

"A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE TERM "SON OF GOD,, IN ST. PAUL, THE OLD TESTAMENT, THE HELLENISTIC WORLD AND IN PHILO,,

1. THE SON OF GOD IN ST. PAUL

BY

BASIL TSAKONAS, Doctor of Philosophy

The term «Son of God» is used of Christ by St. Paul seventeen times throughout his Epistles, and eleven times for the same identification by the author of the Hebrews. What Paul meant to express by this term will be seen in the following pages: but before that, it is indicative to isolate all the passages and to examine them in their immediate context as a help for a better understanding of the expression and its deeper meaning. The term, in Paul, is a religious one.

(1,2) Paul mentions this term in the epistle to the Romans.

1:3. *περὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα, τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν».*

(3) 1:4. *ἐν τῷ Εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ...*

(4) 5:10 *εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ Θεῷ διὰ τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ πολλῶ μᾶλλον... σωθησόμεθα.*

(5) 8:3-4. *Ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν πέμψας ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας κατέκρινε τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί...*

(6) 8-29. *Ὅτι οὗς προέγνω καὶ προᾴρησε συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς».*

(7) 8:32. *Ὅς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων παρέδωκεν αὐτόν, πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα χαρήσεται ἡμῖν».*

Then we have the term «Son of God» in the other Pauline letters.

(8) I Cor. 1:9 *Πιστὸς δὲ ὁ Θεὸς δι' οὗ ἐκλήθητε εἰς κοινωνίαν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν.*

(9) I Cor. 15:28. *ὅταν δὲ ὑποταγῇ αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα τότε καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ὑποταγήσεται τῷ ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, ἵνα ἢ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ πάντα ἐν πασι....*

- (10) II Cor. 1:19 'Ο γὰρ τοῦ Θεοῦ υἱὸς Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὁ ἐν ἡμῖν δι' ἡμῶν κηρυχθεὶς... ὅσαι αἱ ἀπαγγελίαι τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ».
- (11) Gal. 1:16 ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν ὁ Θεὸς ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.
- (12) Gal. 2:20 'Εν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ».
- (13) Gal. 4:4. "Ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός...
- (14) Gal. 4:6. 'Εξαπέστειλεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν κράζων Ἀββᾶ, ὁ πατήρ».
- (15) Eph. 4:13. μέχρι καταστήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ».
- (16) Col. 1:13. Εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν».
- (17) I Thess. 1:10. Ἐναμένειν τὸν Υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν ὃν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, Ἰησοῦν τὸν βυόμενον ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης».

Outside St. Paul, the expression is found, in the Synoptics, in the Epistles to the Hebrews, and in the Gospel of St. John. Also the term appears in the Acts of the Apostles, but in Acts 9:20 and 13:33, the usage of the term is ascribed to Paul, whereas the 8:37 presents a textual problem which puts the verse in the margin¹. We can refer to the «Son of God» terminology as a *Pauline one*², except for the Gospel of St. John, in which the expression is used in a meaning different from that of Paul. To more completely understand the Pauline concept of Christ's Sonship we must look at the circumstances under which Paul uses it, and the background of the idea. The Sonship of

1. The Son of God in the New Testament, exclusive of Paul, is used in four different senses: (1) in the creative sense, distinguishing the person as one owing his existence to the creative power of God (Luke 1:35; 3:28); (2) in an affectional or elective sense, marking the person as the object of Divine love and approval (Matt. 17:5; 27:40; John 3:16,17; 3:35; 5:19; 11:4); (3) as connoting likeness to God (a) a moral likeness (Matt. 5:9,45; Luke 6:36; John 1:12; 14:7,9); (b) likeness in mode of existence (Luke 20:36; cf. John 1:14,18); (4) in the official or theocratic sense denoting one as exercising authority for God (Mark 3:11; 5:7; Matt. 8:29; 16:6; Luke 8:28; John 15:22-27); cf. Gustaf Dalman, *The Words of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1902), pp. 268-288; E. Lovestam, *Son and Savior, A Study of Acts 13:23-37* (Coneiectanea Neotestamentica, Vol. XVIII, Copenhagen: n. p., 1961), pp. 88-112.

2. W. Bousset, *Kyrios Christos* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1926), pp. 52-57.

Christ becomes a hypostasis and is used by Paul whenever he speaks of the relationship between God and the world. Between God and the world—rather, man—there is a gap that was produced because of the original Sin: it transformed men to be like the enemies of God and to be led away from God's realm (Rom. 5:10, 8:3-4. 8:7. II Cor 5.18. Col. 1:21). Further, the very nature of God, as conceived by Paul, keeps Him away from interfering in the world. For Paul, God is invisible (*ἀόρατος*) Col. 1:15,16. Rom. 1.20. I Tit. 1:17. 6:17. Hebr. 11:16), whom no man has seen (*ὃν εἶδες οὐδεὶς ἀνθρώπων, οὐδὲ ἰδεῖν δύναται*). Paul shares these views of the invisibility of God with almost all the contemporary religious and philosophical streams. Thus, according to the Hermetic writings, God is invisible and rules the universe¹. God is He who sees all things but He remains unseen³. In the Pseudo-Aristotelian writings we find the idea that God cannot be seen by any mortal being³. In Philo, the soul participates in the invisibility of God. As He is invisible, so the soul becomes invisible as coming from Him, and is used as a dwelling place for God⁴. In the Corpus Hermeticum there is an excellent piece of antithetic parallelism; we are given a description of all the divine attributes of the Cosmic God. It runs as follows⁵.

