in terms of election of Rom. 9 : 4 which means that the legal term used in Roman and Greek legal practice *ὀψέσθαι* "adoption", is filled by Paul with a meaning which is Judaean-Christian, i.e. God elected Israel and adopted her to sonship (Exod. 4 : 22f). Paul writes that "adoption" is the first of the prerogatives of the Israelites, and that by election and adoption the believer in Jesus becomes a spiritual child of Abraham of Rom. 9 : 7ff, 30f, whether he be Jew or Gentile.³¹ *ὀψέσθαι* also implies the moment of maturity, whereby a child becomes a fully fledged son and member of the household. In the NT *ὀψέσθαι* implies both maturation (coming of age) and legal adoption.

Therefore the act whereby a person became a child of God was an act of grace whereby the new believer was transferred into the family of God and became a mature member of the household, to become an "heir". In Rom. 8 : 17 the word "heirs" is qualified by "heirs of God". This phrase has been interpreted either in the sense of the subjective or the objective genitive. Probably here the meaning is subjective. So subjectively understood it refers to the

29. J.S. Candlish, art. Adoption, A Dictionary of the Bible, ed. by James Hastings, Edinburgh, 1898-1906, Vol. I, pp.40f; N.W. Schoenberg, *Huiothesia: The Word and the Institution* (Scripture, The Quarterly of the Catholic Biblical Association) Edinburgh, Vol. XV, No. 32, Oct. 1963, pp.115-123 esp. pp.118f.

30. Schoenberg, op. cit., p.118; Hester, op. cit., pp.12f.

31. Cf. Schoenberg, op. cit., p.123; Willi Wislizenus, *Die Gotteskindschaft der Christen nach dem Neuen Testament*, Gütersloh, 1939, pp.50ff.

"heirs" being heirs of the inheritance which God had prepared for them, the Kingdom which it was promised they would enter and possess, cf. Matt. 25 : 34 "Come, blessed ones of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world", cf. I Cor. 2 : 9.³² If this phrase were to be interpreted objectively, quite literally it would mean that God himself is the inheritance.³³ This interpretation would require a strictly OT. background. Alex Martin³⁴ suggests that the real inheritance of Israel was not the land but Yahweh himself, "fellowship with whom within its borders lends it its significance and value, as the true and proper 'inheritance'". This he considers is due to the provision by which the priests and Levites (Numb. 18 : 20 and Deut. 18 : 2) were not to possess any specific territory; Yahweh was to be their inheritance. Yahweh as the inheritance of Israel was a later development of the consideration that the inheritance of Israel was "the land". Yet the two are not contradictory, since Israel associated Yahweh very closely with the land of Canaan, which was Yahweh's inheritance (Psalm 79 : 1) and Israel herself was said to be Yahweh's inheritance (Jerem. 12 : 7; 51 : 19), while Yahweh was claimed as the inheritance of his people (Psalm 73 : 26; 119 : 57; 142 : 5). In Rom. 8 : 17 the objective genitive interpretation seems forced and "heirs of God" should be

32. Cf. Murray, op. cit., p.298; Michel, op. cit., pp.170f; Demsey, op. cit., p.648; Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans (Eng. tr. by G.O. Rossieson), Philadelphia, 1949, pp.328f apparently follows Philo in describing the inheritance as "the new aeon of the resurrection". Philo makes it denote the bliss of the soul when freed from the body, Cf. Moffatt, op. cit., p.204.

33. Murray, op. cit., p.298.

34. Art. Inheritance, J. Hastings, Dictionary of the Bible, op. cit., Vol. II p.471.

understood as a subjective genitive with glorification of the believer with Christ as the inheritance. So then "heirs of God" is almost synonymous with "heirs of the promise" (Gal. 3 : 29), which in the OT. refers to "the land" and in the NT. to "the Kingdom of God".

