**Sons rule the earth today (“angels” — sons because of creation), but God is about to remove the present order of sons and give the kingdom to a new order of Sons — three firstborn Sons — from the human realm:**

**Those forming the nation of Israel, presently God’s firstborn but disobedient son.**

**Those forming the Church, following the adoption into a firstborn status.**

**And Christ, God’s only begotten firstborn Son.**

**God’s Firstborn Sons BOOK**

*A Study About Sons, Firstborn Sons, Adoption and Inheritance*

**By Arlen L. Chitwood of** [**Lamp Broadcast**](http://lampbroadcast.org/)

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**BOOK COVER**

God presently has two firstborn Sons — *Christ* ([Hebrews 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.6&t=NKJV)) and *Israel* ([Exodus 4:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22-23&t=NKJV)).  *Christ* is God’s firstborn Son through *procreation* ([John 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.16&t=NKJV)), and *Israel* is God’s firstborn son through *adoption* ([Romans 9:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+9.4&t=NKJV)). And God is about to bring into existence a third firstborn son through adoption — *the Church* ([Romans 8:14-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14-15&t=NKJV), [19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.19&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.23&t=NKJV)).

“Sonship” implies *rulership*. Only “sons” hold regal positions in God’s kingdom — past, present, or future. That’s the way God established matters in the beginning, and that which God has established in this respect *never changes.*

Angels alone (sons of God because of creation) have ruled throughout God’s kingdom in time past (both over this earth and elsewhere in the universe). But, with man’s creation — an entirely new order in the universe, an individual created in God’s image, after His likeness — a change in the order of rulers within God’s government was made known. Man was created *for regal purposes* ([Genesis 1:26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV)); and, though sin subsequently entered, resulting in a ruined creation ([Genesis 3:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.1ff&t=NKJV)), God did not and will not change His mind concerning the reason He brought man into existence ([Romans 11:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+11.29&t=NKJV)).

The whole of man’s salvation has this high end in view, whether salvation past (the spiritual birth, presently possessed by all Christians) or salvation present and future (the saving of the soul, not presently possessed by Christians but awaiting realization). Man has been, is being, and is about to be saved for *a revealed regal purpose*.

A new order of “sons” is about to be brought forth ([Romans 8:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.19&t=NKJV); *cf.* [Hebrews 2:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.5&t=NKJV)). And *only then* will God’s purpose for man’s creation (in the beginning) and His reason for man’s subsequent salvation (following his ruin) be realized.

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**FOREWORD**

When referring to firstborn sons in the human realm, only one son can be in view through the natural process of procreation. But, in the divine realm, the whole of the matter is seen from a different perspective.

Though God possesses only one firstborn Son through procreation (Jesus), as in the human realm (*cf.* [John 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.16&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.6&t=NKJV)), He can possess other firstborn sons through adoption (*i.e.*, God taking a son and adopting that son into a firstborn status).

And this is exactly what God has done with one son and will do yet future with another son.

The nation of Israel is God’s son because of creation ([Isaiah 43:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.1&t=NKJV), [7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.7&t=NKJV)), and this nation is God’s firstborn son because of a subsequent adoption ([Romans 9:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+9.4&t=NKJV)):

*Thus says the Lord: Israel is My son* [because of creation], *My firstborn* [because of a subsequent adoption]. ([Exodus 4:22b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22b&t=NKJV))

Then God is about to bring another firstborn son into existence. God, through His Spirit, is presently leading Christians from immaturity to maturity through what is seen in [Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV) as “child-training” (the Greek word, used in both noun and verb forms in this passage, is from a form of a word referring to a young child — thus, the translation, “child-training”). And this word, contextually, has to do with “instruction” or “teaching,” which is the manner in which the translators of the KJV, NASB, and NIV translated the word in a similar context in [2 Timothy 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+3.16&t=NKJV).

And those Christians who allow “child-training” (or “instruction,” “teaching”) are referred to in a present sense as sons, something possible because of a prior creation ([2 Corinthians 5:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.17&t=NKJV); *cf.* [Ephesians 2:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.10&t=NKJV)).

Then, the present child-training of sons is with a view to adoption yet future, in order that these sons (through this future adoption) might be placed in the position of firstborn sons, allowing them to exercise the rights of the firstborn ([Hebrews 12:16-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.16-17&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.23&t=NKJV)).

And the preceding is with a view to God, in that day, having three firstborn Sons (Christ, Israel, and the Church) to occupy positions of power and authority in His kingdom.

Only Sons can rule in God’s kingdom. And, within the human realm, only firstborn Sons can rule.

Sons rule the earth today (“angels” — sons because of creation), but God is about to remove the present order of sons and give the kingdom to a new order of Sons — three firstborn Sons — from the human realm.

Those forming the nation of Israel, presently God’s firstborn son but also a disobedient son, will, following the nation being brought to the place of repentance, occupy positions of power and authority over the nations from the earthly land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Those forming the Church, following the adoption into a firstborn status (as seen in [Hebrews 12:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.23&t=NKJV)), will occupy positions of power and authority over the nations from a heavenly sphere, that heavenly sphere presently occupied by Satan and his angels.

And Christ, God’s only begotten firstborn Son, will rule the nations from both spheres of the kingdom. He will rule from David’s throne in the midst of His people, Israel (God’s firstborn son), on the earth; and He will rule from His own throne with His co-heirs (God’s firstborn son) in the heavens.

The whole of Scripture moves in this direction, beginning in the book of Genesis and ending in the book of Revelation. And that is what this book, [God's Firstborn Sons by Arlen Chitwood pdf](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/GFS.pdf), is about.

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Chapter One

**CHRIST**

*God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,*

*has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;*

*who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*

*having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*

*For to which of the angels did He ever say: “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You”? And again: “I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son”?*

*But when He again brings* [*lit*., “And when He shall again bring in”] *the firstborn into the world* [“the inhabited world”], *He says: “Let all the angels of God worship Him.*” ([Hebrews 1:1-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.1-6&t=NKJV))

God has many “sons.” *Angels,* because of their special and individual creation, are viewed as “*sons of God*” ([Genesis 6:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+6.4&t=NKJV); [Job 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+1.6&t=NKJV); [2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+2.1&t=NKJV); [38:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Job+38.7&t=NKJV)). *The first man, the first Adam*, for the same reason as seen in the angelic realm — a special and individual creation — was also viewed as God’s “*son*” ([Luke 3:38b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+3.38b&t=NKJV)). Adam’s descendants though, following the fall, were not viewed in this same manner. Rather, they were viewed as *sons of Adam*, or *sons of his progeny*. They were revealed to be *sons of a fallen individual*, or *sons of his descendants* (*cf.* [Genesis 5:3ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+5.3ff&t=NKJV); [11:10ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+11.10ff&t=NKJV); [Luke 3:23-38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+3.23-38&t=NKJV)).

(The word “*son*” only appears once in the Greek text throughout the genealogy in [Luke 3:23-38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+3.23-38&t=NKJV) — at the very beginning, in [Luke 3:23a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+3.23a&t=NKJV) [“*the son of Joseph*”]. The structure of the Greek text though [a list of articular genitives, beginning in [Luke 3:23b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+3.23b&t=NKJV)] necessitates that the thought of son, though not shown in each succeeding generation, be continued from its introductory usage and understood throughout the genealogy. This is why translators have shown the word in italics in each generation, following its introductory usage, all the way back to Adam, “*the son of God*.”)

In the divine realm, *the one created* (whether an angel or a man) is viewed as a “*son.*” In the human realm, *the one begotten* is viewed as a “*son*.” In the former realm, “sons of God” are in view; in the latter realm, “sons of a fallen creature” are in view.

Within God’s economy, “sonship” is inseparably connected with *regality*, in both the angelic and the human realms. *Angels*, “*sons of God*,” were created to have a part in God’s government of the universe. And *man*, a “*son of God*,” was created for exactly the same purpose — to first replace the incumbent ruler of this earth (Satan, a disqualified ruler), and then to subsequently occupy regal positions beyond the earth, in God’s universal kingdom. “Sonship,” in this respect, implies *rulership*.

But “sonship” among Adam’s descendants following the fall is another matter, which *cannot be connected with regality in this same respect*. Descendants of Adam, following the fall, could no longer be looked upon as “*sons of God*.” Rather, they could only be looked upon as sons of *a fallen individual, possessing the same fallen nature as their father* (*cf.* [Genesis 5:3ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+5.3ff&t=NKJV)).

Thus, following man’s fall, *redemption* became necessary if man was to ever realize the purpose for his prior creation. This was something that God brought to pass immediately following man’s sin, something involving *death* and *shed blood*. And once God had established matters in this respect, no change could ever occur. *Redemption* at any subsequent point in Scripture would *always be the same* — that brought to pass on the basis of *death* and *shed blood*.

But *redemption* itself has nothing to do with “sonship.” Adam, as Satan, was a “*son of God*” before his fall; and he remained a “*son of God*” following the fall. Adam’s fall wrought no change in his position as God’s son (though he was no longer in a position to exercise that which is portended by sonship — *regality*).

And, relative to Adam’s descendants, who are not “sons of God,” the converse of matters pertaining to redemption and sonship are equally true. The redemption of Adam’s descendants does not restore the sonship standing possessed by Adam. *One* (*redemption, or even the fall itself, necessitating redemption*) *has nothing to do with the other* (*with sonship*).

“Sonship” results from *creation alone*, not redemption. This was something originally established in the angelic realm and then subsequently seen in the human realm in Genesis chapters one and two. And, as the established means for “redemption” *never changes* throughout Scripture, the established means for bringing into existence “a son of God” *never changes* throughout Scripture as well.

Thus, in order for God to place Adam’s progeny back into the position for which man was created — to rule and to reign — fallen man must not only be *redeemed* but *creation* must again be involved, for only *sons of God* can rule in God’s kingdom.

That is to say, God must not only redeem fallen man but He must also perform a special creation of a nature that would place man back in the position of “God’s son.” Apart from this dual act, man would *forever* be estranged from the reason God brought him into existence.

