



**The Salvation Equation: {Grace > Atonement} Man can now respond: + Repentance + Faith → (and God answers) Conversion + Regeneration + Justification + Adoption → Sanctification**  
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3/17 Grace

3/24 Atonement

3/31 Repentance

4/7 Pr. Robin's Testimony

4/14 Faith

4/21 Conversion

4/28 Regeneration

5/5 Justification

5/12<sup>th</sup> Adoption

5/19<sup>th</sup> Sanctification

5/26<sup>th</sup> Perseverance

## BEGINNING

### PROMO:

*Have you ever wondered if God really sees you?  
 Have you ever wondered if God really can love you?  
 Have you ever wondered if God could really forgive your horrible past?  
 Have you ever felt worthless even though you love Jesus?  
 If we ever have, then we do not understand what happened when we met Jesus at Salvation.  
 Come, find out what Jesus' love really does:  
 Soteriology – a.k.a. The Salvation Principle  
 Beginning March 17<sup>th</sup>, Pr. Orleen and the Wednesday Night Crew as we unpack the meaning of our SALVATION.*

**Soteriology** is the branch of theology dealing with the study of salvation. The term comes from the Greek soterion, "salvation," and is also related to soter, "savior." **Soteriology** relates to several other branches of theology in that it asks who is saved, by whom, from what, and by what means.

- How I met Jesus:
- Biggest hurdle Jesus and I have walked over:
- Jesus surprised me with/when:
- Jesus shows His love to me when:

“Eternal life was the life which Jesus Christ exhibited on the human plane, and it is the same life, not a copy of it, which is manifested in our mortal flesh when we are born of God. Eternal life is not a gift from God, eternal life is the gift of God. The energy and the power which was manifested in Jesus will be manifested in us by the sheer sovereign grace of God when once we have made the moral decision about sin...The life that was in Jesus is made ours by means of His cross when once we make the decision to be identified with Him. If it is difficult to get right with God, it is because we will not decide definitely about sin. Immediately we do decide, the full life of God comes in. Jesus came to give us endless supplies of life: “that you may be fill with all the fullness of God”...The weakest saint can experience the power of the deity of the Son of God once he is willing to “let go”. Any strand of our own energy will blur the life of Jesus. We have to keep letting go, and slowly and surely the great full life of God will invade us in every part, and men will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.” Oswald Chambers

### *On forgiveness*

I find that when I think I am asking God to forgive me I am often in reality (unless I watch myself very carefully) asking Him to do something quite different. I am asking Him not to forgive me but to excuse me. But there is all the difference in the world between forgiving and excusing. Forgiveness says “Yes, you have done this thing, but I accept your apology, I will never hold it against you and everything between us two will be exactly as it was before.” But excusing says “I see that you couldn't help it or didn't mean it, you weren't really to blame.”... Real forgiveness means looking steadily at the sin, the sin that is left over without any excuse, after all allowances have been made, and seeing it in all its horror, dirt, meanness and malice, and nevertheless being wholly reconciled to the man who has done it.

From [\*The Weight of Glory\*](#) Compiled in [\*Words to Live By\*](#)

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**“Eternal life is not a gift from God, eternal life is the gift of God.” Oswald Chambers**

**Hebrews 10:7 HCSB**

*Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come, and not the actual form of those realities, it can never perfect the worshipers by the same sacrifices they continually offer year after year. <sup>2</sup> Otherwise, wouldn't they have stopped being offered, since the worshipers, once purified, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? <sup>3</sup> But in the sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. <sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. <sup>5</sup> Therefore, as He was coming into the world, He said:*

*You did not want sacrifice and offering, but You prepared a body for Me.*

<sup>6</sup> *You did not delight in whole burnt offerings and sin offerings.*

<sup>7</sup> *Then I said, "See— it is written about Me in the volume of the scroll—I have come to do Your will, God!"*

<sup>8</sup> *After He says above, You did not want or delight in sacrifices and offerings, whole burnt offerings and sin offerings (which are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> He then says, See, I have come to do Your will. He takes away the first to establish the second. <sup>10</sup> By this will of God, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all.*

**OPENING:**

Where we have been

Tonight where we are going

HOW one can live this/Ramifications on/in our life

**You've got about 30 seconds to capture people's interest or lose them.**

- The best way to do this is to establish common ground.
- Tell a story.
- Talk about a tension or problem everyone faces.

**Introduce the subject in a way that establishes why it matters.**

**Orient people to your topic** (talk about the series, where you're at and why it matters).

*“And I will give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”*

**John 10:28** (NKJV)

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- What happens when we pray the prayer of Salvation?
- Are we scrubbed clean? Or???
- Do you ever feel like you are not really saved?
- Do you question how much God has forgiven...if there are some things that He has not?
- Do you ever feel like your sins are just too big for God to forgive?
- Is there something you can do to lose your salvation?

**Recap Last Week: THANK YOU, MICHELLE! – JUSTIFICATION**

Because of Justification these sins are declared no more. When you wonder if you can be saved, or if you are good enough, or if.....you are picking these back up.

- Justification means:
  - Acts 13:39 Freedom from the law.
  - Romans 5:1 Peace with God.
  - Romans 5:9 Salvation from wrath.
  - Romans 5:10-11 Reconciliation with God.
  - Romans 8:30 Assurance of glorification.
  - Romans 8:33-34 Freedom from condemnation.
  - Titus 3:7 Becoming heirs of God.

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Opening Prayer: **Luke 24:25**  
*Then He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures.*

## **ADOPTION**

[Conversion = Turning. Regeneration = Renew/Born Again. Justification = ].

Write on white board what I think ADOPTION means

The Salvation Equation: {Grace > Atonement} (Man can now respond) + Repentance + Faith (and God answers) → Conversion + Regeneration + Justification + **Adoption** → Sanctification (Perseverance)

**Jesus is God's Son by Nature. We are His children by Adoption.**

### **I. What Adoption Is:**

- Act of grace whereby God places as sons those who receive Christ Jesus, bestowing on them all the rights and privileges of sonship.
- Regeneration brings about a change in our nature.
- Adoption brings about a change of our position. It is a legal, judicial act.

#### **A. Cultural Adoption:**

### **GREEK:**

The Greek word for adoption means "being placed as a son".: Greek *huiothesia*, a word composed of *huios* 'a son' and *thesis* 'to place, or constitute'.

### **Romans 8:14-15 HCSB**

<sup>14</sup> All those led by God's Spirit are **God's sons**. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received the Spirit of **adoption**, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!"

<sup>16</sup> The Spirit Himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, <sup>17</sup> and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—seeing that we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

**Footnotes:** a. [Romans 8:15](#) The Greek word for *adoption to sonship* is a term referring to the full legal standing of an adopted male heir in Roman culture. B. [Romans 8:15](#) Aramaic for *Father*

**ROMAN:** (referencing Barclay's Daily Bible Study) <http://www.olivebranchministries.us/The%20Sons%20of%20God.htm>

"we must understand how serious and complicated a step Roman adoption was that we really understand the depth of meaning in this passage.

*Roman adoption was always rendered more serious and more difficult by the Roman patria potestas. This was **the father's power over his family**; it was the power of absolute disposal and control, and in the early days was actually the power of life and death.*

- *Potestas*: civil law. A Latin word which signifies power; authority; domination; empire. It has several meanings. 1. It signifies imperium, or the jurisdiction of magistrates. 2. The power of the father over his children, patriapotestas. 3. The authority of masters over their slaves, which makes it nearly synonymous with dominium. A Law Dictionary, Adapted to the Constitution and Laws of the United States. By John Bouvier. Published 1856.

