7 ~ THE JESUS OF HISTORY AND THE JESUS OF FAITH

The Metaphor "Son-of-God" and its Hellenistic-Semitic and Greco-Roman Background

In light of the central aspect of the book, the focus of chapter 7 is on the transition between Jesus' *foundational experience* (in German: *Existenzverständnis* or *Anfangs-erfahrung*[1]) of being child of God to the confession of Christians (in German*: Glaubensbekenntnis*[2]) in a metaphor that Jesus is God's son.   This movement simultaneously represents the elements of *distanciation* (in German: *Entfernung*) and *engagement* (in German: *Aneignung*[3]). It is part and parcel of the *telling* and *showing* process in which Jesus is seen, on the one hand, as the defender of the fatherless and the notion, on the other hand, found in the Christian tradition, that God adopted people as God's children.

In chapter 8, my concern is the transition from the historical Jesus to the origins of the church. I pose five statements in this regard. One concerns the historicity of the circle of "The Twelve." I argue that Jesus did not create such a circle but that it was a notion used by the followers of Jesus to claim positions of power analogous to the twelve patriarchs of Israel.   This phenomenon shows that the earliest post-Easter Jesus movement already was inclined to *distanciate* themselves from Jesus' cause without even

knowing it. Therefore, the faith assertions of the post-Easter church also should be critically tested. I am referring to this process as *engaged hermeneutics*. In chapter 9, I demonstrate that the experience of being child of God, and the confessional assertion that Jesus is God's "adopted" child, form the nucleus of the notion that Jesus is both divine and human. This notion eventually led to the development of the dogma of the two natures of Jesus. I *deconstruct* this dogma to *affirm* the significance of the metaphor of being child of God. In the last chapter, the merit to reflect once more on the continued importance of the quest for the historical Jesus will be considered from the perspective of engaged hermeneutics.

Chapter 7 focuses on the roots of the dogma of the "two natures" of Jesus. This tenet can be traced back to Paul's thinking and to Johannine literature. Its foundation, however, is to some extent Jesus' invocation of God as "Father" (*Abba*). The expression "Abba, Father" is used by Jesus, as recorded in Mark 14:36. Matthew (26:39) contains only the expression "my Father," while Luke (22:42) has "Father." This invocation does not have exactly the same connotation as when Paul had Christians address God in this way. However, what Jesus and Paul do have in common is that "children of God" are not necessarily biological children of Abraham, as thought conventionally by the Israelites. By means of the expression "adoption as child," Paul gives expression to the conviction that believers are not by nature children of God, but on the basis of their being bound to Jesus, the Son-of-God.

The concept of adoption as God's child is a recurrent theme in Greco-Roman and Hellenistic-Semitic literature. I, therefore, present a few sidenotes for how the concept "son-of-god" was used in Greco-Roman and Hellenistic-Semitic literature.[4] First, I

mention that the second-century Roman philosopher Celsus accused the Christians of unjustifiably comparing Jesus' life story with the heroic figures in Greco-Roman literature. Perseus was the first in the series mentioned by Celsus. Second, I retell Ovid's story of the virginal conception of Perseus. Third, I will discuss the parallels between Paul's notion of adoption and Seneca's references to Hercules being adopted by Zeus. The focus will then shift to the Pauline notion of believers being adopted as children of God.

In Philippians 2:9-11, Paul uses the designation "Lord" (Ku/rioj) to describe the crown of Jesus' redemptive work: "God gave him...the name which is above each name, so that in the name of Jesus...each tongue would confess: 'Jesus Christ is *Kyrios*'." Similarly, the designation "son" is a metaphorical label with which the resurrected Jesus is addressed. Thus we read, for instance, in Hebrews (1:4) that the "most excellent name" that God gave the exalted Jesus and that lifted him above the angels, was the designation "son." In the Shepherd of Hermas (Sim. IX,14, 5) we learn that the "name Son-of-God is firm and supports the whole world."[5]