Then, because of the rights of primogeniture (rights of the firstborn) that God established in the human realm (seen in the position that Christ holds as God’s Son — that of *Firstborn*, through being begotten by the Father), the one to hold the scepter must be more than just God’s son to realize *these established rights*. He, as Christ, must be *a firstborn Son of God*. And God accomplished/will accomplish this through the process of adoption (Greek: *huiothesia*, “son-placing”). Adoption in Scripture is connected with *sons*, not with children. The process has to do with taking one who is already a son (because of creation) and placing that son in a firstborn status (through adoption).

Viewing the entire matter from the beginning, man is saved via the birth from above. *The Spirit breathes life* into the one having no life, on the basis of *death* and *shed blood*, allowing man to pass “*from death to life*” ([John 5:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+5.24&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.1&t=NKJV)). This has been God’s *only means* of salvation for fallen man since the matter was introduced in the opening three chapters of Genesis.

Only then do matters having to do with *sonship*, or *a subsequent firstborn status within sonship*, enter into the matter. Creation must be involved in the former and *adoption* in the latter. And neither creation nor adoption enters into matters surrounding the birth from above. Both are always subsequent to the birth from above.

*Creation* during the past dispensation had to do with Jacob and his descendants through his twelve sons, for God took Jacob and performed a special creative act — one which, as the Adamic creation *preceding the fall*, had to do with *the physical man* and could be passed on from father to son ([Isaiah 43:1-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.1-10&t=NKJV)).

*Creation* during the present dispensation has to do with an individual’s positional standing “*in Christ*.” God takes an individual who has been born from above and places him “*in Christ*,” resulting in *an entirely new creation* ([2 Corinthians 5:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.17&t=NKJV)) — something that occurs at the time of the birth from above, though subsequent to this birth. And because this has to do with *the spiritual man* rather than the physical, these things cannot be passed on from father to son. Rather, an individual has to himself believe and experience these things personally.

And *adoption* then follows these two creative acts. Israel has already been adopted and is presently *God’s firstborn son* ([Exodus 4:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22-23&t=NKJV)). The adoption of Christians though is future (*cf.* [Romans 8:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.15&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.23&t=NKJV); [Galatians 4:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.5&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.5&t=NKJV)).

Thus, because of “creation,” Christians can presently be viewed as *sons* (*cf.* [Romans 8:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26&t=NKJV); [4:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.6-7&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV) [the Greek word *huios*, “son,” is used in these passages); but, because the “adoption” is still future, Christians cannot presently be viewed as *firstborn sons*.

(The preceding briefly introduces this three-part series on “God’s Firstborn Sons,” showing the why and necessity of *sonship* and *adoption* with respect to *regality*. As previously shown, God presently has two firstborn Sons [Christ and Israel] and will one day have a third firstborn son [the Church, following the adoption]. And only when God’s third firstborn son has been brought into existence can man realize *the regal purpose* for his creation revealed at the beginning, in [Genesis 1:26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV).

Both “creation” with respect to *sonship* and “*adoption*” with respect to *a firstborn standing*, in relation to both Israel and Christians, will be dealt with more fully in chapters 2, 3. The remainder of this chapter, chapter 1, will deal with God’s Son from eternity, the One possessing a standing as Firstborn, *through birth*, providing Him with the rights of primogeniture within the human realm in relation to His position as the second Man, the last Adam.)

**God’s Son from Eternity**

There has never been a time when Christ was not God’s Son. He has been God’s Son from eternity, always co-existing and being co-equal with the Father.

But, though there has never been a time when the Son did not exist and occupy the position of God’s Son, being co-equal with the Father, there has been a time when the Son did not occupy the position of *Firstborn* in the human realm. God, at a point in time, took His Son and, *through birth*, placed Him in the position of *Firstborn* (God’s “only begotten Son”) — a necessary position for His Son to realize the rights of primogeniture as the second Man, the last Adam.

Thus, when dealing with the incarnation, far more is involved than Christ becoming a Man in order to redeem fallen man. Salvation that fallen man possesses today is only the beginning of the matter. Salvation is for *a revealed purpose*, which has to do *with man ultimately being placed back in the position for which he was created*. In this respect, the reason for the incarnation covers the whole panorama of the matter — *from the new birth to the adoption of sons.*

Note what Jesus told Pilate in [John 18:37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+18.37&t=NKJV) in response to the question, “*Are You a king then?* [*lit.*, ‘So you are a King!’ (a statement, or a statement in the form of a question, worded in the Greek text in a manner expecting a ‘Yes’ response)].” And Jesus responded in complete keeping with that which Pilate had stated. Rather than as in the KJV — “*Thou sayest that I am a king…*” — the translation should be more along the lines of “Yes! You say truly that I am a King” (*Ref*. Weymouth). Jesus then went on to say, “*For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world…*”

Christ was born *King* ([Matthew 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+2.2&t=NKJV)), but He came into the world for purposes surrounding the complete panorama of redemption. The incarnation was for purposes foreshadowed by God’s work throughout the six days in Genesis chapter one, and the incarnation has its fulfillment in that foreshadowed by God’s rest on the seventh day in Genesis chapter two.

Then there will be a further fulfillment beyond that in the eternal ages beyond the seventh day of rest, which Scripture deals with only sparingly. Man in that day beyond the Messianic Era will exercise power of *a universal nature*, for this power will emanate from “*the throne of God and of the Lamb*” ([Revelation 22:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+22.1&t=NKJV), [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+22.3&t=NKJV)), a throne from which *universal rule* will emanate.

At the time Jesus appeared before Pilate, shortly after the interchange with Pilate relative to His Kingship, the Jews accused Christ of *making Himself*  “*the Son of God*” ([John 19:7b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+19.7b&t=NKJV); *cf.* [2 Samuel 7:12-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Samuel+7.12-14&t=NKJV)). This resulted in Pilate becoming even “*more afraid*” ([John 19:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+19.8&t=NKJV)), for he *apparently knew*, in complete keeping with his previous conversation with Jesus, *the implications involved if Christ were truly God’s Son.*

As previously shown, “sonship” implies *rulership*; and this is clearly seen in the Jewish religious leaders’ next accusation, which immediately followed their statement relative to Christ’s claim to be *God’s Son*: “*Whoever makes himself a king* [*i.e*., a statement in complete keeping with their previous accusation — Christ had ‘*made Himself the Son of God*’ ([John 19:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+19.7&t=NKJV))] *speaks against Caesar*” ([John 19:12b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+19.12b&t=NKJV)).

The picture is similar to that seen in [Exodus 4:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22-23&t=NKJV). God had instructed Moses to tell Pharaoh, “*Israel is My son, My firstborn.*” And Pharaoh was expected to understand from Moses’ statement that God recognized this lowly nation of slaves (the Israelites) in subjection to the most powerful Gentile nation of that day (the Egyptians) *as His firstborn son, the nation in possession of the rights of primogeniture, the nation which God recognized as possessing the right to hold the scepter.*

In [John 18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+18&t=NKJV); [19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+19&t=NKJV), *God’s firstborn Son, Christ*, stood before Pilate and was falsely accused by *God’s firstborn son, Israel*; and Pilate himself became *increasingly afraid* surrounding the entire matter. The fear that Pilate exhibited, as seen in the text, could only have been a mild description of how Pilate would possibly have responded had he known the full scope and implications of that which was transpiring on that day, for he was using his power to *subjugate one son* and to *ultimately condemn the other Son*. And both of the Sons being mistreated that day were *the Ones possessing the right to hold the scepter*, not Pilate.

**The Heir of All Things**

The book of Hebrews opens by introducing Christ as the One whom God has placed *at the center of all things* in the outworking of His plans and purposes. God spoke “*in time past to the fathers by the prophets*,” but, “*in these last days*,” God has spoken “*to us by His Son*.” In both instances, God is the One doing the speaking. In the former instance, God spoke in the person of the prophets; in the latter instance, God has spoken in the person of His Son ([Hebrews 1:1-2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.1-2a&t=NKJV)).

The record then continues with references to the Son, not to the prophets. The Son is the One whom the Father “*has appointed Heir of all things*”; and the Son is the One through whom the Father “*made the worlds* [*lit.*, ‘made the ages’]” ([Hebrews 1:1-2b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.1-2b&t=NKJV)). The Father designed the ages around the person and work of the One whom He “*has appointed Heir of all things*,” with the outworking of that seen in the Son’s heirship occurring within the framework of these designed ages.

Reference is then made to Christ’s person, His finished work at Calvary, His ascension to the Father’s right hand, and His position relative to the angels following His ascension (which was different than His position before His ascension [*cf.* [Hebrews 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.7&t=NKJV), [9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.9&t=NKJV)]). Then the thought immediately moves back to the subject previously introduced — Christ as the “*appointed Heir of all things*” ([Hebrews 2:3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.3-4&t=NKJV)). And this second statement surrounding Christ’s heirship is used to introduce *seven Messianic quotations* from the Old Testament ([Hebrews 2:5-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.5-13&t=NKJV)).

The way in which the book opens introduces the subject matter in the book — something seen in the structure of all the books in Scripture, along with Scripture as a whole in the opening verses of Genesis ([Genesis 1:1-2:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.1-2.3&t=NKJV)). The subject matter in Hebrews, shown through the manner in which the book is introduced, is about that coming day when God’s appointed “*Heir of all things*” holds the scepter and rules the earth with “*a rod of iron*” (*cf.* [Psalm 2:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.9&t=NKJV); [Revelation 2:26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.26-27&t=NKJV)).

Through the arrangement of these seven Messianic quotations (a number showing *the completion of that which is in view*), “heirship” is immediately connected not only with sonship but with a firstborn status as well. It is *God’s Firstborn Son*, the appointed “*Heir of all things*,” whom the Father will one day “*again bring into*” the inhabited world ([Hebrews 2:5-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.5-6&t=NKJV)).