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- In regard to his father, a Roman son never came of age. No matter how old he was, he was still under the patria potestas, in the absolute possession and under the absolute control, of his father. Obviously this made adoption into another family a very difficult and serious step. In adoption a person had to pass from one patria potestas to another.

### Two steps to Adoption:

**1:** The first was known as **mancipatio**, and was carried out by a symbolic sale, in which copper and scales were symbolically used. Three times the symbolism of sale was carried out. Twice the father symbolically sold his son, and twice he bought him back; but the third time he did not buy him back and thus the patria potestas was held to be broken.

(monk.a.pa.tio)

**2:** There followed a ceremony called **vindicatio**. The adopting father went to the praetor (preeder) (judicial officer), one of the Roman magistrates, and presented a legal case for the transference of the person to be adopted into his patria potestas. When all this was completed, the adoption was complete. Clearly this was a serious and an impressive step.

(Ecclesiastical) IPA: /vin.di'ka.tsi.o/, [vinɔ̃dʲi'ka:ʃsʲɔ]

### Four Main Consequences of Adoption:

- 1.) The adopted person lost all rights in his old family and gained all the rights of a legitimate son in his new family. In the most binding legal way, he got a new father.
- 2.) It followed that he became heir to his new father's estate. Even if other sons were afterwards born, it did not affect his rights. He was inalienably co-heir with them.
- 3.) In law, the old life of the adopted person was completely wiped out; for instance, all debts were cancelled. **He was regarded as a new person entering into a new life with which the past had nothing to do.**
- 4.) In the eyes of the law he was absolutely the son of his new father. Roman history provides an outstanding case of how completely this was held to be true. The Emperor Claudius adopted Nero in order that he might succeed him on the throne; they were not in any sense blood relations. Claudius already had a daughter, Octavia.

[To cement the alliance Nero wished to marry her. Nero and Octavia were in no sense blood relations; yet, in the eyes of the law, they were brother and sister; and before they could marry, the Roman senate had to pass special legislation.]

### B. Spiritual Adoption:

#### **Romans 8:16-17** HCSB

<sup>14</sup> *All those led by God's Spirit are God's sons.* <sup>15</sup> *For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!"* <sup>16</sup> *The Spirit Himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children,* <sup>17</sup> *and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—seeing that we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.*

**Footnotes:** a. [Romans 8:15](#) The Greek word for adoption to sonship is a term referring to the full legal standing of an adopted male heir in Roman culture. B. [Romans 8:15](#) Aramaic for Father

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- **Testifies Together:**

Another picture from Roman adoption. He says that God's spirit witnesses with our spirit that we really are His children.

- *The adoption ceremony was carried out in the presence of seven witnesses. Now, suppose the adopting father died and there was some dispute about the right of the adopted son to inherit, one or more of the seven witnesses stepped forward and swore that the adoption was genuine. Thus the right of the adopted person was guaranteed and he entered into his inheritance.*

**So, Paul is saying, it is the Holy Spirit Himself is the witness to our adoption into the family of God.**

**Romans 8:16** *The Spirit Himself testifies with **our spirit** that we are God's children.*

**C. Pauline Concept:**

- Paul is hammering away at this Adoption Concept - mentioned 5X.
- Note in each reference **adoption is contrasted** with something.

**Romans 8:14-17** HCSB

<sup>14</sup> *All those led by God's Spirit are God's sons.*

<sup>15</sup> *For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!"* <sup>16</sup> *The Spirit Himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children,* <sup>17</sup> *and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—seeing that we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.*

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**Adoption OR:** Spirit of slavery and fear. A former attitude. We become HEIRS of God.

Heir: **-noun**

1.a person who inherits or has a right of inheritance in the property of another following the latter's death.

2.a.(in common law) a person who inherits all the property of a deceased person, as by descent, relationship, will, or legal process.

b. *Civil Law* . a person who legally succeeds to the place of a deceased person and assumes the rights and obligations of the deceased, as the liabilities for debts or the possessory rights to property.

3.a person who inherits or is entitled to inherit the rank, title, position, etc., of another.

**Origin:** 1225-75; Middle English *eir, heir* < Old French < Latin *hērēd-*(stem of *hērēs* ); akin to Greek *chēros* bereaved

**Romans 8:20-23** HCSB

<sup>20</sup> *For the creation was subjected to futility—not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it—in the hope* <sup>21</sup> *that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of corruption into the glorious freedom of God's children.* <sup>22</sup> *For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together with labor pains until now.* <sup>23</sup> *And not only that, but we ourselves who have the Spirit as the firstfruits—we also groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.*

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**Adoption OR:** Groaning (anticipation, desire) of creation and our own in expectation of the future or SELF fulfillment. A former expression.

**Romans 9:3-12** HCSB

*<sup>3</sup> For I could almost wish to be cursed and cut off from the Messiah for the benefit of my brothers, my own flesh and blood. <sup>4</sup> They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises. <sup>5</sup> The ancestors are theirs, and from them, by physical descent, came the Messiah, who is God over all, praised forever. Amen. <sup>6</sup> But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. <sup>7</sup> Neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants. On the contrary, your offspring will be traced through Isaac. <sup>8</sup> That is, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, **but the children of the promise are considered to be the offspring.** <sup>9</sup> For this is the statement of the promise: At this time I will come, and Sarah will have a son. <sup>10</sup> And not only that, but also Rebekah received a promise when she became pregnant by one man, our ancestor Isaac. <sup>11</sup> For though her sons had not been born yet or done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to election might stand—<sup>12</sup> not from works but from the One who calls—she was told: The older will serve the younger.*

**Adoption OR:** Those who are not God's adopted people. A former allegiance to our Family of origin, lineage.

**Galatians 4:3-7** HCSB

*In the same way we also, when we were children, were in slavery under the elemental forces of the world. <sup>4</sup> When the time came to completion, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. <sup>6</sup> And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" <sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.*

**Adoption OR:** Bondage under the law, we were enslaved. A former position. We become members of God's family.

**Ephesians:1:4-14** HCSB

*<sup>4</sup> For He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love <sup>5</sup> He predestined us to be adopted through Jesus Christ for Himself, according to His favor and will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of His glorious grace that He favored us with in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup> We have redemption in Him through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace <sup>8</sup> that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. <sup>9</sup> He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure that He planned in Him <sup>10</sup> for the administration<sup>[c]</sup> of the days of fulfillment — to bring everything together in the Messiah, both things in heaven and things on earth in Him. <sup>11</sup> We have also received an inheritance in Him, predestined according to the purpose of the One who works out everything in agreement with the decision of His will, <sup>12</sup> so that we who had already put our hope in the Messiah might bring praise to His glory. <sup>13</sup> When you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed in Him, you were also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. <sup>14</sup> He is the down payment of our inheritance, for the redemption of the possession, to the praise of His glory.*

**Adoption OR:** Our former life of trespasses. A former behavior.

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**We are either Adopted into A FULL HEIR OF CHRIST'S or we are the contrast listed in these verses.**

**Jesus says:**

**Hebrews 2:10-13** HCSB (We become siblings of JC says LUKE or APOLLOS)

*<sup>10</sup>For in bringing many sons to glory, it was entirely appropriate that God—all things exist for Him and through Him—should make the source of their salvation perfect through sufferings. <sup>11</sup>For the One who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers,<sup>12</sup> saying:*

*I will proclaim Your name to My brothers;*

*I will sing hymns to You in the congregation.*

*<sup>13</sup>Again, I will trust in Him. And again, **Here I am with the children God gave Me.***

<sup>13</sup>Footnotes: a. [Hebrews 2:12](#) Psalm 22:22 b. [Hebrews 2:13](#) Isaiah 8:17 c. [Hebrews 2:13](#) Isaiah 8:18

- God is the adopter.
- We are the adopted.
- Jesus Christ is the agent, made it possible.