The children of God are also called "joint-heirs with Christ" *συγκληρονόμοι*. Here again we are confronted with a tricky genitive construction, so that it could be interpreted as "heirs with Christ" or objectively as "joint-heirs of Christ". But Paul does not leave us in the dark. He qualifies this statement with two further words compounded with the prefix "joint", which are part of a conditional clause. So we are "joint-heirs with Christ" on the condition that we are "joint sufferers" with him, and if so we shall be "jointly glorified with him". So the genitive is certainly subjective in this context.³⁵ Paul was sure of it in his own case, and took it for granted for others. Those who share Christ's sufferings now will share his glory hereafter; and in order to share his glory hereafter it is necessary to start by sharing his sufferings here.³⁶

According to Roman Law when a man was adopted into a family as "heir" or if a group were adopted as "joint heirs" they accepted the obligations as well as the privileges of being heir. In fact if the deceased died leaving a debt, the heirs divided responsibility for the debt amongst themselves. If one person was sole heir then he was solely responsible. If one wished to appoint someone to the benefit without the attendant responsibilities then he could make grants on the basis of legatum, fideicommissum, donatio mortis causa, modus, munificatio testamenti. In these cases

35. Michel, op. cit., Römerbrief, p.170; Nygren, op. cit., p.329; Murray, op. cit., p.299; Dennay, op. cit., p.648.

36. Dennay, op. cit., p.648.

the recipients were not liable for the debts of the defunctus.³⁷ The owner of an estate would normally consider the merits of his potential heirs until he had chosen one who would become his "sole heir" heres ex asse. To him was given not only the possessions - but the family, i.e. the sum total of rights and duties contained in the Patria Potestas and growing out of it. It was a way of saying who was to have the chieftainship in succession to the Testator.³⁸ But while one person was appointed to the new Patria Potestas, having full authority over the familia, Roman law still provided for "co-heirship". Several people could be appointed by the testator as "joint-heirs". Each shared in the total assets and liabilities of the estate.³⁹ The one was the "heir" and the others sharing the inheritance with him the "joint-heirs".⁴⁰ The heir reaped the benefit of the following definition - Haereditas est successio in universum ius quod defunctus habuit - "an inheritance is a succession to the entire legal position of the dead man".⁴¹ The co-heirs corporately enter into this legal position, but only one has the full authority over the family.

The above description of the Roman legal position of the "heir" and the "joint-heirs" is especially suggestive in Rom. 8 : 17. Jesus Christ as "heir" is head of the family. The believers become "joint-heirs" by faith. This faith is demonstrated in a spiritual claiming of the inheritance, which

37. Cf. Fritz Schulz, Classical Roman Law, Oxford, 1951, pp.213ff; Max Kaser, Roman Private Law (Eng. tr. by Rolf Dammann), Durban, 1965, pp.213f. "If he once had finally acquired the inheritance, his liability was unlimited".

38. H.S. Maine, Ancient Law: Its Connection with the Early History of Society and its Relation to Modern Ideas, London, 1894, pp.190f.

39. In this paper we are assuming that the Roman legal system provides the most likely background to the writings of Paul (as opposed to Greek or Jewish). For full discussion cf. Hester, op. cit., pp.6-21.

40. Kaser, op. cit., pp.304f.

41. Maine, op. cit., p.181.

is symbolically enacted in baptism. The one who has discovered himself unable to live up to the high demands of divine law and righteousness, casts himself on the mercy of God. By faith in Jesus he is reconciled to God whereas previously he had been estranged from Him, and is given assurance of being accepted into sonship. The cross becomes the symbol of his sonship, that his adoption is not through merit but by grace alone. This new experience of God is mediated by the gospel, which proclaims the good news of the Son of God who gave his life for the sins of the world, and by which he is made the recipient of a new righteousness, a righteousness which does not come from man, but from God,⁴² a righteousness which comes through the initial step of self denial whereby believing in Jesus that man is made an heir; so that Paul writes with full assurance of Christian hope to Timothy: (II Tim. 2 : 11f).