These seven Messianic quotations are introduced in verse five and begin with a quotation from [Psalm 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.7&t=NKJV):

*You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.*

This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament — once in [Acts 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+13.33&t=NKJV) and twice in [Hebrews 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.5&t=NKJV); [5:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.5&t=NKJV). And in all three passages, as in [Psalm 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.7&t=NKJV), the verse is used in *Messianic settings*.

The reference in each of the four appearances of the verse is to the Father begetting the Son at the time of the incarnation. This was an absolute necessity if the Son was to be *God’s Firstborn*, allowing the Son to hold the scepter as the Father’s appointed “*Heir of all things*.”

Note how all of this is set forth in the Psalm chapter two. Though a present application to [Psalm 2:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.1-3&t=NKJV) is made in [Acts 4:25ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+4.25ff&t=NKJV), the reference in these verses is more specifically to events at the end of Man’s Day, progressing into the Messianic Era.

The Gentile nations are seen at this time in “*rage*” and imagining “*a vain thing*.” They are seen allied “*together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed*” ([Psalm 2:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.1-2&t=NKJV)). And in their alliance, they are seen saying, “*Let us break their chains…and throw off their fetters* [the restraining and authorative power of the Father and Son in [Psalm 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.2&t=NKJV)]” ([Psalm 2:3 NIV](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.3&t=NIV)).

This is a picture of Gentile world power in a day not far removed from the present day. The Gentile nations at that time will be as “*the sea*” in Jonah, *raging*; they will imagine that which will not be possible — *to continue holding the scepter under the present world ruler, Satan* (*cf.* [Daniel 10:13-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+10.13-20&t=NKJV); [Revelation 13:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13.2&t=NKJV)); and, under Satan’s leadership, they will *counsel together concerning how they can stay God’s hand and prevent the fulfillment of that foretold by the prophets centuries before this time.*

But all will be *in vain.* The One seated in the heavens will *laugh*, He will *scoff* at the puny efforts of the Gentile powers, and He will then *speak* to them in His anger and wrath ([Psalm 2:4-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.4-5&t=NKJV)).

This will be followed by that seen in the continuing text of Psalm chapter two:

*Yet I have set My King on My holy hill* [or, ‘mountain’ (Hebrew: *har)*] *of Zion.*

*I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.*

*Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations* [Gentiles] *for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.*

*You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel”* ([Psalm 2:6-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.6-9&t=NKJV))

The Gentile nations under Satan, in the end time, will be unable to do any more than Satan found that he could do when he sought to exalt his throne at a time in the distant past ([Isaiah 14:12-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.12-17&t=NKJV); *cf.* [Ezekiel 28:14-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+28.14-19&t=NKJV)). Satan’s prior efforts proved utterly futile, resulting in God’s wrath; and exactly the same thing will result from the actions of the Gentile nations at the end of Man’s Day.

Satan, seeking to exalt his throne, found himself disqualified to continue holding his appointed position, and his kingdom was reduced to a ruin ([Genesis 1:2a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2a&t=NKJV)). And, at a time yet future, with the Times of the Gentiles brought to an end, the Gentile nations will find themselves no longer qualified to hold their appointed positions. At that time, their power and kingdom will be reduced to a ruin ([Daniel 2:34-35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+2.34-35&t=NKJV), [44-45](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+2.44-45&t=NKJV); [Joel 3:9-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joel+3.9-21&t=NKJV); [Revelation 19:11-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.11-21&t=NKJV); *cf.* [Isaiah 2:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+2.1-5&t=NKJV)).

Now, note the context on either side of [Psalm 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.7&t=NKJV). Immediately before ([Psalm 2:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.6&t=NKJV)), God is seen placing His King on the holy mountain called Zion; and immediately after ([Psalm 2:8-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.8-9&t=NKJV)), God is seen referring to the King’s inheritance and possession. But the thought of the Father begetting the Son between these two Messianic statements is a reference to an event occurring over 2,000 years in the past, *allowing God’s Son to become His Firstborn, making these events possible.*

In one frame of reference, God is saying in [Psalm 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.7&t=NKJV), “*You are my Son; today* [*i.e.*, for this day, to allow this day to be brought to pass] *I have begotten you* [at a time in the past, making You more than My Son, making You *My Firstborn Son*].”

And this would be borne out by the structure of the Greek text in [Acts 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+13.33&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.5&t=NKJV); [5:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.5&t=NKJV). In each verse, the word “begotten” appears in the perfect tense, pointing to action completed in past time, with the results of that action continuing into the present and existing in a finished state.

In [Acts 13:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+13.33&t=NKJV), it is an action that precedes Christ’s resurrection, anticipating that day when Christ comes into possession of “*the sure mercies* [*lit.*, ‘the holy things’] *of David* [which are regal]” ([Acts 13:33-34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+13.33-34&t=NKJV)). In [Hebrews 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.5&t=NKJV), it is an action set at the beginning of seven Messianic quotations from the Old Testament. And in [Hebrews 5:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.5&t=NKJV), it is an action anticipating Christ one day exercising the Melchizedek priesthood — as the *Great King-Priest in Jerusalem* ([Hebrews 5:5-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.5-10&t=NKJV); *cf.* [Psalm 110:1-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+110.1-4&t=NKJV)).

This is that which Scripture reveals concerning *God’s Firstborn Son, Jesus*, the One who, in a coming day, will bring to pass that which continually eludes man today — *effecting peace in the troubled Middle East, a peace that can only follow that seen in* [*Psalm 2:1-5*](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+2.1-5&t=NKJV)*.*

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Chapter Two

**ISRAEL**

*Then you shall say to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD: “Israel is My son, My firstborn.*

*So I say to you let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.”* ([Exodus 4:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22-23&t=NKJV))

*But now thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine.”* ([Isaiah 43:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.1&t=NKJV))

*who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises.* ([Romans 9:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+9.4&t=NKJV))

The nation of Israel is God’s “son” because of creation. God performed a *special creative act* in the person of Jacob ([Isaiah 43:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.1&t=NKJV)); and, as a result, not only Jacob, but his descendants through his twelve sons — forming the nation of Israel — are viewed in Scripture as God’s “son.”

Then, the nation of Israel is *more* than just God’s “son.” This nation, because of a subsequent *adoption*, is God’s *firstborn son*. That is, God, at a time following His creative activity surrounding Jacob and a nation emanating from his loins, *adopted this nation*, placing the nation of Israel in the position of *His firstborn son* ([Exodus 4:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22-23&t=NKJV)).

Note [Isaiah 43:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.5-7&t=NKJV) relative to both creation and sonship:

*Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants* [the descendants of Jacob in [Isaiah 43:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.1&t=NKJV)] *from the east, and gather you from the west;*

*I will say to the north, “Give them up!” And to the south, “Do not keep them back!” Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth —*

*Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.”*

The reference is to a future re-gathering of the Israelites from a worldwide dispersion. The Israelites, in connection with *creation* mentioned in verses one and seven, are referred to as God’s “sons,” with “daughters” used contextually within this same thought — *i.e.*, within the thought of *creation* resulting in “sonship.”

(With respect to both males and females viewed in relation to sonship, the nation as a whole is almost always spoken of in the sense of *a son*, or in the sense of *sons* when referring to individuals comprising the nation [which would include both males and females].

For example, the expression used in verses such as [Exodus 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+1.1&t=NKJV), [7-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+1.7-9&t=NKJV) or [Acts 5:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+5.21&t=NKJV); [7:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+7.23&t=NKJV), [37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+7.37&t=NKJV) to describe all those comprising the nation [both males and females] is “*the sons of Israel*” [NASB (The Hebrew word translated “sons” in [Exodus 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+1.1&t=NKJV), [7-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+1.7-9&t=NKJV) and other similar Old Testament passages is *ben*, and the Greek word translated “*sons*” in [Acts 5:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+5.21&t=NKJV); [7:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+7.23&t=NKJV), [37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+7.37&t=NKJV) and other similar New Testament passages is *huios*. These respectively are the Hebrew and Greek words for “son,” and both should be so understood and translated)].

Thus, the use of “daughters” in connection with “sons” in a verse such as [Isaiah 43:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.6&t=NKJV) must be understood in the preceding respect. It must be understood in a similar respect to the way God’s wife [Israel] is also viewed — *as God’s son*. And the same would hold true relative to how Christ’s wife is to be viewed yet future. His wife [to be comprised of Christians] will also be viewed the same way Israel, the wife of Jehovah, is presently viewed — *as God’s son*.

The way in which the government in God’s kingdom was originally established, *only sons could rule*. Then, in relation to man and the earth, two things are seen in this respect: *only firstborn sons can rule; and there has to be a husband-wife relationship within this rule, with the wife, of necessity, also being a firstborn son*.)

[Isaiah 43:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+43.7&t=NKJV) clearly states that every descendant of Jacob is himself a *special creation*, as Jacob is seen as a *special creation* back in verse one). Whether this is understood as a passing on of the sonship status through birth, or as God stepping in at the time of birth and performing an individual, creative act, is immaterial. The fact remains that, *because of creation*, Jacob is seen as *a son of God*; and, *through procreation*, all of his descendants are seen in Scripture individually as *sons of God*, with the nation as a whole seen collectively as *God’s son* ([Exodus 4:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.22-23&t=NKJV)).

This entire thought of *creation and sonship, followed by adoption*, is what separates and sets apart both the Jewish people individually and the nation of Israel as a whole from all the Gentiles (individually, or nationally). Scripture makes a sharp distinction between *Israel* on the one hand and the *Gentile nations* on the other. The Jewish people comprise a separate and distinct nation that is not to be “*reckoned among the nations*” — the Gentile nations (*cf.* [Numbers 23:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+23.9&t=NKJV); [Deuteronomy 7:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+7.6&t=NKJV); [Amos 3:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Amos+3.1-2&t=NKJV)).

**The Government of the Earth**

In keeping with this same line of biblical teaching as it pertains to *regality,* Satan — positioned by God as the earth’s ruler in the beginning ([Ezekiel 28:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+28.14&t=NKJV)) — has ruled the earth, uninterrupted, since that time. And Satan’s rule has always been *under God*, though *a rebel ruler under God* following his fall.