**1 John 3:2** HCSB

*Dear friends, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him because we will see Him as He is.*

- Adoption is past, present, and future.
- I was saved, I am being saved, and I will be saved.

## **II. My response to Adoption: [The Adoption Test]**

Do I live like God's kid? Am I confident or wondering?

Do I embrace all that **Adoption brings:**

Luke 11:11-13; John 17:23 We receive a Father's compassion and care.

Psalm 23:1 He provides our needs.

Psalm 144:1-2 He protects us.

John 14:26 He instructs us.

Hebrews 12:7 He corrects us.

Hebrews 4:14-16 We have bold access to God.

1 John 3:1-2 We become more and more like Christ.

Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 1:3-5 We become heirs of God with Christ.

Do I portray **Evidences of adoption:**

Romans 8:4; Galatians 5:18 Led by the Spirit.

Galatians 4:5-6 Childlike confidence in God.

Ephesians 3:12 Confident access to God.

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1 John 2:9-11; 5:1

Love for the brethren.

1 John 5:1-3

Obedience to God.

- Is slavery/addiction/fear a former attitude?
- Is self fulfillment a former expression?
- Is my natural family of origin a former allegiance? (*I can't because my family would not understand or I have always been treated like dirt so dirt I must be.*)
- Is my esteem based on my accomplishments (a former position) or on God's accomplishments?
- Do I live like God's kid or do I embrace my former behavior?

### WHOSE KID AM I?

**One can tell by what I think about myself  
And by how I live my life**

**Adoption means = How has my definition changed now that....**

### EXTRA NOTES:

#### III. What Adoption Is Not:

ASK: Does Adoption make us just like Jesus? How much like?

If we are born again into God's family, why would we need to be adopted?

- It is not the same as the relationship between God the Father and God the Son.
- It is not the same relationship between God and all His people and creation.

#### Adoptionism:

- Christ was originally a man, though born of a virgin by a special decree of God.

After being tested (40 days in wilderness), He was given supernatural powers at His baptism. God rewarded Him for his character and achievements by raising Him from the dead and adopting Him into the Godhead. HE WAS A MAN WHO BECAME GOD. (Denies the trinity. Form of Unitarianism. Similarities to Mormonism that teaches all true Mormons will become Gods.)

- Can you see any threads of eschatological thought in this heresy?

Man who can become a God. Possibility of man earning his way to deification.

Man being man's answer to all the world's problems. Jesus, being the first man to attain this level with God, so now other men, who live righteous, can also follow this path. Self aggrandizement all over again.

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New Testament never uses the word adoption concerning Jesus Christ. He is called the “Only Begotten” meaning unique... begotten is used in NKJV and NASB. One and only in NIV.

1. **John 1:14 New American Standard Bible**  
[ *The Word Made Flesh* ] And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the **only begotten** from the Father, full of grace and truth.
2. **John 1:18 New American Standard Bible**  
No one has seen God at any time; the **only begotten** God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.
3. **John 3:16 New American Standard Bible**  
“For God so loved the world, that He gave His **only begotten** Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
4. **John 3:18 New American Standard Bible**  
He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the **only begotten** Son of God.
5. **1 John 4:9 New American Standard Bible**  
By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His **only begotten** Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

**Jesus is God, part of the Triune God, the Trinity.**

We must own this biblically. It will be denounced in the endtimes.

Look for the establishment of a fact about Jesus’ nature at the beginning of this passage:

**READ: Philippians 2:5-11**

<sup>5</sup> *In your relationships with one another, have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had:*

<sup>6</sup> *Who, being in very nature <sup>[a]</sup> God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;*

<sup>7</sup> *rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature <sup>[b]</sup> of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

<sup>8</sup> *And being found in appearance as a human being, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!*

<sup>9</sup> *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,*

<sup>10</sup> *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,*

<sup>11</sup> *and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**Luke 1:31-35 (Annunciation)**

<sup>31</sup> *You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.* <sup>32</sup> *He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,* <sup>33</sup> *and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”*

<sup>34</sup> *“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”*

<sup>35</sup> *The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called <sup>[a]</sup> the Son of God. Footnotes: a. [Luke 1:35](#) Or So the child to be born will be called holy,*

The Name “Jesus Christ”

Fill in the blank: The name Jesus means ‘Savior’.

As the name given to God’s Son at His birth, Jesus speaks of His human nature.

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The name Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew Messiah and means 'the Anointed One.' Pointing to His divinity. His Father is our Heavenly Father; His mother was Mary. With this parentage, Jesus is truly human and truly divine. We can identify with Him as a human who experiences life as we do, only without sinning. We can also look to Him as a member of the divine Godhead, knowing He has made us children of God.

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The Holy Spirit's role in ....: (use what wording? Use where?)

Seal	Ephesians 1:13
Pledge of more to come.	Ephesians 1:14
Sanctifier	1 Peter 1:2
Giver of Gifts	1 Corinthians 12:4-11
Producer of Fruits	Galatians 5:22-23

New Testament references to the concept of adoption:

Sons:

Romans 8:14, 19  
2 Corinthians 6:18  
Galatians 3:26; 4:6-7  
Hebrews 2:10; 12:5-8

Children:

Romans 8:16-17, 21; 9:8  
Galatians 4:28  
Ephesians 5:1  
1 John 3:10; 5:2

**Homework:**

Old Testament adoption:

Exodus 2:10 Moses  
1 Kings 11:20 Genubath  
Esther 2:7, 15 Esther

Sons of God:

Exodus 4:22-23  
Deuteronomy 14:1-2, 32:18-20  
Jeremiah 31:9  
Hosea 1:10, 11:1  
Malachi 1:6, 3:17

Who are the 'sons' of God in these references?

Which passages speak of someone being a son by birth?

Which verses imply adoption as sons?

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- Who initiated Jesus' setting aside His divine privileges? What does this say about the authenticity of His humanity? (Vs. 7)

*{Jesus initiated the surrender of His divine prerogatives. He was not just God in all His glory walking around in a human suit. Jesus' humanity was not a trick: He actually gave up powers so that He could experience life like we do.}*

- To what extent was Jesus human? (Vs. 7, 8)

*{Jesus took up 'the very nature of a servant', placing himself under the Father's authority(7). He was made in 'human likeness' bodily form. But Jesus was not just a humbled divine being walking around in a human body. He also died physically(8), an experience that is strictly earthly.}*

- What does verse 9 reveal about Jesus' divine nature?

*{Jesus has been exalted to the highest place – at the right hand of the Father – a place where no created being can sit. He has the highest name of all; since no one's name can be higher than God's, this is also confirmation of Jesus' divinity.}*

- What rewards have been given to Jesus for His obedience? (Vs. 9-11)

*{Because of Jesus' obedience in taking on a human nature so that He could accomplish salvation through the Cross, God has exalted Him, has given Him His name, and will cause all humanity to acknowledge Jesus' lordship. If Jesus had never given up His divine privileges and become human, He would not have needed to be exalted.}*

- What hope does Jesus' full obedience to become human prove to us today?

*{Jesus' obedience provides hope for our salvation, for it could not have been achieved by any other means. His obedience shows that we, too, can be obedient and be confident that we will be rewarded for our faithfulness.}*

- What announcement is made in verse 31? What does this indicate about the nature of Jesus?

*{Gabriel announced that Mary would become pregnant and give birth to a son. This indicates that Jesus is fully human, born as a physical being.}*

- What promise are made in verses 32 & 33? What do these promises indicate about the nature of Jesus?