ἅγιος εἶ οὗ πᾶσα φύσις εἰκῶν ἔφη
 ἅγιος εἶ, ὃν ἡ φύσις οὐκ ἐμόρφωσεν
 οὗτος ὁ ἀφανής, οὗτος ὁ φανερώτατος
 οὗτος ὁ ἐν νῶ θεωρητός — οὗτος ὁ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ὀρατός,
 καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πολλὰ ἔχει ὀνόματα
 ὅτι ἐνός ἐστι πατὴρ
 καὶ διὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸ ὄνομα οὐκ ἔχει, ὅτι πάντων ἐστὶ πατὴρ
 πάντα δὲ ἐν σοὶ — πάντα δὲ ἀπὸ σοῦ.
 Σὺ πᾶν τὸ γινόμενον — Σὺ τὸ μὴ γινόμενον.

The creativeness of God is a means of His being made known and revealed⁶. The whole creation is the place where God is revealed⁷, The

1. Corpus Hermeticum XII:367. (ed. by A.D. Nock and A.J. Festugiere 4 vols. Paris: 1945:54).

2. Ibid., XII:63.

3. De Monde, 399 B.

4. Cher. 98-101.. (Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt ed. by L. Cohn and P. Wendland, 6 vols. Berlin: 1896-1915).

5. 1:31, V; 10.

6. C. G. Montefiore, «Rabbinic Judaism and the Epistles of St. Paul, » Jewish Quarterly Review, XIII (1900-1901), 161-215.

7. Corpus Hermeticum XI:22.

monotheistic views of Paul are very strong; there is only one God (εἰς Θεός) the Father (I Cor. 8:6; I Tim. 1:17; 2:5; Eph. 4:5-6) from whom everything is coming and to whom everything returns¹. The same group of ideas can be found among the Stoics. Accordingly, there is only one God who for reasons of offices takes various names². In Philo's mind, God is one and the whole (εἰς καὶ τὸ πᾶν ὄν)³. Nothing is like Him: *μόνος δὲ καὶ καθ' ἑαυτόν, εἷς ὢν ὁ Θεός, οὐδὲν δὲ ὅμοιον Θεῷ*.⁴ Also for Paul God is eternal (αἰώνιος) and incorruptible (ἄφθαρτος) the king of all ages, the king of kings and the lord of lords, the one to whom everything is subject (I Tim. 1:17; 6:16; Rom. 1:23). All these attributes refer to the nature of God in Himself; but there are also divine attributes which are related to His place with respect to the world.

Thus, God is the Father (Rom. 1:7; II Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; 4:22; Col. 1:2; I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:2; I Tim. 1:2; Phil. 3; Gal. 1:1,4). He is the creator of heaven and earth (Acts 17:23-29; I Cor. 8:6; Rom. 11:36; Eph. 4:5) the Redeemer of His people and the Judge of the whole world (I Tim. 4:10; 2:3; 1:1; Rom. 11:32).

We have to enter into the investigation of the Divine Sonship of Christ as it was conceived and developed by St. Paul with these pre-suppositions. Starting with the epistle to the Romans, we can be sure that the passage 1:3-4 gives the idea of the combined nature of Christ, i. e., of the human and Divine⁵. The human side of Christ is traced from the house of David (Matt. 1:1; 22:42; II Tim. 2:8; Apoc. 22:16)⁶. His Divine origin is traced back to God⁷. The passage is not an easy

1. Cf. *Ibid.*, IV:8; V:1; XI:5; XIV:3.

2. J. Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* (Leipzig: B. S. Teubner, 1902), II, 1070. «Stoici dicunt non esse nisi unum deum et unum eadem potestatem quae pro ratione officiorum variis nominibus appellatur.» (Cf. Virgil *Aeneid*, IV, 638, «Sciendum Stoicos dicere unum esse deum, cui nomina variatur pro actibus et officiis.

3. *Leg. All.* 1:44. Cf. *Corpus Hermeticum*, XIII:17.

4. *Philo Leg. All.* II:1.

5. R. Bultmann regards this passage, together with many others, as citing or alluding to confessional formulae or hymns that had already become traditional. *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. K. Grobel (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1951), I, 121.

6. Ps. Sol. XVII:23. (Cf. IV Ezra 12:32. According to Acts 11:30; Hebr. VII:14, «It is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah». In Test. of the XII, Patriarchs, we have the theory of a double descent from Levi and from Judah (Sym:7).