"If we died with him, we shall live with him;
 if we endure, we shall reign with him.
 If we deny him, he will deny us.
 If we are faithless he keeps faith,
 for he cannot deny himself". (NEB).

As we are appointed "joint-heirs" we hope to share in the inheritance, but as Roman Law states, we cannot have the privileges of heirship without the responsibilities. These responsibilities are inherent in "suffering with Jesus" (vs. 17c). "Hierdie lye omvat nie alleen lyding wat verduur word in die navolging van Christus, óf in die uitoesening van die roeping van die gelowige, óf as gevolg van belydenis van geloof nie, maar alle lye wat die gelowige tref in sy nuwe bestaanwyse „in Christus".⁴³

42. Jacob Joss, "A Theology of Election - Israel and the Church", London, 1958, p.5.

43. J.M. de Villiers, Die betekenis van Hutoeksa in die Brieue van Paulus, Amsterdam, 1950, p.184.

Gal. 3 : 29f.

In the letter to the Galatians Paul, in his polemic against the Judaisers, declares that the Spirit of God does not come to the believer through the works of the law, but by faith. Believers are children of Abraham and are blessed along with him. The law had a certain value, preparing for the coming of the gospel, but Christ has fulfilled the law and the promise to Abraham. Faith in him brings freedom from the condemnation and curse of the Law. This freedom in Christ introduces a new world order.⁴⁴

In Gal. 3 : 29 Paul winds up his argument from the history of God's saving acts in which he had declared that all who belong to Christ were true spiritual children of Abraham (vs. 7) as he contends: "if you thus belong to Christ, you are the 'issue' (seed) of Abraham, and so heirs by promise". (vs. 29) Note here how Paul emphasises the "you", to bring out the wonderful transformation of men who as Gentiles had been foreigners to the kingdom, but by the Gospel had become members of Christ.⁴⁵

The prize which the Judaisers had put before the Galatians was that through circumcision and the keeping of the law they might become "seed of Abraham" and therefore "heirs of the promise". This prize Paul assures them is theirs now because they are Christ's, since it belongs to those who believe (vs. 7). He makes an antithesis of "faith" and "works" and at the same time of "faith" and "law". It is through "faith" as opposed to "works" that the

44. Ibid., pp. 75f; Cf. F. Rendall, *The Epistle to the Galatians*. (The Expositor's Greek Testament), London, Vol. III, no date, pp.132f; Ernest de Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*. (I.C.C.), Edinburgh, 1921. Introduction, pp.111f-117.

45. Cf. Rendall, op. cit., p.175.

blessing of Abraham is received.⁴⁶

It is significant that in vs. 29 *οὐτως* as referring to those who belong to Christ is used without the article. As such it is indefinite or qualitative. It means that they are not the categorical or the absolute seed; this we have already been informed in vs. 16 has already been fulfilled in "the seed", viz. Christ himself. Rather the believers, children of Abraham (vs. 7) have been vested with the quality of "seed of Abraham", and have ascribed to them the standing and privilege of Abrahamic seed, i.e. "If you belong to Christ who is the seed of Abraham, you share his standing as such."⁴⁷

Then in 4 : 1, after believers in Christ have been described as "heirs by promise" Paul undertakes a short excursus on the position of the heir. As a child he served under certain slaves who were appointed to take care of his upbringing. He was indistinguishable from any slave. He was a *νηπιος*. This word is not necessarily juristic, but is synonymous with the Rabbinic word *ṭup* which means simply a small or an immature person.⁴⁸ The word *κατηννομις* is used in the same sense as in Mark 12 : 7 and parallels. He is someone who does actually have the legal claim on the inheritance but as yet did not have it under his power. As long as he was immature he remained under the power of *ἐκτερονοι* (guardians) and *οικονομοι* (trustees). He remained in this position until the age which his father had predetermined, when he would be given full power over the estate.⁴⁹

46. Cf. Heinrich Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater*. (KEK NT), Göttingen, 1951, p.131; Burton, op. cit., p.669.