*{Jesus would be called the Son of the Most High and be given the throne of David, indicating that Jesus is the Messiah and as such is fully divine.}*

- What is important about the way Mary became pregnant?

*{Jesus did not have a human father, but He did have a human mother. Mary was not just a host for the divine being: Jesus was very literally her Son, developing in her womb like any other child. But He also was not the product of human conception, but the uniquely begotten Son of God (John3:16 <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.)}*

What are supposed to do now that we know this:

Remind people of the call to action, reflect on what will happen if they do it (some inspiration), and then often repeating the bottom line of the message.

### Closing Prayer:

**Jude 24** HCSB

*<sup>24</sup> Now to Him who is able to protect you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless and with great joy,*

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*25 to the only God our Savior,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
be glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time, now and forever. Amen.*

## Notes:

**ADOPTION** (υιοθεσία, *huiothesia*). A Greek phrase that describes the act of raising a child who is not biologically related. Used by Paul to describe God adopting humans—implied elsewhere in the Bible to represent membership in the family of God.

### Adoption in the Ancient Near East and the Hebrew Bible

The absence of a word that translates as “adoption” in Hebrew suggests that Israel did not practice legal adoption. However, this does not mean that adoption as a concept did not exist (Scott, *Adoption as Sons*, 61): there are certainly instances of someone taking a child into his or her care. For example, “Mordecai took [Esther] to be his daughter” because she had no mother or father (Esth 2:7). Despite the absence of a term, it is clear that the concept of adoption existed.

There are several other instances in the Hebrew Bible where adoption is represented:

- Moses grows up in Pharaoh’s household (Exod 2:1–10). The story of Moses also says that Pharaoh’s daughter agreed to pay wet nurse fees (Exod 2:9). In ancient Near Eastern legal codes, a person who pays the wet nurse fees to keep a child alive—particularly a foundling, or child who has been abandoned shortly after birth—assumes the child in his or her household (Malul, “Adoption of Foundlings,” 107–108).
- Ezekiel 16:1–7 uses much of the same legal terminology for adoption as the Babylonian code in its metaphor for God’s relationship to Israel (Malul, “Adoption of Foundlings,” 98–99). The metaphor suggests that God gradually becomes Israel’s father, not through sexual procreation, but through adoption (Miles, “Israel as Foundling”).
- Ruth’s formulaic declaration to stay with her mother-in-law (Ruth 1:16–17) might represent a rite of adoption. This is comparable to Jesus’ declaration from the cross, when he places his mother into the family of the disciple he loved (John 19:26–27).
- Abraham “adopts” his slave Eliezer of Damascus to be his heir before the birth of Ishmael and Isaac (Selman, “The Social Environment,” 125–127).
- Josephus describes Abraham as adopting Lot (*Antiquities*, 1.7.1), although he was writing in a Graeco-Roman context where legal adoption was practiced.

### Adoption in the Graeco-Roman World

Adoption was a legal act in the Graeco-Roman world. In ancient Greece, there were three types of adoption. In each of these three cases, adoption is necessary only to preserve the estate (Edwards, “Introduction,” 8–10).

1. *Inter vivos* adoption occurred when someone adopted a son during his lifetime.

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2. Testamentary adoption involved designating an adopted son in a will (Isaeus, “On the Estate of Appolodorus,” 119).
3. If a man died without appointing a legitimate heir, the next of kin’s offspring would be adopted in the third type: posthumous adoption (Isaeus, “On the Estate of Hagnias,” 192–193).

In the Roman world, social standing (i.e. slave or free, male or female) determined who had the right to adopt, and who could be adopted under what terms. As in Greece, women were virtually removed from this system: They could not legally adopt because they were under the guardianship of their male relatives. They were also adopted at a far lower rate than males, since the usual reason for adoption was to provide an heir—women were restricted in inheritance rights. Additionally, children under the age of puberty were rarely adopted.

Adopting someone of age had an advantage in that “the adopter has the opportunity to engage with the individual before making a final choice” (Lindsay, “Adoption,” 201). Someone who had already proven abilities for managing a household would be a good investment as an heir. For this reason, young men who had at least reached puberty or adulthood were more likely to be adopted than an infant.

In the Roman Empire, there are also three types of adoption.

1. Adoption (*adoptatio*) and adrogation (*adrogatio*) both involve outsiders becoming children in another family, but the difference is in the overseeing authorities.
  - For *adoptatio*, the praetor, or local magistrate, must approve of the new relationship. The adoptee in this case is moving from one *paterfamilias* to another, so his social status has not changed.
  - In the case of *adrogation*, the adoption must be approved via a commission called the *comitia curiata*. This commission was located in Rome. *Adrogation* occurs “when persons who are their own masters deliver themselves into the control of another, and are themselves responsible for the act” (Gellius, *Attic Nights*, V.19.4). The people were suspicious of *adrogation* because one *paterfamilias* (literally father-family; the basic familial organization of the Roman world) was dissolved into another. In a culture where the authority of a *paterfamilias* was the pinnacle of personal relations, someone’s willingness to go from independent to dependent status needed to be reviewed. The extinction of the adoptee’s family of origin was legally and socially serious. There were some acceptable motivations under which *adrogation* might occur, like the intention of seeking an heir (Lindsay, “Adoption,” 203).
2. Testamentary adoption is often mentioned in literary works, but does not appear separately in the writings of legal authorities. In this case, the beneficiary does not even leave his own family to become part of the household of the adopter. This type of adoption appears to allow someone to inherit at least a portion of an estate without dissolving his own ties to his *paterfamilias* (Lindsay, “Adoption,” 203).

Roman emperors frequently had to adopt an heir. The emperors were plagued both with reproductive difficulties and the reality that their heirs were frequent targets of enemies. Emperors also sought competent heirs, and their natural biological children did not always fit the bill. In the span of accessions in the 97 years between Nerva and Commodus, every heir to the throne was legitimized by adoption (Goodman, *The Roman World*, 67).

## Adoption in the New Testament

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A few New Testament instances allude to the Old Testament view of adoption, perhaps even indicating the legal kind (e.g., John 19:26–27; Jas 1:27, which is about caring for orphans). But adoption is most often used in a theological sense.

Paul uses adoption in Romans to describe the relationship between God and the followers of Jesus (Rom 8:15, 23; 9:4; compare Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5). He uses one Greek term for adoption: υιοθεσία (*huiiothesia*). The term υιοθεσία (*huiiothesia*) is rarely found in literary sources, but is prevalent in inscriptions and documentary papyri. Still, Paul had other options of words meaning adoption that were more explicitly tied to religious concepts (Scott, *Adoption as Sons*, 27, 45, 55). So, why did Paul use υιοθεσία (*huiiothesia*)? It may be significant that he chose a word that contains the word (υιός, *huios*), which means “son.” His use of a term that invokes adopted *sonship* may have linked the term with other masculine terms in Romans, such as “seed” and “circumcision.” He may also have been challenging the authority of the emperor over the sons of Rome.

Paul’s use of terms such as brothers and sisters, father, and adoption allows him to construct a family of people who are not biologically related—the community of believers (Rom 8:15–21; Gal 4:4–6). “Christ has enabled Jews and Gentiles to become related to each other as children of Abraham, but they do not cease to be Jews and Gentiles” (Eisenbaum, “Is Paul,” 521). In the Abrahamic line, the distinction is maintained biologically, but the family is created through adoption.

At the time Paul was writing, a series of laws referred to as the *Lex Iulia et Papia Poppaea* required Roman citizens to bear children to build up the Roman population. Paul’s use of adoption as the means to grow God’s family stands in direct opposition to these laws. Paul’s theology not only made the family of God more open than the family of the Roman state, it also created a community that valued those who could not produce biological heirs. The family of God, created through adoption, is open to anyone who wants to be a part of it.