Throughout Man’s Day, Satan has carried out this rule through *the nations*. And he accomplishes this rule through a complete gradation of powers and authorities within his kingdom — *i.e.*, through angelic rulers (fallen angels), to whom power and authority has been delegated.

Particular angels have been placed over particular nations. Then, under each of these angelic princes placed over nations, there are numerous other angels assigned to occupy lesser positions of power and authority.

This is the manner in which the government under Satan, in the heavens, is revealed to presently exist; and this established government, with respect to individual nations, angelic princes, and lesser angelic rulers assigned under these princes, apparently corresponds to a complete gradation of powers and authorities within the various nations on earth ([Daniel 10:13-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+10.13-20&t=NKJV)).

However, there is *one exception* to Satan’s rule in this respect. In Satan’s kingdom, there is no angelic prince and there are no lesser angelic rulers holding positions over Israel. *Israel is a separate and distinct nation, God’s firstborn son, and is not to be “reckoned among” the nations.*

The angelic prince that exercises this type of power and authority over Israel during Man’s Day is revealed to be *Michael*, an angel not associated with Satan’s fall and his kingdom. And *any angelic rulers under Michael* would also, of necessity, be outside of Satan’s domain and rule ([Daniel 10:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+10.21&t=NKJV)).

Note [Revelation 12:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.1ff&t=NKJV) in this respect. *Israel and the nations are in view on the one hand* ([Revelation 12:1-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.1-6&t=NKJV)), *and Michael and his angels, along with Satan and his angels, are in view on the othe*r ([Revelation 12:7-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+12.7-9&t=NKJV)), *with everything being regal in nature.*

(In the preceding gradation of powers and authorities, the angelic rulers — whether those consisting of Satan and his angels, or of Michael and his angels — exercise power and authority from *a heavenly sphere*. All hold their positions *under God* [though Satan and his angels are rebel rulers], and all rule *through* those whom God has placed in positions of power and authority on the earth.

“*The heavens do rule*” in this respect. This rule begins with *God* [in the heavens] and progresses through *angels* [also in the heavens] to man [on the earth]. “*There is no power but of God*,” and “*the powers that be* [whether in the heavens, or on the earth] *are ordained of God*” [*cf.* [Daniel 4:17-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Daniel+4.17-26&t=NKJV); [Romans 13:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+13.1-2&t=NKJV)].

During the present day and time, angels — both within and without Satan’s kingdom — continue to hold previously appointed regal positions [appointed by God] in the preceding respect. Note that even those represented by the twenty-four elders in [Revelation 4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+4&t=NKJV); [5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+5&t=NKJV) remain crowned and retain a regal connection with God’s throne *until* a particular, revealed time yet future. And that future time is associated with events immediately following the present dispensation, events occurring near the conclusion of Man’s Day, anticipating Christ and His co-heirs taking the kingdom [*ref.* the “Appendix,” [Bible One - Crowns before the Throne, Book of Ruth by Arlen Chitwood, Appendix](http://bibleone.net/Ruth_A.htm)].

The things reiterated in the preceding three paragraphs form fundamental, foundational biblical teachings surrounding the government of the earth — past, present, and future. And possessing a proper understanding of the government of the earth forms a fundamental, foundational basis for properly understanding numerous related things surrounding Israel and the nations seen occurring in the world today.)

Knowing the things surrounding how the present kingdom on this earth is established — which includes not only the nations but Israel as well — is *the* *key* to seeing and understanding the central and primary reason for Satan’s continuous hatred of the Jewish people down through the years. And this is something that has resulted in or has had a direct bearing upon all of *the anti-Semitism* over centuries of time, as well as *the present unrest in the Middle East.*

The emanating point for all anti-Semitism is *Satan*, and he carries out his numerous anti-Semitic endeavors through the Gentile nations, over which he and his angels rule; and the basic reason for all anti-Semitism is centered in *Israel’s identity* and *position* among the nations — *God’s firstborn son, the one existing apart from Satan’s present governmental rule, the one possessing the right to hold the scepter, and the one who one day will hold the scepter.*

Note [Romans 9:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+9.4&t=NKJV) in this respect:

*who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises.*

God’s “adoption” of Israel is mentioned first, which necessitated a prior *sonship* standing, for only sons are in a position to be placed as *firstborn sons* through adoption. Then “*the glory*” is mentioned, along with “*the covenants*,” “*the giving of the law,*” “*the service of God,*” and “*the promises*.” All of these together are regal in nature and have to do with *God’s firstborn son, a land, and a theocracy.*

In relation to any of the six things mentioned in [Romans 9:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+9.4&t=NKJV), all of the Gentile nations find themselves in exactly the same *alienated position*. No Gentile nation can qualify to lay claim to anything in this list, for there is no special creation among any of the Gentile nations, allowing *sonship* and a subsequent *adoption* to exist. The only way that any Gentile nation can have any type of association with the things listed in this verse is seen in [Genesis 9:25-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.25-27&t=NKJV). And this section of Scripture, early in Genesis, *shows the place that God has decreed that the Gentiles occupy in relation to Israel throughout Man’s Day*, once this nation, through Jacob and his progeny, had been called into existence.

In Genesis chapter nine, of the three sons of Noah, *Shem* was the only one revealed to have God (In [Genesis 9:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.26&t=NKJV)). And if either of the other two sons (Ham or Japheth), alienated from God in this respect, were to receive spiritual blessings, they would have to “*dwell in the tents of Shem*” ([Genesis 9:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.27&t=NKJV)). That is to say, they would have to come to the one in possession of God and spiritual blessings. They would have to come to and ally themselves with Shem.

And that is exactly the position in which Israel and the *Gentile nations* have found themselves throughout millennia of time, find themselves today, and will always find themselves. Of all the nations on earth, *Israel, the nation descending from Shem through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is the only nation having God; and the God whom Israel possesses has decreed that all spiritual blessings are to flow through the nation that He has singled out as His firstborn son.*

Thus, for *the Gentiles* to be blessed — today, or at any time yet future — they would/will have to do the same thing seen among Noah’s sons in [Genesis 9:25-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+9.25-27&t=NKJV). They would/will have to come to the one in possession of God and in possession of spiritual blessings. They would/will have to come to and ally themselves with *Israel*.

(Note that “*the God…of the Gentiles*” in [Romans 3:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+3.29&t=NKJV) is a reference to *saved Gentiles, not to Gentile nations* [*cf.* [Romans 1:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+1.16&t=NKJV); [2:5-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+2.5-16&t=NKJV); [Galatians 1:11-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+1.11-16&t=NKJV); [2:2-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+2.2-15&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+1.11&t=NKJV)]. The nations have gods, but… [*cf.* [Psalm 96:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+96.5&t=NKJV)].)

Exactly the opposite though is happening today. Israel, viewing matters from the vantage point of the nation’s present position of disobedience and unbelief, fails to understand her God-ordained position among the nations; the Gentile nations, alienated from God and His revelation to man (something that has come through Israel), have no concept at all of Israel’s present position; and by and large, the vast majority of Christians in the world today, because of their ignorance of biblical teachings surrounding Israel and the nations, find themselves in a position, as it pertains to the true knowledge of God and world affairs, that is little different than that seen among Israel and the nations.

God though will shortly bring an end to and rectify the entire matter. The present dispensation has almost run its course. And when the present dispensation ends, God will resume and complete seven unfulfilled years in His dealings with Israel during Man’s Day, bringing an end to Man’s Day and the Times of the Gentiles.

That is to say, God will shortly once again step into the affairs of the human race, remove the Church, and then complete seven unfulfilled years of the prior dispensation. And, having brought matters to a completion in this respect, God will have finished His 6,000-year period of work comprising Man’s Day, completely straightening out at that time all the things that man has often only made worse through his vain efforts to improve or to rectify matters.

In this respect, note two things: (1) the present existing situation in the Middle East, apart from Messiah; and (2) that which is about to exist, when Messiah is once again present.

**Israel and the Nations Today**

In relation to that which is clearly taught in Scripture, a situation exists in the Middle East today that should, on the one hand, not exist, but, on the other hand, *has to exist.* And that situation concerns a remnant of Jews leaving their place among the Gentile nations, to which the Jewish people in time past had been driven, and returning to the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

In this respect, according to the type in [Numbers 35:15-34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.15-34&t=NKJV) and that which has occurred in the antitype, the slayer has returned to “*the land of his possession*” before it was time for him to return. He has returned before “*the death of the high priest*,” something expressively forbidden by Scripture.

“Israel” is *the slayer.* The nation is *guilty of blood*, the blood of their Messiah ([Acts 2:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.23&t=NKJV), [36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.36&t=NKJV); [3:14-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+3.14-15&t=NKJV); [7:52](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+7.52&t=NKJV)), and is presently *unclean* through contact with the dead body of their Messiah. And Scripture is clear that *cleansing cannot occur until* the third or seventh day, with Israel *presently* living during the second or sixth day ([Numbers 19:11-22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+19.11-22&t=NKJV)).

The slayer *cannot return until* the antitype of that seen in “*the death of the high priest*.” *Only then can the slayer be allowed to return to the land, with atonement subsequently provided* (the word translated “satisfaction” [KJV], “ransom” [NASB] in [Numbers 35:31-32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.31-32&t=NKJV) is a cognate form of the Hebrew word for *atonement*).

“Christ” is the *High Priest* in view in the antitype. And the termination of His present ministry in the sanctuary is that seen through the termination of the high priest’s ministry (occurring through death in the type). Christ’s present ministry is patterned after the order of Aaron, and this ministry will one day end, which will be the antitype of that seen through the end of the high priest’s ministry in [Numbers 35:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.25&t=NKJV), [28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.28&t=NKJV), [32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+35.32&t=NKJV).

*Only then* can the slayer be allowed to return to the nation’s land; *only then* can Christ come forth as the Great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek; and *only then* can cleansing be provided for the slayer (*ref.* [Bible One - The Death of the High Priest, Book of Esther by Arlen Chitwood, Appendix 1](http://bibleone.net/Esther_A1.htm)).