47. Burton, op. cit., pp.209ff; and de Villiers, op. cit., p.84. Cf. I Cor. 3 : 21ff; Rom. 8 : 17, 32.

48. Cf. Schlier, op. cit., p.132 note 2; de Villiers op. cit., p.87.

49. de Villiers, op. cit., p.86.

Gal. 4 : 7:

This age of maturity Paul explains in 4 : 7. The act of faith in Jesus Christ by which the believer becomes united with Christ is symbolically represented by baptism. As the believer is baptised into Christ (3 : 26f) he puts on Christ,⁵⁰ and is brought to full maturity of sonship. God effected this by making his Son - a man - born of a woman, born under the law so that those who are in bondage to the law (i.e. to the $\epsilon\lambda\lambda\eta\nu\iota\sigma\mu\circ\varsigma$ and $\omicron\kappa\nu\omicron\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\tau\omicron\varsigma$ of the old dispensation) might become a full son (Greek "receive the adoption").⁵¹ So then Paul writes emphatically - "You are sons! You do not need to conform to the Jewish ritual law - you are sons right now". God had sent the spirit of his son into their hearts so that they might with full assurance cry out "Abba, Father!" So he again emphasises: "You are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God".

50. Schlier, op. cit., p.141 contends for an *ex opere operato* reception of the spirit of sonship at baptism, but Paul makes it quite clear in 3 : 26 that it is faith which renders one a son, baptism being the outward symbol of the inward experience by which God grants the spirit of sonship in the heart of the believer, so baptism symbolises the spiritual reception of Christ by faith. This experience of faith may happen at the time of baptism or it may precede it. Cf. Acts 2 : 38; 8 : 12 and esp. the story of the conversion of Paul where Paul received the Spirit before his baptism 9 : 17-19. Baptism is a cultic reenactment of the death and resurrection of Jesus as a source of sanctification to the believer, and a source of strength to him to preserve him from falling into sin cf. Rom. 6 : 1-12.

51. This is a difficult term to translate in this context as it evidently refers not to "adoption" but to the "coming of age" of the heir, so de Villiers, op. cit., pp.96f; Burton, op. cit., p.220 interprets it in the light of Rom. 8 : 14c and defines it as: "God's reception of men into the relation to him of sons, objects of his love and enjoying his fellowship, the ultimate issue of which is the future life wherein they are clothed with a spiritual body." This interpretation misses the point of the maturation of the heir and his attendant attainment to full sonship.

The last phrase $\delta\iota\alpha\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ has caused considerable problems and variations in the textual history of this verse. Among many other variations the received text renders $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ $\delta\iota\alpha\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ but despite the problems the difficult text is the right one here. The Epistle has traced God's scheme of redemption and His design of granting to His People a heavenly inheritance in Christ right back to the Patriarchs. It has shown that right from the time of Abraham onwards God was disciplining His People Israel with a view to their becoming mature sons of God. At the same time He was preparing the Gentiles in like manner even though they did not know Him, having the same intention with them as with Israel. So it is with good reason that our text reads "through God", it being through His design and providential care that they, Jews and Gentiles were elevated to the position of sons and heirs.⁵¹

To conclude then the People of God are described by Paul as "seed of Abraham". This concept has its roots in the OT, where God calls Israel Abraham's seed and at the same time refers to him as His special possession. This teaching is associated with the doctrine of election - Abraham and his seed are elect. The fruit of this election was the covenant and Yahweh's acknowledgment of Israel as being His son, and the individual Israelites came to be called the sons and daughters of Yahweh, while they came to call Yahweh their Father. This understanding of God as their Father was clarified by the recognition that the Davidic king was God's son. It only really came to be spelled out in the religious writings of the Jews well after the return from exile. Then the sonship became less and less considered a national institution and more and more it became conditional on personal piety. We find this teaching maturing in the Sermon on the mount by Jesus (Matt. 5 : 44f).