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MICHELLE J. MORRIS

**ADOPTION IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST** An act by which a man or woman acknowledges a person of different blood as his or her son or daughter and bestows on that person the legal rights and duties of a true child.

### Overview

Literature from the ancient Near East indicates that adoption took place from very early times and held an important role in society. In Mesopotamian culture, children were valued for their ability to carry on the family name and care for parents in their old age (de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 51). Childless couples had the options of adoption, divorce and remarriage, and even polygamy. Those who adopted a child agreed that the child would be their heir, regardless of how many natural children were born to them after the adoption. An adopted boy in particular enjoyed full rights of inheritance as well as all the other rights and duties that natural children would have. Parents who broke the adoption agreement could face a fine or risk losing their entire estate. A child who broke the adoption agreement could lose his or her freedom.

In the ancient Near East, kinship terms such as “son,” “brother,” or “eldest son” were not limited to biological relationships but instead “define special juridical relationships that can be created artificially through various types of adoption and specifications” (Frymer-Kensky, “Patriarchal Family Relationships,” 214). Thus, these terms essentially describe “a particular juridical relationship which may be entered into by contract as well as by birth. People adopt others as brothers, brothers adopt each other as sons, brothers adopt women as sisters, and the designation of an individual as ‘first-born’ can also be a matter of choice” (Frymer-Kensky, “Patriarchal Family Relationships,” 214).

Mesopotamian cuneiform tablets illuminate the family customs described in the narratives of the patriarchs (Gen 15–31). The earliest written laws to provide clear definitions of adoption appear in the 18th-century BC Code of Hammurabi.

### Adoption in the Old Testament

The Old Testament contains no laws regarding adoptions (de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 51). The Old Testament narratives similarly do not specifically refer to adoption (compare Gen 30:1–13; 48:5, 12; 50:23). Various explanations have been offered for the lack of references to adoption in the Old Testament—especially considering the prevalence of adoption in regions neighboring the Israelites.

One such explanation concerns the polygamous marriage practices attested in the Old Testament. Those who hold this view argue that Old Testament marriage law allowed polygamy, which considerably reduced the likelihood of childlessness and reduced the need for adoption. In contrast, Babylonian marriage law, which was based on monogamy, increased the threat of childlessness and thus made the concept of adoption more attractive. One objection to this explanation is that polygamy was not necessarily the norm in ancient Israel. Furthermore, it is not easy to see why polygamy and adoption should be mutually exclusive (Boecker, *Law and the Administration of Justice*, 120).

Another explanation concerns the institution of so-called levirate marriage, whereby the brother of a deceased man was expected to marry and provide children for his brother’s widow (e.g., Deut 25:5–10). The firstborn child of this new union was legally regarded as the dead man’s child, even with respect to his right of inheritance (Racah, *Widows at the Gate*, 326–36). However, the laws regarding levirate

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marriage acknowledged the possibility that a man might refuse to fulfill his duty. The paucity of references to levirate marriage practices in ancient Near Eastern literature portray it as a practice that is in addition to—not instead of—adoption. Thus, the custom of the levirate marriage cannot fully explain the absence of references to adoption in the Old Testament (Boecker, *Law and the Administration of Justice*, 121–22).

Raccah argues that “the Israelite family was based on the agnatic principle of blood kinship, that is, patrilineal descent,” and therefore adoption was not allowed (Raccah, *Widows at the Gate*, 326; see also Hempel, *Das Ethos des Alten Testaments*, 69). Another explanation is that adoption is absent from the Old Testament for theological reasons, since having descendants was a sign and an expression of God’s blessing. One could not and might not force God’s hand, and adoption was clearly regarded as an unlawful human manipulation designed to substitute God’s blessing by one’s own means (Boecker, *Law and the Administration of Justice*, 122).

### Sumerian Laws Exercise Tablet

The Sumerian Laws Exercise Tablet, a scribal training tool written by a student named Bēlshunu around 1800 BC, contains three laws relating to adoption (Roth, *Law Collections*, 42):

#### Law 4

“If he [the adopted son] declares to his father and mother, ‘You are not my father,’ or ‘You are not my mother,’ he shall forfeit house, field, orchard, slaves and possessions and they shall sell him for silver [into slavery] for his full value.”

#### Law 5

“[If] his [adoptive] father and mother declare to him, ‘You are not our son,’ they shall forfeit ... the estate.”

#### Law 6

“If his [adoptive] father and mother declare [to him], ‘You are not our son,’ they shall forfeit [the estate].”

These three laws take for granted that adoption of a son did take place but provide no details as to how or why it took place. These laws appear to respond to cases where either the adoptee or the adopter wanted to terminate the filial relationship. Furthermore, these laws indicate that the father and the mother equally shared the adoption relationship and its accompanying responsibilities. Consequences for breaking these laws include slavery for the repudiating son or loss of property for the repudiating parents (Roth, *Law Collections*, 43). Later Mesopotamian law codes contained similar laws and provided protection to both the adoptive parents and the adopted child.

### Laws of Eshnunna

The Laws of Eshnunna (ca. 1770 BC) contain primarily casuistic laws introduced by the conjunction “if.” Four laws deal with the subject of adoption (Roth, *Law Collections*, 57–58):

#### LE 32

“If a man gives his child for suckling and for rearing but does not give the food, oil, and

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clothing rations [to the caregiver] for three years, he shall weigh and deliver 10 shekels of silver for the cost of the rearing of the child, and he shall take away his child.”

**LE 33**

“If a slave woman acts to defraud and give her child to a woman of the *awīlu*-class [a member of the highest privileged class], when he grows up should his master locate him, he shall seize him and take him away.”

**LE 34**

“If a slave woman of the palace should give her son or her daughter to a commoner for rearing, the palace shall remove the son or daughter whom she gave.”

**LE 35**

“However, an adopter who takes in adoption the child of a slave woman of the palace shall restore [another slave of] equal value for the palace.”

These laws do not deal with adoption proper—they do not specify that an adoption contract was made, that money changed hands, or that the child was under any obligations. Rather, LE 32 specifies that the father of a child given up for adoption has to provide for his care for three years. This indicates that the father did not give up the child for adoption for economic reasons; instead, the adopting father had to be compensated for taking the child in. It is possible that this law deals with guardianship and care of a child for his first three years rather than adoption proper.

The other three laws deal with the offspring of a slave who has been given up for adoption. In each case, the slave woman seems to be attempting to protect her child from also becoming a slave. In LE 33, a slave intentionally seeks to defraud her master by placing her child up for adoption. In so doing, the slave is “stealing” from her master, since her child would also be considered the master’s slave. The specification that the child is given to a woman of the upper class, and the lack of references to the woman’s husband, may indicate that at that time a noblewoman in Eshnunna could transact adoption on her own. The laws does not call for any indemnity paid to the adopting mother, likely because she did not need the child to care for her financially in her old age. In contrast, LE 34 deals with a palace slave who puts her child up for adoption. In this case, the child would belong to the palace, making the adoption illegal. LE 35 builds on LE 34 by specifying that the anyone who accepts a slave woman’s child must forfeit one of their own slaves to the palace.

## Laws of Hammurabi

The Code of Hammurabi is a collection of laws that draws on the traditions of earlier law collections and likely influenced those that came later (Roth, *Law Collections*, 71–72). The ordinances that deal with adoption in the Code of Hammurabi are primarily concerned with safeguarding the natural parents’ right over him, rather than providing a home for an orphaned child. This indicates that adoption was a

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definitive step, but in certain cases it could be reversed (Boecker, *Law and the Administration of Justice*, 117). The Code of Hammurabi contains no provisions regarding the levirate union (Driver and Miles, *Assyrian Laws*, 245).