The two names "Kyrios" and "Son-of-God" belong together.[6] Son-of-God refers to the divine nature of the *Kyrios* who is honored as a cultic figure. Inversely, *Kyrios* refers to the status and function of the figure called Son-of-God. It was in Hellenistic Christianity that the label *Kyrios* was first given to Jesus to express his divine nature. Previously, Jesus was already called *Kyrios* by Aramaic-speaking Christians, but for another reason. In the synagogue, teachers of the law were called "Rabbi." The Aramaic-speaking Christians, influenced by Greek idiom, translated the word "Rabbi" with "Kyrios" and referred to Jesus as such, as can be seen, for example, in Matthew.[7]

Hellenistic Christians used the label "Son-of-God" as part of their missionary message. In the First Testament, this name referred to a messianic king. Now it attained a new meaning. For Christians today it seems that "Son-of-God" applies uniquely to Jesus in an ontological way. However, in the Hellenistic environment, it was commonly used for people who were considered divine. At this stage, the metaphor "Son-of-God" started referring to the divine being of Jesus. Jesus was distinguished from the human sphere on the basis of his divine nature. The metaphor thus pertained to a confessional function. With the confessional metaphor "Son-of-God" the claim was being made that Jesus had a divine origin and was filled with divine power.

To Christians embedded within the Israelite tradition, the idea that a messianic figure could be represented as being subject to suffering was offensive. However, to Hellenistic Christianity, such a representation regarding a son-of-god figure was not an obstacle, but a "mystery."[8] This paradoxical mystery consisted of the fact that a figure, divine in being, appeared in human form and accepted the fate of suffering as a human. This can be seen in the Christ hymn quoted by Paul in Philippians 2:6-11. For them the divine origin and power of the Son-of-God were not belied by his humanness.

One way in which divinity and humanness came together was in a child conceived through sexual intercourse of a deity with a mortal human. This is a legacy from the Greek tradition. The lives of people who were born as a result of such a union were characterized by heroic acts and spiritual contributions to humanity—benefactions far beyond ordinary human measure.[9] Many divine figures were known in the Hellenistic period. Such a figure claimed to be "son-of-god." Some of them were honored in cults. In these cults, the combination of divinity and humanness was not an issue. The

prevalent view in Greek thought was that the soul of each person was a "divine entity."[10] From the perspective of Greek mythology, interest was not as much in the ontological interrelationship of someone's divine nature and human nature, as in later Greek metaphysical philosophy, but more in the content of the divine figure's life (`bi/oj`) that was characterized by charismatic phenomena and miracles.[11]

Another way in which divinity and humanness came together during the time when the New Testament was written was the idea of "sons-of-gods." This was a legacy from eastern Hellenism and, initially, from ancient Eastern mythology. The sons-of-gods were honored in the cults of the mystery religions. They were taken to be savior figures of redemption. The myths about them recounted how they suffered the human fate of death but again rose from death (cf., e.g., the dying and rising Osiris myth in Egypt). Worshippers could partake in the redemption if they experienced the god's death and resurrection in the form of rites. The origin of these divine figures lies in ancient fertility religions.

The figure of the redeemer in Gnostic myth is related to these "mysteries." Some of the Christians who came from the heathen world made the birth and death of Jesus comprehensible by making use of the concepts "sonship-of-God" and the "Gnostic redemptive figure" who comes from above. Thus we read that the writer(s) of the Gospel of John say(s) the following about Jesus: "Such is God's love for the *cosmos*: He gave his 'only begotten' Son" (Jn 3:16). The Johannine school has Jesus say on the eve of his death: "I was born for this and entered the *cosmos* for this" (Jn 18:37). In 1 John 3:16 we read: "In this way we know what love is: that man [Jesus Christ, the Son-of-God – cf. 1 Jn 3:23], gave his life for our sake." In this kind of statement we see that the paradoxical

concept of a divine being (a "son-of-god") who became human and suffered a human fate may be related to the Gnostic idea of a redeemer who entered from above into the *cosmos* here below. The conceptualization of Jesus as Son-of-God varied in Hellenistic Christian circles, depending on which tradition–that of the Greek mythological or that of the Eastern mythological-Gnostic "son-of-god"–more greatly influenced it.