God uprooted Israel from her land and drove His people out among the nations because of unbelief and disobedience. And the reason for the Jewish people being driven out in this manner was to *effect repentance, resulting in belief and obedience*. In short, the Jewish people were to remain scattered among the Gentiles and suffer at the hands of the Gentiles, under Satan, until such a time as *repentance* was effected.

Thus, in the light of the current alignment of nations in the Middle East, one central question emerges: What is the slayer doing back in the nation’s land — removed from numerous Gentile lands where the Jewish people were scattered — both before *repentance* and before *Christ completes His high priestly ministry in the sanctuary?*” That, of course, can have only one answer.

God, in His sovereign control of all things *has allowed the slayer to return, for a revealed purpose*. God has allowed the slayer to return in order to effect the fulfillment of end-time biblical prophecy, for, according to prophecy, a nation, must exist in the Middle East during the latter days.

But God drove the Jewish people out among the Gentile nations to effect repentance, and *He has not changed His mind concerning where He has decreed that His people will be residing when repentance occurs*. This alone should tell a person that the present remnant in the land will have to be uprooted and driven back out among the nations — something that can never occur once God restores the Jewish people in accord with His numerous promises (*cf*. [Deuteronomy 30:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+30.1-5&t=NKJV); [Ezekiel 36:24-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+36.24-28&t=NKJV); [37:11-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+37.11-28&t=NKJV); [39:25-29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ezekiel+39.25-29&t=NKJV); [Joel 3:1-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joel+3.1-21&t=NKJV)).

An *unrepentant* and *unbelieving* remnant is back in the land today to set the stage for that which is about to occur. God is about to remove the Church and once again turn back to His people, Israel, dealing with the Jewish people during Daniel’s unfulfilled Seventieth Week, bringing them *to the end of themselves and to the place of repentance*.

*Only then can God deal with them in relation to the Old Testament prophecies surrounding the nation’s restoration.*

(Note that to associate the present return of a remnant — over 5,000,000 strong, forming the present nation of Israel — with God’s promise through the prophets that He would one day restore His people to their land is *an oxymoron*. That is to say, it is a contradictory statement. And God simply does not do things in a contradictory manner. Things of this nature are left for man.

God cannot presently restore His people to their land in accord with that which the prophets have foretold, for He has made matters very clear in His Word concerning both *the time* of Israel’s return and *the existing conditions* surrounding the nation’s return. And neither presently exists — *the time* [the termination of Christ’s present ministry in the sanctuary has not occurred], or *the conditions* [according to the prophets, Israel will repent and return in belief, not in their present unrepentant and unbelieving state].

Thus, the present existence of the nation of Israel in the Middle East can have *nothing* to do with God’s promise through the prophets to one day remove the Jewish people from the nations into which He has driven them and place them back in their land. And that should be simple enough for anyone to understand, for, if the present restoration is a fulfillment of God’s promise of restoration, God would be acting contrary to that which He has revealed in His Word — *an impossibility*.)

**Israel and the Nations yet Future**

Israel in the Middle East today is as Jonah on board the ship in the book of Jonah. Jonah was *out of place* on the ship, *fleeing* from the Lord in a disobedient and unrepentant state, and *asleep* down in the hold of the ship ([Jonah 1:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jonah+1.1-3&t=NKJV), [5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jonah+1.5&t=NKJV)). And Israel is *out of place* in the land today, *fleeing* from the Lord in their disobedient and unrepentant state, and *asleep* in relation to the nation’s calling.

As Jonah sought to flee from the Lord’s presence, a great storm arose on the sea, *of a magnitude that put all those on the ship in danger, producing conditions completely beyond their control* ([Jonah 1:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jonah+1.4&t=NKJV)). And, because of Israel’s presence in the land, in the antitype, this is exactly where matters are headed in the Middle East — the Gentile nations ultimately finding themselves in *a genocidal turmoil, of a nature completely beyond their control.*

The “*sea*” carries a dual metaphorical meaning in Scripture — *the Gentiles, and the place of death* (*cf.* [1 Corinthians 10:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+10.1-2&t=NKJV); [Colossians 2:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.12&t=NKJV); [Revelation 13:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+13.1&t=NKJV)).

In the type, *Jonah*, at the height of the storm, was cast from the ship into the sea, and *repentance* *ultimately resulted*; and, in the antitype, Israel, at the height of the turmoil about to occur, will be removed from the nation’s land and be driven out among the Gentile nations, *where repentance will ultimately occur.*

It was *after two days, on the third day, in the sea,* that Jonah *repented*; and it will be after *two days, on the third day, among the nations*, that Israel will *repent.*

Scripture clearly reveals numerous details about that coming day when *the entire nation of Israel will find herself among the nations* — both those presently in the land and those still scattered among the nations (*cf.* [Joel 3:1-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Joel+3.1-8&t=NKJV); [Matthew 24:15-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+24.15-31&t=NKJV); [Luke 21:20-24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+21.20-24&t=NKJV); [Revelation 11:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+11.2&t=NKJV)).

Israel, in Gentile lands in that day, will be brought into such dire straits through Gentile persecution that the nation will have no recourse other than to turn to and call upon the God of their fathers. And God, according to His promise, *will then hear and bring to pass their long-awaited deliverance* (*cf.* [Exodus 2:23-24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+2.23-24&t=NKJV); [3:7-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+3.7-10&t=NKJV); [4:20-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+4.20-23&t=NKJV); [2 Chronicles 7:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Chronicles+7.14&t=NKJV)).

Why have the nations, under Satan, persecuted Israel throughout history? And why will the nations, under Satan, persecute Israel, yet future, during the Tribulation, to the extent seen in Scripture? The answer is clear. It is *because of Israel’s identity and destiny — God’s firstborn son, destined to take the scepter.*

Why has God allowed this persecution to occur in the past, and why will God allow the nations to persecute Israel to this extent yet future? The answer is exactly the same as to why the nations have persecuted and will continue to persecute Israel. It is *because of Israel’s identity and destiny — God’s firstborn son, destined to take the scepter.*

God will use Satan’s hatred of and efforts to destroy Israel through the Gentile nations to bring His firstborn son to *the place of repentance*. Only then can God’s son realize *the rights of the firstborn.*

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Chapter Three

**THE CHURCH**

*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.*

*For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. . . .*

*For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*

*Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.* ([Romans 8:18-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.18-19&t=NKJV), [22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.22-23&t=NKJV))

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.* ([2 Corinthians 5:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.17&t=NKJV))

Christians, because of *creation*, are seen in Scripture as “sons” of God, with *the adoption* yet future. And following the adoption of Christians, God will have *a third firstborn son* — a corporate or national son, as Israel.

God presently has two firstborn Sons — *Christ and Israel.* And He is about to bring into existence a third firstborn son — *the Church*. Only then can God’s purpose for man’s creation, six millennia prior to that time, be realized.

“Sonship” portends *rulership*; only “sons” can occupy *regal positions* in God’s *kingdom*. That’s the way it has always existed in the angelic realm, prior to, at the time of, and following man’s creation. And, once man had been brought into existence, for *the regal purpose* revealed at the time of his creation ([Genesis 1:26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV)), that’s the way it had to exist in the human realm as well.

In the human realm though, something additional was subsequently revealed. Not only *must* the one holding the scepter be *a son*, but he must, more particularly, be *a firstborn son*. Within the human realm, *only firstborn sons can rule in God’s kingdom.*

That’s why Scripture places such a heavy emphasis upon Christ not only occupying the position of *God’s Son* but that of *God’s Firstborn* as well*.*

Note how the author of Hebrews brings both to the forefront in the first of seven Messianic quotations in chapter one of the book:

*You are My Son, today I have begotten You.* ([Hebrews 1:5a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.5a&t=NKJV); *cf.* [Psalms 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalms+2.7&t=NKJV))

Then, following a Messianic quotation dealing with the Father-Son relationship ([Hebrews 1:5b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.5b&t=NKJV)), reference is again made to Christ as *God’s Firstborn* preceding the remaining five Messianic quotations:

*But when He again brings* [*lit.,* “And when He shall again bring”] *the Firstborn into the world . .* . ([Hebrews 1:6a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.6a&t=NKJV); *cf*. [2 Samuel 7:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Samuel+7.14&t=NKJV)).

And even in a passage such as [John 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.16&t=NKJV), attention is called to God’s “*only begotten Son,*” a direct reference to not only *Christ’s Sonship* but to *His Firstborn status*.

(The statements to this effect in both the opening verses of Hebrews and John chapter three should be expected.

The opening verses of Hebrews form the manner in which The Spirit of God arranged seven Messianic quotations, introducing *the subject matter in the book*. The Holy Spirit, when He moved the author of this book to pen the recorded words, arranged these seven Messianic quotations from the Old Testament in such a manner that *Christ’s Sonship* and *His Firstborn status as God’s Son* would be brought to the forefront at the beginning, *forming the foundational basis for all that follows.*

Then, [John 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.16&t=NKJV) forms a part of Christ’s discourse to Nicodemus, where the subject matter begins through referencing *the coming kingdom*, responding to Nicodemus’ question about *the signs being manifested* ([John 3:2-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.2-5&t=NKJV)). “Signs” in Scripture always have to do with two things: *Israel*, and *the kingdom*. And it would be in complete keeping with the subject at hand to continue the thought portended by Nicodemus’ question surrounding “signs” into the latter part of the discourse, which is exactly what is seen.)

Within the family relationship, Christians are referred to as both *children* and *sons*. And the two are closely related but are not really the same.

All Christians are referred to as “children” (Greek: *teknon*), but Scripture does not use “sons” (Greek: *huios*) in the same all-encompassing manner. Though all Christians are “sons” because of *creation*, the New Testament use of the Greek word *huios*, referring to Christians through this means, appears only within contexts which are both *regal* and *where Christians are seen actively progressing toward the goal set before them*. In this respect, the word is used relative to Christians in complete keeping with that which “sonship” portends — *with rulership*.