Adoption was very common during the Babylonian classical periods. The goals of adoption included:

- carrying on a dynasty occupation or family name
- providing care for a parent in their old age
- protecting property right.

Driver and Miles explain that the types of adoption regulated in the laws are those in which the adopter is a member of the highest privileged class (an *awīlu*) “whose object is to get a son to continue the family, a craftsman who wishes to obtain and train an apprentice to carry on his trade, and certain officials of the palace who, being eunuchs incapable of begetting offspring or epicenes debarred from bearing children, seek by this means to ensure their support in old age” (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 383).

The regulations can be summarized as follows:

- Birth parents (with the exception of vestals, temple slaves, certain palace officials, and slaves) had to consent to the adoption. Upon completing the adoption, the birth parents released any claim to the child.
- Adopted children were considered full and legal heirs of their adoptive parents.
- If an adoptive parent subsequently had a biological child, he could return the adopted child to his birth parents; however, the adoptive parents had to give the adopted child a portion of his property.
- An adoptee who wanted to return to his or her birth parents could be punished by having his eye or tongue removed.

Adoption was not restricted to couples. Both men and women could adopt, whether they were single or married. While adoptees were expected to fulfill their parents’ expectations (which in some instances approached servitude similar to slavery), the Code of Hammurabi makes it clear that they had rights within their adoptive families, both in terms of property and position. The following paragraphs will briefly review the laws concerning adoption in the Code of Hammurabi and their significance.

### § 185

Law § 185 establishes the principle of adoption “for life”: “If a man takes in adoption a young child at birth and then rears him, that rearing [young child] will not be reclaimed” (Roth, *Law Collections*, 119). The term “young child” (*šihrum*) in this law referred to any child below the age of puberty. The law specifies that the adoption is *ina mēšu*, meaning that the child is solemnly named the *mârum* [son] of his adoptive parents (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 388–89).

### § 186

Law § 186 concerns an adopted child and his birth parents: “If a man takes in adoption a young child, and when he takes him, he [either the child or adoptive father] is seeking his father and mother, that rearing shall return to his father’s house” (Roth, *Law Collections*, 119). This law could be interpreted either as giving the adopted child the permission to seek and return to his birth parents, or to state that if the adoptive father finds the child’s natural parents, the child was legally entitled to return to his real family at any time (Boecker, *Law and the Administration of Justice*, 117; compare Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 390). In either case, the adopted child or the adoptive father could sever the adoptive relationship,

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although Driver and Miles find it “difficult to imagine any form of compulsion brought by the adopter to bear on the parents of the adoptee” (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 390).

### § 187

Law § 187 builds on Law § 186 by placing limitations on the child’s ability to return to his birth parents: “A child of [i.e., reared by] a courtier who is a palace attendant or a child of [i.e., reared by] a *sekretu* [member of a group or class of temple dedicatees] will not be reclaimed” (Roth, *Law Collections*, 119). In this case, it seems that the palace attendant did not want to or could not be encumbered with a child. It is also possible that the *sekretu* yielded enough power to forestall such a reversal of adoption. Driver and Miles suggest that the child in question may not have been the courtier’s or *sekretu*’s natural child but an adopted one (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 392).

### § 188

Law § 188 does not specifically deal with adoption, but with the cognate subject of apprenticeship: “If a craftsman takes a young child to rear and then teaches him his craft, he will not be reclaimed” (Roth, *Law Collections*, 119). In this case, the child was either taken to be brought up and trained in a craft, thus following the adoptive parent’s profession, or was part of a “guardianship or foster-parentage” relationship (David, *Die Adoption*, 34–35). The child in question would not be an infant but a boy capable of learning a trade (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 394).

Contrary to modern apprenticeship, if the boy was taught the craft, he could not be reclaimed by his natural parents but “must become a member of the craftsman’s family” (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 393). The custom was roughly equivalent to the modern retirement fund: The child was brought up for the purpose of carrying on the trade of the craftsman, thus ensuring that the craftsman would have a certain level of economic care in his old age. Returning the trained child to his birth parents would diminish the craftsman’s possibility to be taken care of in his old age. Additionally, the craftsman had invested too much in the training and upkeep of the child to dispense of him. David suggests that the irrevocable nature of this arrangement implies that the trained boy will inherit his master’s business, though the law does not guarantee this (David, *Die Adoption*, 35).

### § 189

Law § 189 builds on § 188 by specifying that if the craftsman fails to teach the adoptee his trade, the child can be returned to his parents: “If he should not teach him his craft, that rearling shall return to his father’s house” (Roth, *Law Collections*, 119). Driver and Miles suggest it is likely that “a provision was included or implied in the contract enabling the craftsman to send the boy back to his home if he could not or would not learn” (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 394).

### § 190

Law § 190 states that an adopted son has the right to return to his natural parents if his adoptive parents do not treat him as a son: “If a man should not reckon the young child whom he took and raised in adoption as equal with his children, that rearling shall return to his father’s house” (Roth, *Law Collections*, 119). Normally, the adopted son would have the right to inherit the adoptive father’s property. There is no indication in this law that the adoption is in any way abnormal or that the adoptive parents or the natural parents of the boy are other than free persons. However, it appears that the adopted boy has no right of inheritance in his adoptive family. By returning to his natural father’s house, the child renounces all rights in connection with his adoptive family. In doing so, he would reacquire his right to inherit from

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his natural father (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 396). By not treating the adoptee as one of his own sons, the adoptive father was in effect breaking any contractual agreement that may have been in place.

### § 191

Law § 191 addresses the dissolution of the adoptive tie: “If a man establishes his household [by reckoning as equal with any future children] the young child whom he took and raised in adoption, but afterwards he has children [of his own] and then decides to disinherit the rearing, that young child will not depart empty-handed; the father who raised him shall give him a one-third share of his property as his inheritance and he shall depart; he will not give him any property from field, orchard, or house” (Roth, *Law Collections*, 119–20).

The proper interpretation of this law is debated. David argues that the child addressed in this law is an infant who has been fully adopted, brought up by his adoptive father, and has thus acquired rights of succession. But having had “natural” sons, the adoptive father wishes to get rid of his adopted son (*Die Adoption*, 39–40). Objections to this interpretation are:

- The circumstances presented in the opening lines of § 191 are identical with those of § 190, rendering it difficult to regard one law as referring to a child given in adoption by its own parents and the other to a foundling.
- Law § 191 does not mention the adoptee’s father’s house, as § 190 does, possibly indicating that the adoptee may be grown up and dwelling in his own house.
- It is unlikely that, if the child were just an infant, the law would show any interest in him.

Based on these points, it seems more likely that § 191 is the converse of § 190, concerning the adopted son leaving his adoptive father rather than the adoptive father abandoning his adopted son (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 398).

Law § 191 specifies that if a man had children of his own after a legal adoption, he had the option to disinherit his adopted son but would be required to pay that adopted son a third of his property (Boecker, *Law and the Administration of Justice*, 117). It is unclear whether the adoptee receives his one-third share immediately or whether it will be delivered to him only upon the adopted father’s death. Most likely the payment was immediate, since the adoptee had ceased to be a member of the family. It also appears that the adoptee is to be paid out of the adopter’s personal or acquired property, since the adoptee is expressly said to receive no part of the ancestral family estate (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 401).