7. Test. of Levi: *Καὶ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης ἔσται ἐν αὐτοῖς*.

one to interpret; a great deal of disagreement exists among the commentators. Pfleiderer¹ insists that the πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης is that which originally constitutes the person of the Messiah (not something which afterwards comes to it from without), the principle which forms the person, and consequently the very essence of the personality of the Messiah, not a mere accident of it. So he derives an element which was essential for the Messiah: His sinless nature². Holtzmann holds that «das πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης ist das personbildende Princip des Messiaspersonlichkeit maect eines inneres, einzigartiges wesen ans»³. The expression is very rare. We can find it in the Testament of the XII patriarchs in the form of the πνεῦμα ἁγιασμοῦ⁴. The πνεῦμα ἁγιασμοῦ and συνέσεως refers here to the baptism of Christ. Another expression more closely defining the phrase πνεῦμα ἁγιασμοῦ is found in the same book in the statement καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς δόξης ἤξει ἀπ' αὐτὸν ἁγίασμα μετὰ φωνῆς πατρικῆς⁵. This ἁγίασμα is rather referred to the Holy Spirit which descended during the baptism of Christ⁶. But since Rom. 1:4 does not refer to the baptism of Christ, it cannot be connected with the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity⁷ — a view held by many Church Fathers and some modern commentators⁸. Another explanation is given by Meyer. According to him, πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης implies the inward mental element, the substratum of His noun (νοῦν). (I Cor. 2:16) the principle and the power of His inner life, the intellectual and moral «Ego» which received the communication of the Divine, the ἔσω ἄνθρωπον of Christ⁹. Procksch identifies the πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης with the Divinity of

1. O. Pfl e i d e r e r, Paulinism, A Contribution to the History of the Primitive Theology, trans. E. Peters (London: Williams and Norgate, 1877), I, 127.

2. G. S t e v e n s, The Theology of the New Testament (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1899), p. 390.

3. J. N. H o l t z m a n n, Lehrbuch der Neutestamentliche Theologie (2 vols.; Leipzig: Mohr, 1897). II. 87, n. 3:

4. Test. Levi; 18; (M.G.P.), II, 1068.

5. Ibid.

6. Matt. 3:16-17; Mark 1:19-11; Luke 3:21; John 1:32-34.

7. B o n s i r v e n, L'Évangile de Paul (Paris: Aubier, 1948), p. 59; W. Sanday, and A. C. Headlam: The Epistle to the Romans. International Critical, commentary. New York. C. Scribner's Sons. 1895, p. 9. A. Barnes, Notes on the New Testament, ed. J. Cobbin (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1962), p. 545, col. 1; M. J. Lagrange St. Paul Épître aux Romains. Paris: Gabalda, 1922 p. 8.

8. Sanday, op. cit. p. 9.

9. H. A. O. M e y e r, Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, trans. F. Crombie (20 vols: Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1873): Romans, IX, 46.

Christ. He says that «Die ἁγιωσύνη ist hier also identisch mit der Gettlichkeit»¹. No relation can be found between πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης and the Holy Spirit². The word is a translation of the Hebrew expression **שְׁרֵי־הַיְיִר** = τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ Θεοῦ³, which means the creative principle of life not in relation to the order of nature but rather in relation to the new creation (νέα κτίσις). In the Old Testament, the πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης either is identical with the very nature of God⁴ or is one of His attributes⁵. In II Cor. 7:1 (ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ Θεοῦ) the word implies the Holiness as a human quality (Menschliche Eigenschaft). (Cf. I Thess. 3:13, Εἰς τὸ στηρίξει ἡμῶν τὰς καρδίας ἀμέμπτους ἐν ἁγιωσύνην).

Theodoret of Cyrus refers it to the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit, or to the bestowal of the Holy Spirit that took place through Christ⁶. (Likewise Chrysostom, Oecumenius, Theophylactus, Luther, Estius)⁷. Holsten conceives of the Spirit of ἁγιωσύνης as a transcendent pneumatic force which produces the ἁγιωσύνη (Holiness), a radiance of the Divine pneuma ἅγιον. So that ἁγιωσύνη, for him, is not an abstract concept, but a concrete *wesengeigenschaft*⁸. As we stated above, the word occurs two more times in the New Testament. In II Cor. 7:1, ἁγιωσύνη appears as a product or result of the human efforts to obtain morality and to reach the Holiness through the fear of God. The implications here make it clear that the mere cleansing from a defilement is not enough. A positive element of moral achievement is necessary and it is obtained only when the process of the Self-conservation is continuously taking place⁹. This same meaning is implied throughout the New Testament. The Christian life is an attempt at «bringing to completeness»¹⁰ a state of Holiness (I Thess. 11:13;

1. Procksch, (ἁγιωσύνη...), in Kittel, Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (1908), I, 446.

2. Ibid.

3. Is. 63:10; cf. Ps. 51:13.

4. Ps. 29:5.

5. Ps. 95:6.

6. M.G.P., LXXXII, 52.

7. Meyer, op. cit., IX, 46-47.

8. K. J. Holsten, Zu Evang. des Paulus und des Petrus (Rostock: Stillner, 1868), p. 425.

9. A. Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (International Critical Commentary, 47 vols., New York: Scribner's, 1915), XXXVI, 212.

10. II Cor. 8:6,11.

cf. Zach. IV:9). In the Testament of the XII Patriarchs (Levi 18:11), it is said that the Saints who enter Paradise will eat from the tree of life and πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης ἔσται ἐπ' αὐτοῖς. Here is the divine quality of ἁγιωσύνης that prepares Christians to become the sanctuary of God and to have Him as their Father (Rom. 5:5; Eph. 1:1; Col. 3:12; Eph. 4:12). In I Thess. 3:13, the ἁγιωσύνη is used to refer to the perfection which is required of Christians to have achieved before they appear in the last Judgment. It is the moral quality by which Christians will see God; in both places the ἁγιωσύνη is related to the embodiment of all the divine qualities that make man be as close to God as possible¹. The meaning of Rom. 1:3-4, therefore, is not that of II Cor. 7:1, nor of I Thess. 3:13. If we accept this meaning, then necessarily we have to admit a progressive perfection about Christ, which is truly a misunderstanding of the whole Pauline theology. On the contrary, πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης here means the Spirit which presupposes a condition of Holiness which Christ possessed long before He came upon earth. The Divine Sonship of Christ, as it is witnessed here, is not an act of adoption (adoptionist theory), but rather it is a proof of what had been hidden, πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων. (Rom. 16:23; II Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2).

The πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης is contrasted with the κατὰ σάρκα. Both of them bear evidence to the double nature of Christ. The resurrection, accordingly, is the sign of the declaration of the Divine Sonship of Christ, and not the starting point for it. Christ, according to Rom. 1:3, was the Son of God eternally and to the Christ-event, all the prophecies of Israel bear witness². The meaning of ὀρισθέντος is explicit: it means «to be proved,» «marked out as being»³. Christ was the Son of God before His resurrection⁴. It is obvious from other passages in Paul's

1. Hebr. 6:1; Hebr. 7:28; cf. Matt. 5:48; Rom. 12:2; I Cor. 2:6; 13:10; 14:20; Phil. 3:15.

2. Cf. II Cor. 1:19.

3. Theophylactus, M. G. P. CXXIV, 341. τοῦ ὀρισθέντος, τοῦτέστιν ἀποδειχθέντος, βεβαιωθέντος, κριθέντος..... (Likewise Chrysostom, Sanday, op. cit., p. 7). Pfleiderer, op. cit. p. 228, says that the verb ὀρίζω does not indicate a proof or evidence for the perception and recognition of men. It is always an actual making of something by an intervention of an act of the will, whether the effect of this act takes place at once or not until some future time.

4. For an opposite opinion, see Bultmann, op. cit., I, 27: the author asserts that in the earliest church and Paul's writings, Jesus' Messiahship was dated from the resurrection. (Cf. J. Weiss, Primitive Christianity, 2 vols. Trans. By F. C. Grant. I, 475-478; F. C. Baur: «Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, his life and work, his epistles and his doctrine. A contribution to a critical history of primitive Christianity» 2 vols. London: Williams and Norgate, 1873-75. vol. I p. 130.

epistles in II Cor. 4:4, Christ is the εἰκὼν of God (cf. Col. 1:15; Hebr. 1:3). In chapter 8, verse 9 of the same epistle, the divine glory of Christ and His pre-existence are affirmed. It becomes still more clear in Phil. 2:5-11, where His preexistence, His relationship to God, the Father, and to the Universe (material and Spiritual worlds) is assured.

Christ, as the Son of God, is the only Son (Rom. 8:32; 8:3-4), His own Son (Rom 5:10; 8:29; Gal. 1:16; 4:4,6; I Thess. 1:10). Christians become Sons of God if they are led by the Spirit of God¹, or by faith in Christ (Gal. 3:26). The incarnation of Christ is regarded as being the point of origin of the Sonship of all men. He came on earth ἕνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολαύσωμεν (Gal. 4:6). As sons through Christ, Christians also become heirs to the Kingdom of God (Gal. 4:7). In I Thess. 5:5, Christians are characterized as the Sons of light and of day, in relation to the very nature of God, Who is also Light (I Tim. 6:16; I John 1:1)². As the only Son³, Christ enjoys cosmological privileges. Everything will be subjected to Him as the ruler of the world (I Cor. 15:28; cf. Hebr. 2:6-8; Phil. 3:21; 1:5-11; Ps. 8:7).

Also from these passages the pre-existence of Christ is shown. The ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ bears witness to the historical appearance and to the human side of Christ. But by the «κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης» it becomes evident that a pre-historic existence of Christ is meant. Paul undoubtedly believed in the pre-existence as a presupposed element; for that reason never takes the burden of proof⁴. God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. He did not spare His own Son but gave Him up to be crucified (Rom. 8:3-4;32; Gal. 4:4). Special attention is here called to the verbal forms used to describe the coming of Christ to earth: πέμπειν and ἐξαποστέλλειν. The verbs in themselves do not imply pre-existence. There are many passages in which the doctrine of

1. Rom. 8:14; II Cor. 6:18.

2. For the attribute of God as being Light, or as dwelling in Light, cf. Sib. Oracl. 3:787; Plut. Pericles 39:2 (The Gods dwell in the τόπον ἀσάλευτον φωτὶ καθαρωτάτῳ); Philo. Somn. 1:75; Christ is the Light of the world. John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46; 3:19α; 1:4,9.

3. In interpreting the expressions his own (ἑαυτοῦ), the Son of His (God's) love, etc. C. A. A. Scott says that the language, postulates a relationship which is independent of any historical experience which is pre-eminently ethical in character, and seems to involve a community of nature between the Father and the Son. Christianity according to St. Paul (Cambridge: University Press, 1927), p. 256.