The synoptic gospels in essence represent the first type (the Greek tradition) insofar as they represent Jesus as the Son-of-God who reveals his divine authority.[12] This is a mode of representation that fit into that part of Christian thought that was determined by Israelite views. Within this structure, the "power" manifested in the life of the divine figure is attributed to the Divine Spirit. This is a phenomenon that, according to Hellenistic interpretations, also appeared in the lives of First-Testament "holy men of God," like David and the prophets. To those Christians influenced by Israelite thinking, this served as an analogy for their confession that the Christ was the Son-of-God. The faith assertion found in the Markan report about Jesus' baptism can be seen as an illustration of this conviction.[13]

In the first type of the combination of the divine and human, the divine figure was a miracle worker filled with the Divine Spirit. According to the second type (Eastern mythology), Jesus was seen as the preexisting Son-of-God who became human. Paul (like John) takes this notion as his point of departure. The pre-Pauline Christ hymn (Plp 2:6-11) also indicates that Paul was not the first person to have imported this idea into Christian thought. It is a pre-Christian concept that is found in the writings of Greek-speaking Israelites.[14] Paul, therefore, did not see Jesus as a miracle worker.[15] In a certain sense, these two types were mutually exclusive.

These two "christologies" were combined at a later (post-New Testament) stage. In this time, the New-Testament writings were used for reflection. Both types were represented in the various New-Testament texts. The synoptic gospels portray Jesus Son-of-God as a miracle worker. The other type is found in the Pauline and Johannine literature. Church fathers combined these two (incompatible) types in their homilies and writings. Ignatius seemingly had a sense of this incompatibility. Therefore, he referred to the virginity of Mary, her falling pregnant, and the death of the *Kyrios*, as "three enigmas" ("mysteries").[16] He was probably also aware of the paradox found in the second type (the preexistent christology).

On the periphery of the New Testament, a third type can be found. In this type a preexistent divine figure was co-creator of the *cosmos*.[17] For Gnostics, however, the *cosmos*, because of its transience and corruption, could not possibly be the realm of the loving God (the Father of Jesus). The genesis of the *cosmos* is to be sought in the creating work of the God (witnessed to in the First Testament) who is to be distinguished from the Father of Jesus. Therefore, in relation to their witness of Jesus, Gnostic Christians tried to get rid of First-Testament elements. They denied that God's son could take on human form.

In the polemics of Ignatius against the Gnostics, in his letter to the Ephesians (19:1), Ignatius combined all three types. With the first type he refuted the Gnostic heresy that a "Creator-God" (revealed in the First Testament) could not possibly be the Father of Jesus. In this first type, Greek mythology intertwined with First-Testament features regarding the "holy men of God" who performed charismatic deeds. With the second type, namely that the preexistent "Son-of-God" took on human fate, Ignatius

refuted the Gnostic idea (that functioned within the sphere of the third type) that God could not associate with perishable humanness.

These polemics, employing the metaphor "Son-of-God," originated from various cultural backgrounds and formed the basis for confessional creeds that were used as the building blocks for the formation of the fourth-century ontologic-metaphysical dogma of the two natures (divine and human) of Jesus. It is clear that this is a long way from Jesus' foundational experience (*Anfangserfahrung*) of being child of God and, because of this experience, became the defender of the fatherless and subverter of conventional wisdom. He who proclaimed unmediated access to God now became the mediator–the iconoclast became a cultic icon as a result of the combination of two traditions (the Israelite and the Greek). The following statement by Robert Funk[18] is a good summary of this complexity:

> The paradox of the dead god represents the marriage of the imageless tradition of Israel with the iconic mentality of the Graeco-Roman world. For descendents of Abraham, no one has ever seen God, and God cannot be pictured. For the Greeks, to consort with the gods was an everyday matter, and it was commonplace to make images of every imaginable deity. For hellenized Christians, Jesus the iconoclast became Christ the icon. Because Christianity has a twin heritage its ancestors are both Jews and Greeks it has never quite made up its mind whether it is iconic or iconoclast.