### § 192–193

Laws § 192–193 indicate that arbitrary rescission of the adoptive relationship, either by the father or by the son, carried severe penalties. In both these laws, it is the adopted child who wrongfully breaks the adoptive relationship. Both laws address only the case of adopted sons of a courtier or privileged members of society (*sekretu*), not ordinary citizens. It is unclear whether these clauses are exceptions intended to satisfy the rich or whether they applied to everyone.

Law § 192 addresses a situation in which the adoptee makes a formal declaration to his adoptive parent, similar to a later divorce formula among people of the Near East: “If the child of [i.e., reared by] a courtier or the child of [i.e., reared by] a *sekretu* [member of a group or class of temple dedicatees] should say to the father who raised him or to the mother who raised him, ‘You are not my father,’ or ‘You are not my mother,’ they shall cut out his tongue.” Law § 193 concerns a situation in which an adopted child returns to his natural father’s house: “If the child of [i.e., reared by] a courtier or the child of [i.e., reared

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by] a *sekretu* identifies with his father's house and repudiates the father who raised him or the mother who raised him and depart for his father's house, they shall pluck out his eyes."

The declaration " 'You are not my father,' or 'You are not my mother,' " in § 192 may have been some prescribed formula used for creating or dissolving an adoption (David, *Die Adoption*, 79–81). It is possible that before the penalty was carried out, the parties had recourse to a court (which was necessary in the case of disinheriting a son). It seems probable that a formal repudiation had to be proved.

Driver and Miles argue that the different penalties prescribed in § 192 and § 193 indicate that "the offences underlying these laws must be different" (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 404). They note that both laws reflect the principle of talion, in which a punishment is identical to the offense. In the case of § 192, the adopted son's tongue has committed the offense by uttering the formal denial of the adoption and must thus be cut out. In § 193, the adopted son's eye committed the offense by looking on his natural father's house, so it must be plucked out (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 404).

These laws seem intended to enable the noble or *sekretu* to retain the adoptee at all costs, since neither can have natural children. While § 193 specifies that the adoptee had returned to his natural father's house, § 192 does not specify whether the adoptee, having had his tongue cut out, was to remain with his adoptive parents. Driver suggests that "the adoptive parents retain their legal right over him, whether they shall keep him or give him up is left to their discretion" (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 404). The laws also do not clarify what caused the adoptee to withdraw from the adoption contract.

### §170

Law § 170 concerns a situation in which a father has had children with someone other than his first-ranking wife: "If a man's first-ranking wife bears him children and his slave woman bears him children, and the father during his lifetime then declares to [or concerning] the children whom the slave woman bore to him, 'My children,' and he reckons them with the children of the first-ranking wife—after the father goes to his fate, the children of the first-ranking wife and the children of the slave woman shall equally divide the property of the paternal estate; the preferred heir is a son of the first-ranking wife, he shall select and take a share first" (Roth, *Law Collections*, 113–14).

## Sumerian Laws Handbook of Forms

The Sumerian Laws Handbook of Forms (ca. 1700 BC) is a Sumerian compendium of contracts and contractual clauses, legal provisions comparable to those found in legal collections, and isolated phrases similar to those found in Old Babylonian contracts. Recorded by an accomplished scribe on a four-sided prism, this compilation displays professional organization and care (Roth, *Law Collections*, 46). Among the recordings we read:

- "He has adopted him as his son" (iv 25–26)
- "He has established him as his heir" (iv 27–28)
- "Into the status of foster child; into the status of apprentice-foster child" (iv 29–30)

These clauses are somewhat disjointed and have no context that would allow for a better understanding of them. However, they apparently indicate that a young male child was adopted and considered to be the son and heir of the one adopting him. The adoption also appears to have been performed for the purpose of learning and continuing the adopter's trade, thus perpetuating the adopter's legacy.

## Nuzi Tablets

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Archaeologists have discovered dozens of adoption tablets at Nuzi, a city-state that flourished during the 15th and 14th centuries BC. In this society it was customary for a man who had no children to adopt someone to carry on his name and inherit his property. Speiser notes that the Nuzi documents deal with both real adoption, in which there is “an actual transference of parental authority,” and nominal adoption, in which “adoption is used to further other purposes” (Speiser, “New Kirkuk Documents,” 7). Adoption was performed for various reasons in addition to childlessness. The adoptee, the majority of whom were males (Frymer-Kensky, “Patriarchal Family Relationships,” 211), did not need to be an orphan or a child; often he was a member of the adopter’s family (such as a nephew or cousin) or a member of the household. Through adoption, this individual would become son and heir in return for taking care of his adopted parents in their old age and providing for them in their death (Frymer-Kensky, “Patriarchal Family Relationships,” 211; Gadd, “Tablets from Kirkuk,” 126–27). This requirement explains why the adopter was sometimes willing to pay the parents for the privilege of adopting a child (Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, 385).

Several of the texts from Nuzi indicate the adopter already had children. For example, Nuzi tablet 2 records: “The tablet of adoption belonging to Nashwi, the son of Ar-shenni: he adopted Wullu, the son of Puh-shenni. As long as Nashwi is alive, Wullu will provide food and clothing; when Nashwi dies, Wullu shall become the heir. If Nashwi has a son of his own, he shall divide (the estate) equally with Wullu, but the son of Nashwi shall take the gods of Nashwi. However, if Nashwi does not have a son of his own, then Wullu shall take the gods of Nashwi. Furthermore, he gave his daughter Nuhuya in marriage to Wullu, and if Wullu takes another wife he shall forfeit the lands and buildings of Nashwi. Whoever defaults shall make compensation with 1 mina of silver and 1 mina of gold” (ANET, 219–20).

The Nuzi documents also indicate that a childless couple could adopt as heir one of their servants, just as Abraham adopted his servant Eliezer as heir (Gen 15). For example, consider Nuzi tablet H 60: “[Tablet] of adoption of [E]helteshup son of P[uhiy]a; [Zi]gi son of Akuya he a[do]pted: ‘Accordingly, [a]ll my lands, my [build]ings, [an]d my earnings, my domestics, one (part) of all my property, to Zigi I have given.’ In case Ehelteshup has any sons (of his own) a double portion they shall receive, and Zigi shall be second. If Ehelteshup has no sons, then Zigi shall be the (principal) heir. And Ehelteshup, another strange [= adopted] son in addition to Zigi shall not acquire. As long as Ehelteshup is alive, Zigi shall serve him; with garments he shall provide him. Whoever among them breaks the contract shall furnish one mina of silver and one mina of gold” (Speiser, “New Kirkuk Documents,” 30). In this case, Ehel-teshup adopts Zigi as principal heir, unless he has a son of his own.

The Nuzi documents indicate that as an alternative to adoption, a childless man’s wife could produce an heir “by proxy” by giving her servant to her husband. If a couple subsequently had a son of their own, then that son automatically became chief heir in place of any servant son (compare Gen 15:4; 17:18–21). In such cases, the servant and her son should not be sent away after the birth of a true heir. Consider Nuzi tablet H 67: “Tablet of adoption belonging to [Zigi] son of Akkuya; his son Shenni[ma] as son to Shu[rihil] he has given.] And Shu[rihil], as far as Shennima is concerned, all these lands, his earnings, whatever their description, one [portion] of it all to Shennima he has given. If Shurihil has a son [of his own,] firstborn [he shall be;] a double share he shall take. Shennima shall then be second and according to his allotment his inheritance share he shall take. As long as Shurihil is alive, Shennima shall serve him. When Shurihil [dies,] Shennima shall become h[eir.] Further, Gilimninu as wife to Shennima has been given. If Gilimninu bears [children,] Shennima shall not take another wife; and if Gilimninu does not bear, Gilimninu a woman of the Lullu as wife for Shennima shall take. As for [the concubine’s] offspring, Gilimninu shall [not] send [them] away. Any sons that out of the womb of Gilimninu [to She]nnima may be bor[n, all the] lands,

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buildings, [whatever their description,] to [these] sons are given. [In case] she does not bear [a s]on, then the daughter of Gilim[ninu of] the lands and buildings one portion shall take. As for Shurihil, another son in addition to Shennima he shall not adopt. Whoever among them breaks [the contract] shall furnish one mina of silver and one mina of gold. Moreover, Yalampa as handmaid to Gilimninu has been given, and Shatimninu for supervision has been assigned. As long as she is alive, she [Yalampa] shall serve her;] and Shatimninu [...] shall not annul. If Gilimninu bears [children] and Shennima takes another wife, her 'bundle' she shall pick up and she shall leave. 10 witnesses. The remaining sons of Zigi with the lands and buildings of the [above] one [part of the] property shall not interfere" (Speiser, "New Kirkuk Documents," 32).