**Children, Sons, Adoption**

In the New Testament epistles (both the Pauline and the general epistles), Christians are referred to as “children [*teknon*] of God” and “sons [*huios*] of God” about an equal number of times. They are referred to as “*children of God*” in [Romans 8:16-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.16-17&t=NKJV), [21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.21&t=NKJV); [Philippians 2:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+2.15&t=NKJV); [1 John 3:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+3.1-2&t=NKJV), [10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+3.10&t=NKJV); [5:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+5.2&t=NKJV). And they are referred to as “*sons of God*” in [Romans 8:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26&t=NKJV); [4:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.6-7&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV) (the word “sons” alone, rather than “sons of God,” is used in the latter reference; but a Father-son relationship is in view throughout, showing God dealing with Christians as *His sons*).

In all three sections of Scripture where Christians are presently referred to as “sons,” *adoption* is also in view. In both Romans and Galatians, in the Greek text, the word *huiothesia* (the word for “*adoption* [son-placing]”) appears in the context of the verses where Christians are referred to as “sons” ([Romans 8:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.15&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.23&t=NKJV); [Galatians 4:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.5&t=NKJV)).

And in Hebrews, adoption is seen in the context as well, though from a different perspective. It is seen following the verses referring to Christians as “*sons*” (in [Hebrews 12:16-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.16-17&t=NKJV) — verses forming the heart of the fifth and final major warning in the book, dealing with Esau [the firstborn] forfeiting his birthright).

In the antitype of the account pertaining to Esau forfeiting his birthright, the thought of *adoption* would have to be brought into the picture, for Christians must not only be sons but they must be *firstborn sons* to realize *the rights of the firstborn* that Esau in the type forfeited. And the only way Christians can be brought into this position is through *adoption.*

(Aside from [Romans 8:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.15&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.23&t=NKJV); [Galatians 4:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.5&t=NKJV), the only other place in the New Testament where the Greek word *huiothesia* is used relative to Christians is in [Ephesians 1:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.5&t=NKJV). And the use of this word early in the book of Ephesians is in complete keeping with how the subject matter of the book is introduced in this first chapter — a future “*redemption*” and “*inheritance*,” in connection with the “*mystery*” revealed to Paul [[Ephesians 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.7&t=NKJV), [9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.9&t=NKJV), [11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.11&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.14&t=NKJV), cf. [Ephesians 3:1-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.1-6&t=NKJV); [4:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.30&t=NKJV)], to be realized “*in the dispensation of the fullness of times*” [[Ephesians 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.10&t=NKJV)]. These interrelated things are presently being made known, “*by* [‘through’] *the Church*,” to “*the principalities and powers in heavenly places*” [Satan and his angels], which accounts for the warning and instructions concerning the spiritual warfare at the close of the book [[Ephesians 3:9-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.9-11&t=NKJV); [6:10ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+6.10ff&t=NKJV)].

As in any New Testament epistle, the central subject seen in *Ephesians* is *not* salvation by grace, though that subject is dealt with in the book. Rather, the central subject has to do with the things seen in the opening chapter, which introduce the things about to be developed in the book — *things pertaining to Christians in relation to the coming kingdom of Christ*. And if this epistle, or any New Testament epistle, is not studied after the manner in which the epistle is introduced, the central message of the epistle will be lost to the reader.)

Thus, Christians are referred to as “sons” *only in sections of Scripture where adoption is in view*. Both sonship and adoption place matters within *a regal setting*; and Christians, in all three passages where adoption is dealt with, are seen actively moving toward the goal set before them — *the adoption of sons and being brought into a realization of the rights of the firstborn.*

On the other hand, Scripture refers to Christians as “children” within a *regal* setting as well, *but not with respect to adoption.* This is the main difference concerning how the two words are used in the New Testament epistles. It is *sons* who are adopted, not children.

(In [Romans 8:16-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.16-17&t=NKJV), [21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.21&t=NKJV), the Greek word for “children” [*teknon*] is used in a context with the Greek word for “sons” [*huios*]. And an inheritance, an adoption, and a manifestation of sons are seen in the passage [with *huios* alone used relative to the latter two ([Romans 8:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14&t=NKJV))]. In [Philippians 2:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+2.15&t=NKJV), *teknon* appears in connection with present Christian activity, with a view to the coming day of Christ [[Romans 8:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.16&t=NKJV)]. And in [1 John 3:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+3.1-2&t=NKJV), [10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+3.10&t=NKJV); [5:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+5.2&t=NKJV) the context shows the same thing as seen in [Philippians 2:15-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+2.15-16&t=NKJV).

*Teknon* is used in these verses to depict present Christian activity, with a view to *the hope* set before Christians, *Christ’s future appearance*, and being shown as an *overcomer* in that coming day.)

Thus, there is the central distinction between the way in which “children” and “sons” are used in the New Testament. Both are used in *regal settings*, with the latter used more specifically in connection with *the rights of the firstborn*. Both can be used of Christians today; but, *only* “sons” is used when *adoption* is in view.

**Romans, Galatians, Hebrews**

In the New Testament passages where Christians are presently called “sons” ([Romans 8:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26&t=NKJV); [4:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.6&t=NKJV), [7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.7&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV)), each passage presents a different facet of biblical truth surrounding *sonship*. In Romans, the central issue is *flesh* and *spirit*, with *adoption* in view. In Galatians, the central issue is “*the faith*” *in relation to Law, with adoption in view*; and in Hebrews the central issue is *God’s training for sons*, with *adoption* in view.

1) Romans chapter Eight

*For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

*For as many as are led* [*lit.*, “are being led”] *by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

*For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”* ([Romans 8:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.13-15&t=NKJV))

Chapters one through seven in the book of Romans build into what could be considered an apex in chapter eight, which begins with “*There is therefore .* . . .” These opening words are based on that which has proceeded, and they introduce that which is about to follow. And that which follows brings to the forefront teachings surrounding *flesh* and *spirit,* dealt with different ways in the chapters that proceeded.

All Christians possess two natures, “*the old man* [the man of flesh],” and “*the new man* [the man of spirit]” ([Colossians 3:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.9-10&t=NKJV)). And the far-reaching ramifications of Christians (all Christians, none excluded) following one nature or the other is graphically stated in [Romans 8:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.13&t=NKJV).

Christians following the fleshly nature, living after the flesh, *will die*; but, Christians following the leadership of the Spirit, putting to death “*the deeds of the body*,” that associated with the flesh, *will live*.

Life in this respect is then explained ([Romans 8:14ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14ff&t=NKJV)), with *death* simply being the absence of that seen in the explanation.

Those following the leadership of the Spirit are presently looked upon as *sons* ([Romans 8:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14&t=NKJV)), and this is with *a view to a future adoption and manifestation of sons, with the sons corporately (as Israel) forming a firstborn son* ([Romans 8:15-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.15-23&t=NKJV)).

But those following after and minding the works of the flesh (*cf.* [Romans 8:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.5-8&t=NKJV)) will have no part in these things. They are not presently looked upon and being dealt with as sons, and they will have no part in the things seen in this chapter awaiting sons.

The preceding is the manner in which both *life* and *death* are used in this chapter. And the salvation or loss of the soul/life is in view, which is simply another way seen in Scripture to state the matter at hand (*cf.* [Matthew 16:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.24-27&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 10:35-39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.35-39&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 1:3-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.3-9&t=NKJV)). Christians following after the things pertaining to their fleshly nature will lose their souls/lives; but Christians following the leadership of the Spirit, putting to death “*the deeds of the body*,” will realize the salvation of their souls/lives.

*For all Christians, it is either one or the other. No middle ground exists* (*cf.* [Matthew 12:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+12.30&t=NKJV)).

The salvation or loss of the soul has to do with *occupying or not occupying a position with Christ in the coming kingdom, living or not living with Him in this respect*. And, with “sonship” implying *rulership*, Romans chapter eight places the emphasis on a present *recognition of sons*, for a reason seen in the context: *a future adoption of sons, followed by a manifestation of these sons.*

Both *life* and *death* are dealt with in the chapter, with both relating to the saved and covering the same time period, which can only be millennial, not eternal. If for no other reason (though there are other reasons), this time period would be evident from both [1 Corinthians 15:25-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.25-26&t=NKJV) and [Revelation 21:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+21.4&t=NKJV), which specifically state that *death* will not exist during the ages beyond the Messianic Era.

Thus, that portended by *death* in [Romans 8:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.13&t=NKJV) cannot extend into these subsequent ages; and, viewing the other side of the matter, neither can that portended by *life* in this same verse.

(The Messianic Era will be the last 1,000 years of a septenary arrangement of 1,000-year periods, which are foreshadowed in the opening verses of Genesis through the use of six and seven days. Scripture deals at length with events during these 7,000 years but sparingly with events outside this septenary period.

During the Messianic Era, man’s rule will be confined to this earth. The manifestation of sons during this time will have to do with bringing one province in God’s kingdom back into the condition and use for which it was originally intended, with governmental power emanating from the Son’s throne in the heavenly sphere of the kingdom [*cf.* [Revelation 2:26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.26-27&t=NKJV); [3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3.21&t=NKJV)]. The Son, with His co-heirs, will take 1,000 years to bring order out of disorder. Then, once order has been restored, the kingdom will be delivered back to the Father, that the Father might be “*all in all* [‘all things in all of these things’ ([1 Corinthians 15:24-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.24-28&t=NKJV))].”

During the eternal ages beyond the Messianic Era, man’s rule will emanate from “*the throne of God and of the Lamb*,” a throne from which universal rule will issue forth. And this throne will both rest upon a new earth and be the central governmental point in the universe. Thus, the manifestation of sons at that time will no longer have to do with governmental affairs of the present earth but with an apparent restructuring of the government of the universe itself, possibly beginning with the new earth.)