51. Rendall, op. cit., pp. 176f.

Building on this basis Paul refers to the People of God as the Seed of Abraham, but his definition of what constitutes this seed differs widely from the opinion held by Inter-testamental writers and those of Late Judaism in that Paul teaches that it is not the keeping of the law of Moses which qualifies one, but that it is faith and God's response to faith by adopting the believer as His child. This assertion of Paul is especially stated in Gal. 3: 16 - 29. In this passage the point made is that Christ is the Seed, but that believers in Him who are then baptised into Him are somehow collectively in Christ and therefore Seed of Abraham irrespective of their race. In both Gal. 3 and Rom. 4 the teaching is that those who have faith have Abraham as their father, since their justification is by faith and not by physical birth or by keeping of the law. Therefore kinship to Abraham is spiritual and not physical. This makes it universal and Christocentric.

CHAPTER 6. BELIEVERS AS SONS AND HEIRS IN HEBREWS

A. The People of God:

As in the OT, and in the epistles of Paul, the believers are called "the People of God" in Hebrews. They are described in this way in 4 : 9; 8 : 10; 10 : 30; 11 : 25. In each one of these cases they are described as either "the people of God", or "my People", or "his People". Two are in the normal text of Hebrews (4 : 9 and 11 : 25) and two appear in quotations from the OT. (8 : 10 and 10 : 30). Our author does not associate "the People of God" with the "Seed of Abraham", as Paul does, but he broadens the concept in Ch. 11, taking us back in the household of faith to Abel and telling us that Jesus as the first born Son is set over this household. (3 : 3, 6).

In Hebr. 4 : 9 we are reminded of the promise of a "rest for the People of God". According to the story of the wilderness wanderings the children of Israel had sinned because of their unbelief when they refused to enter the land of promise in spite of hearing the good reports of Caleb and Joshua. As a punishment for this unbelief they wandered in the wilderness for forty years. God was angry with them and in His anger He vowed against that generation: "They shall never enter into my rest".⁵² The implication is that by crossing the river Jordan they should have entered into the Sabbath rest in the promised land, and yet this did not happen when Joshua led them into the land. Our author provides scriptural proof of

52. Psalm 95 : 7-11 (LXX 94 : 7-11). This refusal was because of the hardness of their hearts evidenced by a complaining spirit Exod. 15 : 23ff; 17 : 7; Num. 20 : 2-5, and finally by their unbelief, Num. 14 : 21-23 esp. vs. 23: "Surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it".

the failure of Joshua to lead them into rest from a quotation from the Psalms in Hebr. 3: 7 - 11. The psalmist who was writing during the early monarchy, at a time when Israel's possession of the land was most complete, urges the worshipper not to harden his heart if he wants to enter his rest. The argument of the author to the Hebrews is therefore that the Israelites could not have entered into their rest at the passage of the river Jordan if they were, at the time of writing the Psalm, still being urged to enter into their rest "today", so many years after Moses and Joshua. He then poses the problem that if they hadn't entered with Joshua, when did or would they then enter God's promised rest? In vs. 9 he saw it as being yet in the future: "Therefore a sabbath rest still awaits the People of God" and so, on this basis he urges his readers: "Let us then make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by following this evil example of unbelief". In the following chapters we are told how to enter that rest.⁵³

In Hebr. 3: 9 "the People of God" evidently has a double dimension; the physical children of Israel, and the spiritual "People of God". The author of Hebrews, writing within the framework of Platonic philosophy, regards the OT. pictures and representations to be incomplete and imperfect types of that which was to come. Thus the Israel of the OT. prefigures the Church as the People of God. The physical Israel falls under the Old Covenant whereas the Church is the People of God of the New Covenant. These two covenants cannot co-exist, the New perfected and has replaced the Old.⁵⁴ Yet he sees a line of continuity between the Old and the New People of God.