4. Beyschlag, W. New Testament Theology. 2 vols. Trans. by N Buchanan. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1895, II: 78. Cf. Holtzmann, op. cit. II p. 82, n. 3.

pre-existence of Christ becomes obvious¹. But the verbs here have a special meaning; they emphatically denote the idea of a mission or of a representative who is coming from God. The verb πέμπειν is used of John the Baptist (John 1:33) and of Jesus (John 4:34; 5:23; 24:30, 37; 7:16). In the Old Testament it is used of the Wisdom². The ἐξαποστέλλειν is particularly used in the Old Testament to denote the divine mission of the prophets or other messengers of Yahweh (I Kings 10:22; Jer. 7:25; Zach. 4:9; 7:12; 8:10; II Chron. 36:15; Ps. 104:26; 151:4; Mal. 3:1: «Ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου (cf. Rev. 22:16). The verb ἐξαποστέλλω is used by Paul with this meaning only in Gal. 4:4,6. According to Holtzmann³ and Stevens⁴ the verb itself implies pre-existence. In all the passages which refer to the Divinity and mission of Christ the verbs πέμπειν, ἐξαποστέλλειν and παραδίδοναι⁵ denote the inner relationship existing between the Father and the Son and imply the pre-existence of Christ, although not in a sense as in other passages in which certain expressions and terms do.

The Son of God in St. Paul becomes an object of faith and of the preaching of the Apostle, in a manner analogous to that of God. The Εὐαγγέλιον⁶ of God, or, the Εὐαγγέλιον of the Kingdom of God, takes the form of the Εὐαγγέλιον of Christ (I Cor. 9:12; II Cor. 1:19; 2:12; 10:14; Gal. 1:7; I Tim. 3:2) or of the son of God (Rom. 1:9; 5:10; cf. Gal. 1:16). The word «Εὐαγγέλιον» and the verb derived from the same root, «Εὐαγγελίζεσθαι» occur also in the Old Testament in a different meaning. The «Εὐαγγελίζεσθαι» is always connected with the «good news» that the prophets proclaim about God (Is. 61:1; cf. Luke 4:19). The contents of the «εὐαγγελίζεσθαι» is the peace of Yahweh

1. Ga. 4:4; Rom. 8:3; II Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15,16,17; I Cor. 8:6; Rom. 1:4.

2. Wisdom of Solomon 9:10.

3. Holtzmann, op. cit. II, 82.

4. Stevens, op. cit. p. 392, n. 2.

5. Cf. Eph. 5:2; 5:25; Gal. 2:20.

6. For the original meaning of the word «Εὐαγγέλιον» see P. O. Spicq, Les Épitres Pastorales (Paris: Gabalda, 1953), p. 29; F. Prat, The Theology of St. Paul. 2 vols. Trans. by T.L. Stoddard The Newman Bookshop, Westminster 1958. II: 397-8; Kittel op. cit., II, 718-722: it signified: (1) In Homer, and later, the present given to the Bearer of good tidings, or the sacrifice offered on the occasions of Good news cf. Odys. 14, «οὐ... εὐαγγέλιον τόδε τείσω» (Isocr. 7:10, «Εὐαγγέλιον θύειν ἑκατὸν βοῦς τῇ Θεῷ»). (cf. Millar Burrows, «The origin of the term Gospel», Journal of Biblical Literature, XLIV (1925), 21-33.

(הַיְהוָה: שְׁלוֹם)¹. In the Old Testament the Εὐαγγέλιον (בְּשֵׁרָה) has a meaning analogous to that of the Greek usage of the word. (Cf. II Sam. 4:10: ᾧ ἔδρα με δοῦναι εὐαγγέλιον cf. II Kings 7:9; II Sam. 18:20, 15,17). In St. Paul it becomes a terminus technicus² and is used in a religious sense, with the only exception for I Thess. 3:6 where it is quoted in its secular meaning. The contents of this gospel are varied. The word occurs as the Gospel of God (Εὐαγγέλιον Θεοῦ II Cor 11:17; I Thess. 2:2,8,9; cf. I Peter 4:17), the Gospel of Christ (Εὐαγγέλιον Χριστοῦ I Cor. 9:12; II Cor. 2:12; 10:14; Gal. 1-7; II Thess. 3:2), or the Gospel of salvation (Εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης); Eph. 1:13; cf. Acts 13:26, ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης); the Gospel of Grace (Εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος Acts 20:24), the Gospel of Glory (τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον τῆς δόξης I Cor. 4:4; I Tim. 1:11). The subject of the Gospel is the Revelation of God brought by Christ on earth and proclaimed by the apostles. Also the Kingdom of God becomes the Kingdom of His Son (Col. 1:3). The Christians participate in the fellowship (κοινωνίαν) of His Son (I Cor. 1:9). The Kingdom of Christ as the Kingdom of God is an everlasting one. (Cf. Luke 1:33.) The constituent elements of the Kingdom of God are not food and drinking, but justice and joy and peace in Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17, cf. I Cor. 4:20). The spiritual status of the Kingdom of God is explicitly stated (I Cor. 15:50). The metaphysical character of the βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ or Χριστοῦ is obvious here. The throne of Christ, the God, is forever (Hebr. 1:8 ὁ θρόνος Σου, ὁ Θεός, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος.) It is a Kingdom ἀσάλευτος (Hebr. 12:28) and heavenly (ἐπουράνιος II Tim. 1:18). Christ will deliver the believers³ from every evil thing, saving them in his heavenly Kingdom. The word ἐπουράνιος is an exclusive Pauline term, contrasted to the ἐπίγειος earthly (I Cor. 15:40; cf. John 3:12). The word designates a supernatural and glorious condition (I Cor. 15:48), a place where the angels dwell (Eph. 3:10; Hebr. 12:22) and above all, Christ (Eph. 1:3,20; 11:6). The Kingdom of the Son, as well as that of the Father, is eternal. God has already transferred us from the power of the darkness to the Kingdom of the Son of His love. This Kingdom is extended not only to the present age but also to the future. This point is another indication of the everlasting Sonship of Christ. On this point there is a great deal of disagree-