While this document is defective in several places and must be considered as conjectural, it gives a glimpse of adoption customs as pertained to a son conceived through a servant. It further provides insight into several Old Testament narratives whereby a wife seeks to obtain children through her handmaid. For example, in Gen 16, Sarah instructs Abram to have a child with her maidservant, Hagar. Rachel similarly gives her maidservant, Bilhah, to Jacob to obtain children through her (Gen 30:3).

Only one Nuzi document contains a religious element: It specifies that when the adoptive mother dies, the adopted daughter "shall offer a libation of water for her." This apparently refers to some funerary rite, perhaps one connected with the worship of ancestors (David, *Die Adoption*, 93). In this instance, a woman is the one who has adopted a girl.

## Hittite Laws

The Hittite Laws we have access to contain no provisions for adoption. However, we may assume this was regulated by custom (Neufeld, *Hittite Laws*, 126). The idea of adoption is present in the Hittite custom that a man with daughters but no sons could select a husband for his daughter with the understanding that the son-in-law should enter his house and continue his family as a true son.

## Middle Assyrian Laws

The Middle Assyrian Laws (ca. 1076 BC) are a collection of laws from the Assyrian capital, Assur. The existing copies were apparently edited during the reign of Tiglath-pileser I and are composed of 15 tablets. These laws were collected either for his royal library or for individual scribal libraries. They appear to be copies of originals that were likely composed at least three centuries earlier (Roth, *Law Collections*, 153). Very few laws deal specifically with the subject of adoption. Those that do appear in Middle Assyrian Laws A.

Almost all the paragraphs in the Middle Assyrian Laws begin with the term "if" (*šumma*), indicating they are conditional clauses and case laws rather than definitive pronouncements. Further, the Middle Assyrian Laws concern two principal classes of people: the free person or "man" (*a'ilu*) and the male or female slave (*urdu* and *amtu*). Middle Assyrian Law A contains regulations concerning women of the *a'ilu*-class, that is, wives, widows, and devotees of the *qadiltu*-class (or *qadištu*-class), which are members of a group or class of minor temple dedicatees with special privileges.

Although Middle Assyrian Laws contain few regulations for adoption, we have recovered numerous adoption contracts or portions of them. These adoption documents, called a "sealed-tablet," seem to have been of considerable importance as a proof of adoption. Apparently, the adoption would be considered invalid or unable to be proven if the tablet was destroyed (Driver and Miles, *Assyrian Laws*, 223). Assyrians also made an "announcement" of the adoption in some public part of the city, usually in the city gate or the governor's residence.

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### *MAL A § 28*

MAL A § 28 deals with a child's legal position if his stepfather does not adopt him—something not dealt with in the Code of Hammurabi: “If a widow should enter a man's house and she is carrying her dead husband's surviving son with her [in her womb], he grows up in the house of the man who married her but no tablet of his adoption is written, he will not take an inheritance share from the estate of the one who raised him, and he will not be responsible for its debts; he shall take an inheritance share from the estate of his begetter in accordance with his portion” (Roth, *Law Collections*, 163). This law states that, although the child will be raised in his stepfather's household, the child will not be responsible for his stepfather's liabilities, nor will he have a part in his stepfather's inheritance unless his stepfather formally adopts him (Driver and Miles, *Assyrian Laws*, 223).

### *Daughter-in-Law Adoption*

Assyrians practiced a type of adoption in which a father acted as his son's agent in order to obtain a wife for him. In each instance, the man who adopted the girl acquired her as a daughter-in-law whom he could give in marriage only to one of his sons or to a slave, not as a daughter whom he could offer in marriage as he wished. MAL A § 30 concerns this type of adoption: “If a father should bring the ceremonial marriage prestation and present <the bridal gift> to the house of his son's father-in-law, and the woman is not yet given to his son, and another son of his, whose wife is residing in her own father's house, is dead, he shall give the wife of his deceased son into the protection of the household of his second son to whose father-in-law's house he has presented [the ceremonial marriage prestation]. If the master of the daughter who is receiving the bridal gift decides not to agree to give his daughter [in these altered circumstances], if the father who presented the bridal gift so pleases, he shall take his daughter-in-law [the wife of his deceased son] and give her in marriage to his [second] son. And if he so pleases, as much as he presented—lead, silver, gold, and anything not edible—he shall take back in the quantities originally given: he shall have no claim to anything edible” (Roth, *Law Collections*, 164).

Two additional laws (MAL A § 42 and MAL A § 43) do not specifically mention adoption but describe the exchange of gifts and the pouring of oil upon a young woman's head. These were contractual acts that declared that the young lady was now accepted (or adopted) into the man's family in order to marry one of his sons (see Roth, *Law Collections*, 169–70). These ceremonial deeds were quite common and reflected marriage contracts or ceremonies in which a slave or servant submitted to a master. These laws also specify that if the man's son disappeared or died, the man had the right to give the girl in marriage to any of his other sons. Thus, he does not merely acquire the girl for a specific son but acquires the right to give her to any of his sons. In these cases, the man adopts and thus acquires another man's daughter “for the purpose of a daughter-in-law” or to be offered publicly “in the gate.” The girl thus becomes the daughter of the person adopting her, who thereby obtains the right to marry her to anyone whom he likes, as a father could his own daughter (Driver and Miles, *Assyrian Laws*, 162–63).

### **Egypt**

Ancient Egyptians placed high value on family life, treasuring their children and regarding them as a great blessing. In lower-class families, the mother raised the children. Wealthy and noble families had slaves and servants who helped care for their children. If a couple had no children, they could pray to the gods and goddesses for help or use magic. They could also place letters at the tombs of dead relatives asking them to use their influence with the gods. If the couple still could not conceive a child, they could consider adoption (Peck, *Splendors of Ancient Egypt*, 74).

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In an inscription from the New Kingdom period (1539–1069 BC), a wife named Nanefer (possibly a temple attendant) specifies that her husband, Nebnefer, adopted her as a daughter so that she could inherit from him because they had no children: “Year 1, third month of summer, day 20, under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Ramses. On this day, proclamation to [the god] Amun of the accession of this noble god, he arising and shining forth, and making offering to Amun. Thereupon Nebnefer, my husband, made a writing for me, Nanefer, the musician of [the god] Seth, and made me a daughter of his, and wrote down for me all that he possessed, having no son or daughter apart from myself: ‘All profit that I have made with her, I will bequeath it to Nanefer, my wife, and if any of my own brothers or sisters arise to confront her at my death tomorrow or thereafter and say: “Let my brother’s share be given (to me) ...” ’ Before many and numerous witnesses: [names] “Behold, I have made the bequest to Nanefer, my wife, this day before Huyyeremw, my sister” ’ ” (Gardiner, “The Instruction to Kagemni,” 72).

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