53. For a similar analysis of. G.K. Barrett, *The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. (The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, in Honour of G.H. Dodd), Cambridge, 1956, pp. 366ff.

54. Cf. Klaassen, op. cit., p. 33.

The People of God as the Pilgrim Church (Wandering People of God) is very similar to the speech of Stephen in Acts 7. We see this not only in Hebr. 4 : 9 but also in 11 : 25 where Moses chose to suffer with the People of God rather than to enjoy the privileges of an adoptive son in Pharaoh's household. In both Hebrews (esp. Ch. 11) and in Stephen's speech the People of God are seeking the heavenly city, finding it necessary to pass through this world (cf. Vanity Fair in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*), yet as strangers and pilgrims they keep persecution on their own heads. They are persecuted in Egypt and later the true Israelites, represented by the prophets and eventually Jesus, are persecuted and killed at the hands of Israel after the flesh.⁵⁵ The figure of Israel is ambiguous because sometimes the People of God are associated with Israel after the flesh, and sometimes with the faithful remnant of pious ones in Israel who in many cases are persecuted by their brethren after the flesh. Thus it would appear that "the People of God", is a conditional term, depending on personal faith and piety. So the author of Hebrews can refer to "the People of God" as a present reality - a people who still have to enter their promised land of rest i.e. The Kingdom. They should learn the lessons of the People of God in the OT. who failed to enter because of unbelief. At the same time he can speak in the past tense of the People of God with whom Moses by faith associated himself. They were identical as long as they had faith, obeyed God, and continued faithful despite the persecution of unbelievers, whether these unbelievers were Egyptians or Hebrews.⁵⁶

In Hebrews "the People" is used in an absolute sense, meaning "the People of God". It is used twice (7 : 5, 11)

55. Cf. *N. Dahl*, *Das Volk Gottes*, p.196.

56. The other two refs. 8 : 10; 10 : 30 are quotations from the OT, both of which emphasize what has been said above, that the People of God stand in a special relationship to God as "my people" and "his people".

in a non liturgical sense: "the people" pay tithes and receive the law, but in the vast majority of cases it has a liturgical meaning referring to the expiation of the people's sins. In 9 : 19 the author of Hebrews describes how Moses sprinkled "the people" with sacrificial blood as part of the old covenant renewal ceremony (cf. Exod. 24 : 8). The other references relate to Christ's priestly work of expiation on behalf of his People.⁵⁷

According to Hebr. 2 : 17 Christ became a man, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham who offered a sacrifice for the sins of the people, i.e. to make a complete, perfect, one and only sacrifice for the expiation of the sins of God's People. Expiation was what the High Priest was believed to obtain for the people by the sin offering on the Day of Atonement⁵⁸ and so Christ as High Priest expiated the sins of the people on the cross, and now stands between them and God to purify and sanctify them with his blood and to restore them to divine favour.⁵⁹ What rendered Christ's sacrificial death especially significant to "the People" was the fact that it occurred outside Jerusalem; "So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood". (13 : 12).

The emphasis of the word "suffered" (instead of "death") is an emphasis on the humanity of Jesus. Criminals were put to death outside the city so that it might not be polluted. Jesus' death was no exception, cf. John 19 : 20 "the place where Jesus was crucified was outside the city".⁶⁰ From the location of Jesus' death a practical lesson is drawn for the

57. Hebr. 2 : 17 cf. 1 : 3; 5 : 3; 7 : 27; 13 : 12.

58. Cf. Montefiore, op. cit., p.68 cf. Hebr. 5 : 3; 7 : 27.

59. Spinoza, op. cit., Vol. II p.48.

60. It is a moot point whether the significance of this act was because the carcasses of the sin-offerings were thrown outside the camp or because of the killing of the red heifer

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