As previously seen, in [Romans 8:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14&t=NKJV), God views *only* those Christians as “sons” who are being led by the Spirit and, as a result, are putting to death the deeds of the body. And the reason why God limits viewing Christians as His sons in this manner need not be stated in so many words. God’s apparent reasoning can be easily ascertained from *the context* and that which “sonship” implies — *rulership*.

It is only those Christians presently allowing the Spirit to control their lives who will, in that coming day, *live, be adopted* ([Romans 8:14-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14-23&t=NKJV)), and *be among those manifested as sons* (forming God’s firstborn son). And it is with this end in view that God looks upon certain Christians as “sons” during the present time ([Romans 8:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.19&t=NKJV); *cf.* [Hebrews 12:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.23&t=NKJV)).

Those Christians failing to govern their lives in this manner *will die*, and *there will be no adoption or manifestation as sons for them.* And with this end in view, there would be no reason for God to view these Christians as “sons” during the present time, but only as “children.”

2) Galatians chapters Three and Four

*For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. . . .*

*But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,*

*to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

*And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”*

*Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.* ([Galatians 3:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26&t=NKJV); [4:4-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.4-7&t=NKJV))

Christians are referred to as “sons” in three different verses in the book of [Galatians 3:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26&t=NKJV); [4:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.6-7&t=NKJV). And, as in the book of Romans, references of this nature are used in a context having to do with *adoption* ([Galatians 4:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.5&t=NKJV)). It is simply the same picture once again, though from a different perspective.

A different facet of sonship and adoption is dealt with — how the Law, given through Moses, can have *absolutely nothing* to do with the matter at hand.

The inheritance was given to Abraham, by promise, four hundred and thirty years before the Law was given through Moses; and *the giving of the Law didn’t, it couldn’t, bring about any type change to that previously given to Abraham* ([Galatians 3:16-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.16-18&t=NKJV)).

Then, as in Romans, “faith” is brought to the forefront in that which is stated in Galatians. The Law cannot be separated from faith, for the Law is God’s Word, and “faith” is simply *believing that which God has stated about a matter.* In this respect, an Israelite keeping the Law would be acting *by faith* (*cf.* [Deuteronomy 5:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+5.33&t=NKJV); [28:1-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Deuteronomy+28.1-14&t=NKJV); [Matthew 19:16-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+19.16-21&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 11:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+11.6&t=NKJV)).

“Faith” in connection with *the Law* though is not how “faith” is dealt with in this section of Galatians, preceding and leading into the reference to Christians as “sons” ([Galatians 3:19-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.19-25&t=NKJV)). Rather, “the faith” is introduced (which is a means used by the New Testament writers to reference the Word of the Kingdom), and “the faith” (used in [Galatians 3:23-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.23-25&t=NKJV) [“faith” in both verses is articular in the Greek text]) is sharply contrasted with Law. *One has nothing to do with the other.*

(Regarding “the faith,” refer to the author’s book, [Bible One - From Acts to the Epistles by Arlen Chitwood, Ch. 10](http://bibleone.net/A2E_10.htm) and [Ch. 11](http://bibleone.net/A2E_11.htm).)

The picture presented in Galatians is that of individual “*sons*,” forming part of God’s national firstborn son (Israel), under Law, who become “*new creations*” *in Christ.* And, through this means, they relinquish their national identity with Israel — no longer being associated with the things pertaining to Israel (in this case, *the Law*, or *the adoption relative to a present firstborn status*) — and become members of a new nation where there is no distinction between Jew and Gentile ([Galatians 3:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.28&t=NKJV)).

And, once they have become followers of “the faith,” these individuals are looked upon as “sons” (because they are *“new creations” in Christ)* and, along with all other Christians of like mind in this new nation (whether formerly Jew or Gentile), *await the adoption*.

Then, beyond the adoption will be the realization of an inheritance, t*hrough Christ, who is Abraham’s Seed*, seen in [Galatians 3:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.29&t=NKJV) (*cf.* [Galatians 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.16&t=NKJV)):

*And if you are Christ’s* [*lit.*, “And if you are of Christ,” *i.e.*, among those belonging to Christ], *then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise*. ([Galatians 3:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.29&t=NKJV))

The promise given to Abraham was to be realized through both *an earthly* and *a heavenly seed*, as seen in [Genesis 22:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+22.17-18&t=NKJV). “Israel,” the seed of Abraham through the nation’s lineage from Isaac and Jacob, will, following Israel’s repentance, conversion, and restoration, realize *the earthly portion of the inheritance*; and “the Church,” the seed of Abraham through being “*in Christ,*” will, following the adoption, realize the *heavenly portion of the inheritance.*

3) Hebrews chapter Twelve

*And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: “My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;*

*For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.”*

*If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?*

*But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. . . .*

*lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.*

*For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.*  ([Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV), [16-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.16-17&t=NKJV))

The passage in [Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV) deals with God’s training for those Christians whom He views today as “sons.” The words “chastens” ([Hebrews 12:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5&t=NKJV), [7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.7-8&t=NKJV)) or “*chastening*” ([Hebrews 12:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.6-7&t=NKJV)) are translations of the Greek words *paideia* or *paideuo*, which are noun and verb forms of the same word. These words refer to “instruction” or “training,” and the translation should reflect this fact.

*Paideia* and *paideuo* are cognate forms of the word *paidion*, which refers to “a very young child” (used this way in [Matthew 18:2-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+18.2-5&t=NKJV); [19:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+19.13-14&t=NKJV)). In this respect, the words *paideia* and *paideuo* in [Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV) refer to *God’s child-training for those whom He presently views as His “sons.”* And this child-training would, of necessity, take the exact form of that seen in [Matthew 18:2-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+18.2-5&t=NKJV):

*Unless you are converted and become as little children* [*paidion*], *you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.* ([Matthew 18:3b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+18.3b&t=NKJV)).

Then note [Hebrews 12:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.8&t=NKJV). All whom God views as “sons” partake of this training, and any Christian who doesn’t is referred to by the Greek word *nothos* (translated “bastard,” KJV). The thought, through the use of *nothos*, has to do with “illegitimate sons,” *i.e*., *Christians not having a part in God’s training of His “sons” — through rejection, unfaithfulness, etc. — and thus cannot be His sons.*

Then *the adoption* awaiting Christians is seen in a type-antitype structure in verses sixteen and seventeen, forming the last of the five major warnings in this book.

God will possess a third firstborn son *only after* God’s present child-training of His sons is brought to completion, followed by the adoption. *Only then* can the Messianic Era be ushered in, *bringing to pass the goal seen throughout all prophetic Scripture.*

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Appendix

**ADOPTION, REDEMPTION OF THE BODY**

“The adoption” is spoken of in [Romans 8:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.23&t=NKJV) as being synonymous with “the redemption of our body”:

“. . . *waiting out adoption*, [*namely*] *the ransoming of our body*” (Lenski)

“. . . *patiently awaiting son-placing, the redemption of our body*” (Wuest)

And since “the adoption” and “the redemption of our body” are synonymous in this respect, the matter cannot possibly be a reference to that which will occur at the time of the resurrection and rapture at the end of the present dispensation, as commonly taught. If the redemption of the body were to occur at this time, all Christians would be adopted into a firstborn status. And this would be *completely contrary* to any Scriptural teaching surrounding adoption, for “sons” *alone* [those whom God presently recognizes in this capacity, as seen in [Romans 8:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26&t=NKJV); [4:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.6-7&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 12:5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.5-8&t=NKJV)], not children, find themselves in a *position to be adopted* [*ref.* pp. 25-33 of this book, [God’s Firstborn Sons by Arlen Chitwood pdf](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/GFS.pdf)].

If the redemption of the body/adoption does not occur at the time of the resurrection and rapture, then when does it occur? And exactly what is involved in this future redemption/adoption?

[Romans 8:14-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.14-23&t=NKJV) connects this future *redemption/adoption* with being “glorified together” with Christ and with “the manifestation of the sons of God.”

Then, in this same respect, note how these things have been put together in [Philippians 3:20-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.20-21&t=NKJV):

*For our citizenship* [Greek: *politeum*a, “commonwealth,” “political sphere of activity”] *is in heaven* [“heavens”]; *from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,*

*who will transform our lowly body* [*lit.*, “our body of humiliation”], *that it may be conformed to His glorious body* [*lit.*, “His body of glory”], *according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.* ([Philippians 3:20-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.20-21&t=NKJV))

The thought from the preceding two verses has to do with the Christians’ future regal position in the heavens, following Christ’s return; and it has to do with occupying this position in a “body of glory,” like unto the body presently possessed by Christ, not in the “body of humiliation” presently possessed by Christians.

There was a time when this same *humiliation* presently seen in connection with the Christians’ body was also seen in connection with Christ’s body. Note the quotation from [Isaiah 53:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+53.7-8&t=NKJV) in [Acts 8:32-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+8.32-33&t=NKJV):

*. . . He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He opened not His mouth.*

*In His humiliation His justice was taken away, and who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth.* ([Acts 8:32-33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+8.32-33&t=NKJV))

(The Greek word translated “*humiliation*” in [Acts 8:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+8.33&t=NKJV) [*tapeinosis*] is the same word translated “*lowly*” in [Philippians 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.21&t=NKJV) [also in the Septuagint translation of [Isaiah 53:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+53.8&t=NKJV)]. “Humiliation,” as in [Acts 8:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+8.33&t=NKJV), is *the correct* translation of the word.)

The preceding reference from Acts has to do with the events surrounding Calvary. Christ, following His being stripped of His garments and arrayed as a mock King, was again stripped of His garments and impaled on a cross. Reference is made in all four gospels to His garments being removed prior to the crucifixion ([Matthew 27:35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+27.35&t=NKJV); [Mark 15:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+15.24&t=NKJV); [Luke 23:34](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+23.34&t=NKJV); [John 19:23-24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+19.23-24&t=NKJV)). Christ was lifted up in this manner, after His garments had been removed (except for perhaps an inner tunic), *exposing His uncovered flesh for all to see* ([Psalm 22:16-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+22.16-18&t=NKJV)).