1. Cf. Nahum 2:1 (cf. Eph. 2:17).

2. It is used sixty times by him.

3. Cf. Lord's Prayer, «ἀλλὰ ρῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ» where the action of deliverance belongs to God (Matt. 6:13; cf. John 17:11;15).

ment among the commentators. The ground for the varied interpretations is based on I Cor. 15:28, in which the apostle, as some of the critics say, preaches a temporary kingdom and sovereignty of the Son over the universe, after which everything—even the Son—will be subjected to God, the Father, Who will be all in all (cf. I Cor. 15:23,29). Cullmann connects this idea of subordination with the absolute obedience of the Son to the Father, and relates it to the redemptive activity of the Son. The subordination is only explicable if we regard it in view of God's revelatory action, not in view of the Son's being¹. «So», he says, «it is very significant that the final fulfilment of all redemptive activity is described precisely as a final «subjection» of the Son to the Father.»² Here, according to Cullmann, lies the key to all New Testament Christology. Moffatt thinks that, according to the apostle's thought, Jesus after finishing his redeeming work as Lord over sin and death, is now simply υἱὸς Θεοῦ (God's Son). He thinks that the Lordship of Christ, which is eliminated after the subjection of all things to Him, is a phase of his eternal Sonship, although even for Moffatt himself, in Phil. 2:6-11, Paul seems to make the Lordship final³. This explanation supported by Moffatt does not solve the problem. It is true that everything said or done by Christ (see note 1 below) is for the glory of God (II Cor. 4:15; cf. Luke 17:18; John 7:18; 9:24; 13:31, 32; 14:13, 15:3; 17:4; Hebr. 5:5). He is acting on the name of the Father (John 5:43) and he comes in order to do the will of his Father (τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με πατρός John 4:34; cf. 5:30; 6:38; 7:17; 9:31). This information, however, does not imply that Christ was a subject to God as every other creature. The idea of subordination is not an idea in the real

1. Cullmann, O. *Christology of the New Testament*, Trans. by S. C. Guthrie and C. A. M. Hall. London S. C. M. Press p. 293.

2. *Ibid.* Cf. C. Ellicott, *St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians* (n. p. 1887), p. 307. Cf. Tunc remoto velo palam cernemus, Deum in sua majestatem regnatum, neque amplius media erit Christi humanitas, quae nos ab interiore Dei conspectu conhibeat (Calvin). Also, Deus immediate se ostendens vivificans et affundens in beatos suam mirandam lucem, sapientiam, justitiam, et luetitiam (Melancthon). Cf. H. Weinel, *Paul, The Man and His Work*, trans. A. Bienemann (London: Williams and Norgate, 1906), p. 50. Origen in his *De Principiis* interprets the passage in this way.

3. J. C. Moffatt, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians* (New Testament Commentary, 27 vols., London: Holder and Stoughton, 1938), VII, 247. He tries to explain the Phil. 2:6-11, assuming that even in these passages the final acclamation of Jesus as Lord is to the glory of God the Father «from whom all comes, by whom all lives and in whom all ends». (Cf. Rom. 11:36.).

meaning of the word but it rather determines a mode of stating or a condition of existence derived from the Father-Son relationship. I is a sign of full agreement¹ and consent between Father and Son. In interpreting this passage, Theophylactus says that the passage means nothing else but the «πολλὴν ὁμόνοιαν τοῦ υἱοῦ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα»², or that the father is the only source of the power of the Son, and so the Son is not another power opposite to the Father³. The real meaning of the passage, according to the same commentator, is to show that all things depend on the Father and to avoid any assumption of a dualism in the divinity⁴. Gregory of Nazianzos assumes that this subjection is not referred to Christ but to us, and since he took over all our nature, he regards even our subjection as his own⁵. Christ after his resurrection is exalted at the right hand of God (Hebr. 1:13; Col. 3:1; Rom. 6:2; Phil. 3:20). He is *χθὲς καὶ σήμερον, ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*. (Hebr. 13:8; cf. 1:12)⁶. Also he is pre-existent, as becomes clear from many expressions of St. Paul (Gal. 4:4; II Cor. II Cor. 8:9; I Tim. 1:15; II Tim. 1:9; Phil. 2:5-11). Thus no idea of subjection as a condition or status of existence lower than that of the Father can be accepted. Godet accepts the ideas of subordination in harmony with the essential relation of Son to the Father, in His Divine and human existence⁷. His arguments are that (1) Christ was called to reign, by exercising Divine sovereignty within the universe only for a time, with a view to the obtaining of a particular result; (2) Even in the Divine throne, Christ is only as «πρωτότοκος ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς. (Rom. 8:29). So he is a brother who in relation to His brothers keeps only the advantage of his eternal priority⁸. The mediatorial character of Christ's reign over the universe is obvious in Godet's interpretation. The arguments, however, brought up by him are not strong and decisive. For example, (1) Nowhere in Paul's letters it is said that Christ was called to reign by exercising Divine sovereignty within the universe only for a time. The sovereignty and Lordship

1. St. Chrysostom.

2. M. G. P., CXXIV, 765.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 768.

5. In Theophylactus, *ibid.*

6. Cf. Rev. 1:17-18.

7. Godet, Commentary on St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark 1889), pp. 370-371. Cf. Edwards explaining the title «Son» as implying «the possibility of subjection and at the same time equality of nature» Godet p. 420.

8. Ibid., pp. 371-373.

is given to Him on the basis of His absolute obedience to God and on the grounds of His accomplishment of the salvation of mankind (Phil. 2:6-11, *γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου ... δι' ὃ καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὑπερέψωσεν..*) As it becomes obvious from Phil. 2:6-11, Christ was *ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ*, i. e., God Himself, and as such he has the power of ruling over the universe. For Paul, Christ is the head of every principality and authority (Col. 2:10) and above every power and dominion and above every name not only in the present age but also in the future¹. (2) As to the relation between Christ and the brothers much has been said. Christ-is *πρωτότοκος* of every creature (Col. 1:15) and *πρωτότοκος* from the dead. (Col. 1:18; cf. Rev. 1:5.) Christ is also called *πρωτότοκος*, in the epistle to the Hebrews (1:6), where divine attributes, similar to those of God are ascribed to Him by the author of this epistle. There the *πρωτότοκος*-is the Creator of the world (*Κύριε τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας* 1:10; cf. Ps. 102:26-28) and the One who exists forever (*Σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ καὶ τὰ ἔτη Σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσι*:1:12).² The eternal character of the Kingdom of Christ is an explicit statement in the epistle (1:8)³. In the same epistle the subjection of the enemies is done by God Himself. This last statement assures us that there is no such an idea of a separate period of reign between God the Father and the Son. There is a full cooperation between Father and Son throughout the history of the salvation of the world, before and after it⁴. What gives more trouble to the commentators in accepting the temporary character of Christ's Kingdom is I Cor. 15:24, especially the phrase, «Δεῖ γὰρ αὐτόν βασιλεύειν ἄχρις οὗ ἦν πάντας τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ». The word *ἄχρι*, which puts some limit of time, occurs many times in the New Testament (Matt. 24:38; Luke 1:20;

1. Eph. 1:21.

2. As to the correct meaning of *πρωτότοκος* see Lebreton, *Histoire du Dogme de la trinité des Origines au Concile de Nicée*. 2 vols. Paris: G. Beauchesné, 1927. I:399. According to this author, the word never appears equivalent to *πρῶτος* which means the first in a series. Cf. E. A. Cerny, «Firstborn of Every Creature» (Patristic Exegesis), Dissertation (Baltimore, 1938); E. Percy, *Die Probleme der Kolosser und Ephesier Briefe* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1946), p. 69 ff. A. Wikgren, «Patterns of Perfection in the epistle to the Hebrews» *New Testament Studies*, VI, 159-167.

3. In interpreting I Cor. 15:28, Franc Amiot, in his book: *Les idées maîtresses de St. Paul* (Paris, 1959), p. 256, says: «Cette donation royale sera la glorification suprême du Père-et du Fils régnant indivisiblement avec lui-dans la rédemption achiivée, le salut des hommes couronné par la resurrection des corps, la soumission définitive au Créateur du monde que le péché de l' homme ne détournera plus de la fin.» Cf. Romans 8:19,22.

4. II Cor. 5:19.

4:13; Acts 7:18; 11:5; 13:6-11; Rom. 8:22; Phil. 1:5). But the word does not necessarily mean a certain period of time after which some change takes place¹. Occumenius interprets the word not as denoting some limited period of time, but to make sure and reliable the whole spirit of the passage. In no sense does the expression *ἔχρις οὗ* mean the end of the Kingdom². To accept the statement of Godet that Christ was called to reign only for a time³, is not found to be in agreement with the whole spirit of Paul's information about Christ. This statement betrays a full dependence of Christ upon God and changes him into an instrument of the Father. Of course, Christ as Son is He in whom (*ἐν ᾧ*) we have the redemption, the forgiveness of our sins (Eph. 1:10; Rom. 9:13). But at the same time, we can not but realize that for Paul, the Son of God stands as an independent person with a free will to act. As such, the Son becomes the object of Revelation made by Father Himself (*εὐδόκησεν ὁ Θεὸς ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ*: Gal. 1:16)⁴. Usually, Christ and the Holy Spirit are the Revealers (Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22; I Cor. 2:10; 14:30; Eph. 3:5). But in Paul God also reveals His Son. The idea is relevant to that which exists in the epistle to the Hebrews (1:6) where God appears introducing the first-born in the world. Also the idea of independence becomes evident in many other places in Paul. God delivers His Son to suffering (Rom. 8:32; 8:3-4; cf. Gal. 4:4). But the Son is also He who is the source of love (Gal. 2:20) and offers himself for the salvation of man (Gal. 2:20). Elsewhere the action of Christ's resurrection is attributed either to God (*τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν* Rom. 4:24; cf. 8:11; 10:9; I Cor. 6:14; 15:15; II Cor. 4:14; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; I Thess. 1:10) or to Christ Himself (*ὥσπερ ἠγέρθη Χριστὸς ἐκ νεκρῶν*; Rom. 6:4; cf. 6:9; 7:4; I Cor. 15:4, 12,13,14,16,20; I Thess. 4:14).