The time of *the humiliation* spoken of in the text was the time when two things occurred: (1) *His judgment* was “taken away,” and (2) *His life* was “taken from the earth [*i.e.*, He was cut off from the land of the living].” The former could only have to do with *regal activity* and the latter with *His death*.

Christ had come over three decades prior to the events surrounding Calvary as “*King of the Jews*,” “i*n the likeness of* [or, ‘in the resemblance of’] *sinful flesh*” ([Matthew 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+2.2&t=NKJV); [Romans 8:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.3&t=NKJV)). And upon the cross, this body of flesh was *exposed for all to behold*. It was a body that, in all outward appearance, was *like* that which man presently possesses. It was a body that bore a *likeness* to that of all other men in their bodies of sinful flesh and, consequently, a body connected with *humiliation.*

To properly understand that which was involved in relation to Christ’s body at the time of His first coming and in relation to man’s body both prior to and following that time, one must go back to the fall and see exactly what occurred in relation to Adam’s body at the time he partook of the forbidden fruit.

When man sinned in the garden in Eden, the complete being of man — spirit, soul, and body — became in a fallen state. God had commanded Adam concerning the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, “*you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die*” ([Genesis 2:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2.17&t=NKJV)).

After Satan had deceived Eve into eating of the fruit of this tree, she then “*also gave to her husband with her, and he ate*.” Immediately following this, “*the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked*.” Then, in a vain effort to cover their nakedness, “*they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings*” ([Genesis 3:1-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.1-7&t=NKJV)).

At the time of the fall, Adam and Eve lost something; and it is clearly stated in Scripture that both immediately recognized this fact. That which they lost could only have been *a covering of pristine glory* that had previously clothed their bodies, for they, following the fall, found themselves in a twofold condition: (1) *naked* and (2) *separated from God.*

God is arrayed in a covering of “light,” connected with “honor and majesty.” And man, created in the “image” and “likeness” of God, could only have been arrayed in a *similar manner* prior to the fall.

*Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great: You are clothed with* [“you have put on”] *honor and majesty.*

*Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.* ([Psalm 104:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+104.1-2&t=NKJV))

Recognizing the loss of this covering, realizing that they were naked, explains why Adam and Eve, immediately following the fall, *sought to clothe themselves.* They tried to replace the covering that had been lost with a work of their own hands, with fig leaf coverings. And then, apparently realizing the utter inadequacy of this covering, they, in their fallen state, sought to hide from God.

God, finding Adam and Eve in this condition, completely rejected the works of their hands. God completely rejected their feeble efforts to atone for their own sin through seeking to replace the covering of pristine glory with fig leaves.

Then, to bring His fallen creature back into a right relationship (although not in complete keeping with their previously unfallen state — something still future even today [and, as will be shown, something in connection with the redemption of the body]), God provided a covering consisting of animal skins ([Genesis 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.21&t=NKJV)). This *necessitated death and the shedding of blood*; and herein lays basic, unchangeable truth concerning the state of fallen man and the means necessary to effect his redemption.

Unredeemed man is a fallen creature, alienated from God; and two things are necessary to effect his redemption: (1) *divine intervention*, and (2) *death and shed blood*. These truths have forever been set forth in the opening chapters of Genesis and can never change.

(Two different words are used for “naked” in the Hebrew text of [Genesis 2:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2.25&t=NKJV) [before the fall] and [Genesis 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.7&t=NKJV) [after the fall]. In the latter [[Genesis 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+3.7&t=NKJV)], the word has to do with *absolute nakedness*, but not so in the former [[Genesis 2:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2.25&t=NKJV)].

Remaining within the way a person dressed in the East at the time Moses wrote Genesis, and at later times as well, the word used relative to *nakedness* pertaining to Adam and Eve preceding the fall [[Genesis 2:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2.25&t=NKJV)] could be used to describe a person clothed in a tunic [inner garment] but lacking the mantle or cloak [outer garment]. In the preceding respect, prior to the fall, Adam and Eve were clothed in the Glory of God but had yet to possess the regal outer garments worn by kings [fulfilling the reason for man’s creation — to rule the earth ([Genesis 1:26-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV))].

Then, following the fall, no longer clothed in the Glory of God, Adam and Eve were no longer in a position to be further clothed in regal garments, realizing the purpose for their creation. They, apart from the inner garment [the Glory] could not wear the outer garments [royal apparel].

Adam, prior to the fall, never wore regal garments or held the scepter. In this respect, he never moved beyond the description given in [Genesis 2:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2.25&t=NKJV) — a “naked” condition, “*naked*” *in relation to the reason for his creation* [*lacking the outer regal garments*].

Thus, if man, now separated from the Glory, is to ever fulfill the purpose for his creation, God must act. Redemption has to occur; and this, of necessity, has to include the complete man — *spirit, soul, and body* — with a view to not only *a restoration of the Glory but to regality beyond this restoration.*)

Flesh in Scripture is spoken of in synonymous terms with sin (*e.g*., [Romans 8:1-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.1-13&t=NKJV); [Galatians 4:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.23&t=NKJV); [5:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.16&t=NKJV); [6:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.8&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+3.21&t=NKJV); [1 John 2:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+2.16&t=NKJV)). But, in actuality, there is *nothing* inherently wrong with flesh. Flesh is sinful only in the sense in which Scripture uses the expression, *which must relate back to and have to do with the fall.* God created man in a body of flesh; Christ appeared in a body of flesh, which He still has today and will continue to possess throughout eternity; and the whole of mankind, as well, will live in bodies of flesh throughout eternity — a type of body that God designed for man in the beginning.

Flesh is referred to as *sinful* and spoken of in synonymous terms with sin when it is not covered in the manner which God originally covered flesh and intended that flesh remain covered. And the removal of this covering at the time of the fall, because of sin, provides the connection between flesh and sin, existing today.

Thus, Christ coming “in the likeness of sinful flesh” is simply a reference to His coming apart from His body being enswathed in Glory. And, in this respect, the height of His humiliation could only have occurred following His being arrayed as a mock King when His naked body, apart from the covering of Glory originally enswathing man’s body, *was exposed on the cross for all to behold.*

Christ could not have worn regal garments at this time, for there was *no covering of Glory*. Christ, as Adam following the fall, lacked the inner garment; He lacked the covering of Glory.

And, apart from this covering of Glory, which would have allowed *regal garments* to be worn, “judgment,” *was not* Christ’s to render. Consequently, it was taken from Him.

Then, another — Pilate, a Gentile ruler (exercising power during the “Times of the Gentiles,” a time existing because of Israel’s past disobedience, extending over centuries of time) — was allowed to execute judgment upon Christ. And, as a result of this judgment, Christ was “led as a sheep to the slaughter,” with His “life” then taken away.

With all these things in mind, in the light of that stated in [Romans 8:15-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.15-23&t=NKJV) and [Philippians 3:20-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.20-21&t=NKJV), it should be a simple matter for anyone to see what is involved in the adoption, the redemption of the body.

Christ, at the time of His resurrection, was not raised in a glorified body. Christ’s body, following His resurrection, was still void of the covering of Glory. Christ’s body was not enswathed in a covering of Glory until at least forty days following His resurrection, when He ascended and “*a cloud*” received Him out of the disciples’ sight ([Acts 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+1.9&t=NKJV)), an apparent reference to His being “*received up into glory*” ([1 Timothy 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+3.16&t=NKJV)).

In this respect, until His ascension, Christ still appeared exactly as He had appeared since the time of His incarnation — in a body of flesh, void of the Glory.

Note the differences in His appearance to the two disciples on the Emmaus road following His resurrection and His appearance to Paul on the Damascus road at a time following His ascension. In the former appearance, it is evident that the two disciples noticed no visible difference between Christ’s outward appearance and that of any other Jewish man of that day. However, following His being “received up into glory,” that changed dramatically. When Christ appeared to Paul in a body enswathed in Glory, Paul was blinded by His outward appearance, by light that he later described as occurring at “*midday*” and being “*above the brightness of the sun*” ([Acts 9:3-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+9.3-9&t=NKJV); [26:12-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+26.12-15&t=NKJV)).

(Note the similar description of Christ in [Revelation 1:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+1.16&t=NKJV), where He is seen at a yet future time in the role of *Judge* — a time when “judgment” cannot be and will not be taken from Him: “. *. . out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength*.”)

In like manner to Christ’s resurrection, Christians will not be raised in glorified bodies either. The bodies of Christians will not be enswathed in Glory until events following the judgment seat, for it will be there that decisions and determinations will be made surrounding Christians relative to their having been shown qualified or having been shown disqualified to occupy positions with Christ in the kingdom. *And only those having been shown qualified to occupy these positions will enter into events surrounding the adoption, the redemption of the body, and the Glory.*

If a person takes the redemption of the body back to the time of the fall — *which is exactly where it must be taken, for something happened to the body at this time, necessitating redemption* — he can come to only one conclusion. “The redemption of the body” has to do with *placing man back in the position that he occupied prior to the fall and, in this position, allowing man to realize the reason for his creation, which is regal.* This is the way matters are set forth in [Romans 8:15-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.15-23&t=NKJV) and [Philippians 3:20-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.20-21&t=NKJV).

The word “*change*” in [Philippians 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.21&t=NKJV) (referring to changing our body of humiliation) is a translation of the Greek word *metaschematizo*, which refers to *an outward change*. *An inward change* — described by the Greek word *metamorphoo* ([Romans 12:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.1-2&t=NKJV) [translated, “transformed”]) must have previously occurred, else there can be *no outward change* at that future time when Christians having previously been shown qualified find themselves *enswathed in Glory,* with their bodies *“conformed to” Christ's body of Glory* ([Philippians 3:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.21&t=NKJV)).

Thus, the adoption, the change in our body of humiliation, the redemption of the body, occurs at a time following the resurrection and rapture. *This will be the capstone of all that proceeded, placing man back in the position that Adam occupied before the fall, though with regal garments.* And, accordingly, it will precede and anticipate Christ’s millennial reign.