The vocabulary which St. Paul uses in connection with his speaking about Christ as the Son is a deeply religious one. He admonishes Christians to attain to the unity of the faith and of the understanding of the Son of God⁵. The word *ἐπίγνωσις* and the verb *ἐπιγινώσκειν* both

1. Cf. Rom. 8:22.

2. M. G. P., CXVIII, 873.

3. Godet, *op. cit.*, p. 420.

4. The verb *ἀποκαλύπτω* has a special meaning. It is used of divine revelation of certain supernatural secrets (Ps. 97:2; Dan. 2:19; 4:18; Is. 56:1; cf. Matt. 11:25; 16:17; Luke 10:21; Phil. 3:15; Ign. Eph. 20:1;) and of the interpretations of prophetic visions (Test. Reud. 3:15). Also in the eschatological sense of the revelation (Dan 10:1; Luke 17:30; I Cor. 3:13).

5. Eph. 4:13.

have a religious meaning in the New Testament, especially in St. Paul. The verb itself means to have a deeper and full knowledge of something, to understand it thoroughly (cf. Matt. 7:16; Mark 2:8; Luke 1:4; Rom. 1:432; I Cor. 13:12; 14:37; 16:18; II Cor. 1:13; 6:9; 13:5). The noun ἐπίγνωσις refers to the knowledge of God or of anything else that is related to Him. So we have in Paul the expressions, τὸν Θεὸν ἔχειν ἐν ἐπίγνωσει (Rom. 1:28); ἐπίγνωσις ἁμαρτίας... (Rom. 2:30); τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ (Col. 2:9); ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας (I Tim. 2:4; cf. II Tim. 2:25; 3:7; Tit. 1:1); εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν παντὸς ἀγαθοῦ (Philem. 6; cf. II Peter 1:2, 3:8; 2:20;)¹. The verb in its religious meaning also occurs in classical Greek². In the Old Testament we have the verb **יָדַע** to know, and the noun **יְדוּעָה** ἐπίγνωσις. Both of them occur in the sense of knowing something, and are related with the knowing about God (Wisdom 5:7). In Hosea the understanding (ἐπίγνωσις) of God is put on the same level with the truth (ἀλήθεια) and mercy (ἔλεος) (4:1). In Hosea 4:6 the lack of understanding God is the reason for which God leaves this people and forgets them. Here the understanding of God is associated with the study and memorization of His law. The understanding of God is contrasted to the burnt offerings (holocausts). In the same meaning both words can be found in Philo: to know about future things is not a result of secular knowledge, but of a moral life.¹ For this reason, to know and understand God is only given to the virtuous man³. The whole creation is a means for the recognition and apprehension of the truth⁴. It comes down to the New Testament times and becomes a terminus technicus for the decisive knowledge of God⁵. Many times the simple verb γινώσκειν has in the New Testament the same meaning. (Cf. Phil. 3:10; τοῦ γινῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ). The very nature of the Son of God is that of the representative. Christ is the Son of God because he reveals the Father, or the Grace of God (II Tim. 1:10; Rom. 16:26; Tit. 2:11). He brings on earth the promises of God (II Cor. 1:19; ὅσαι αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ). He destroys sin (Rom. 8:3,4), an act of salvation which the Old Testament confined only to

1. Cf. Luke 18:19.

2. Sophocles: Antigone 960: Κἀ[κεῖνος ἀπέγνω μανίας ψαύων τὸν Θεὸν ἐν κερταμοῖς γλώσσαις Cf. Plato Euthid. 301e.

3. Leg. All 4:8.

4. Quod Orum. Prod. liber. Sixt.

5. R. Bultmann, Gnosis, trans. J. R. Coates (London: A. and C. Black, 1957); p. 37.

God Himself.¹ Finally, he will come back as judge of the World, representing His Father. This function of Christ as Judge is one of the most important in the denotation of His deity and equality to God, the Father, as we will show in another chapter: Καὶ ἀναμένειν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν Ἰησοῦν τὸν ρυόμενον ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς... (I Thess. 1:10; cf. II Tim. 3:11; 4:18).² The function of delivering, *ῥύεσθαι*, is ascribed to God in the Old Testament. There are many Hebrew roots to denote the idea (נָצַל, הָלִץ, פָּנַם, הוֹשִׁיעַ). But the most common is the root נָצַל³. The verb in itself means to deliver from something.⁴ In a moral sense it occurs in Ps. 38:9, מִכָּל פְּשָׁעֵי הַצִּילָנִי (cf. Ps. 37:23).

(Continued)

1. The idea of salvation by the coming of a God on earth was widespread even in the pagan world. So in Prometheus Bound we have the idea expressed in the clearest way: τοιοῦδε μὲν γὰρ τέρμα μὴ τι προσδύνασθαι πρὶν ἂν Θεῶν τις διάδοχος τῶν σῶν πόνων φανῆ.

2. For the action of *ῥύεσθαι* attributed to God (cf. II. Cor. 1:10; Col. 1:13; δεξ ἔρρῶσατο ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σκότους Is. 36:14; 15:18; 48:17; 49:26; Ez. 37:23 (in an ethical meaning); Lord's Prayer; Matt, 6:9; Luke 11:2-4; Chase, op. cit., passim.

3. Jer. 20:13. הַצִּיל מִיַּד מְרַעִים (LXX: ἐξείλατο ἐκ χειρὸς πονηρευομένων cf.

Gal. 1:4.

4. II Sam. 14:16, especially from living creatures: Ps. 35:10; 69:15; 140:1.