The intention of the metaphor "son-of-god," applied to Jesus in the New Testament ,according to his experience of being child of God, was to convey unmediated access to God. This metaphor functioned in two spheres, that of divine origin and of divine power. In the first type the divine pertains to the miraculous birth of the son-of-

god. In the second the son-of-god was preexistent and became human. In the first divine power was the result of the miraculous birth. Some of these traditions represented the mother of the son-of-god as a virgin. For instance, Perseus was born from the union of the virgin Danae and Zeus. Other traditions placed no emphasis on the virginity or otherwise of the woman. Examples are Coronis and Alkmena. Coronis was impregnated by Apollo and her unborn child, Asclepios, was torn out of his mothers' womb by Apollo to be reared as a deified diviner and "medicine-man." Hercules was born from the union of the married woman Alkmena and Jupiter. Both traditions, however, placed the emphasis on the benefactions and heroic deeds of the son-of-god. In the second type the divine power of the son-of-god manifested in his victory over death.

In the first type, intermediary figures like angels and the Divine Spirit played a role in the life of a divine figure. Against this background the "holy men of God" in the Israelite tradition were represented as having been filled with the Spirit of God, something that would have occurred either at birth, or at their "adoption as sons-of-god" which was not necessarily represented as having occurred at birth. We have seen that Paul did not take up the tradition of Jesus as the miracle-working son-of-god. We can assume, in light of what Paul says in Philippians 2:7-8 and 2 Corinthians 8:9 about the self-humiliation of the preexistent Christ, that Paul did not view the miracle stories about Jesus as being reconcilable with his (Paul's) gospel. The miracle narratives represented Jesus as someone with divine power, while, according to Paul, Jesus' deeds were characterized not by power but by weakness and vulnerability even upon his death on the cross. In Romans 1:3-4, Paul related that Jesus' preexistent sonship was manifested in

the resurrection events. A few years later, Mark attested to Jesus' "adoption as "Son-of-God" on the basis of the work of the Spirit of God in the life of Jesus.[19]

Mark, like Paul, did not relate this status as "Son-of-God" to a divine birth. For Mark, Jesus was declared Son-of-God at his baptism, which is to say at the beginning of Jesus' activity as miracle worker when he was filled with the Divine Spirit. Some years later, Luke, who used Mark as a source, took over the tradition of fulfillment with the Spirit that occurred with the baptism of Jesus. Luke, however, saw Jesus' adoption as Son-of-God as already anticipated in the story of Jesus' virginal conception on the basis of the work of the Spirit of God.

In chapter 4 where I discussed the Joseph-trajectory, I mentioned that the divine births in the mythological narratives of the gods and the emperor cult form the background against which Luke (as a sophisticated Greek) represented the birth of Jesus (and the ascension) in light of the hellenistically interpreted First-Testament traditions concerning the "holy men of God." Matthew, chronologically the third literary witness within the synoptic tradition, related Jesus' being filled with the Spirit (as did Luke) to Jesus' role as the Messiah and as the apocalyptic Child of Humanity. The "adoption as son-of-god" theme was related by Matthew to the motif of the holy marriage into which Joseph, on the basis of a divine intervention, entered with an impure, pregnant Mary. We have seen that a similar motif is found in the First-Testament pseudepigraphic document Joseph and Asenath.

John stands outside of the synoptic tradition and, like Paul, represented the second type. This second type of "sonship-of-god" of which traces are to be found in the New Testament, emphasizes an anomaly, a paradox. Here the point of departure is the

assumption that a preexistent figure, equal in status to God (cf. Jn 1:1-2), took upon himself the fate of being completely human. A normal, natural birth was one way in which this complete participation in humanness was represented (cf. Gl 4:4 and Jn 1:14). In the Gospel of John (3:5-6; 7-8), the brothers of Jesus and bystanders saw him as somebody completely Galilean. Both Paul and John proclaimed something at which, paradoxically, Judeans took offense: namely that the preexistent Son-of-God was born in the shape of an insignificant human, and also died as one. However, in this apparent anomaly the divine redemptive events lie hidden. John portrayed this redemption as the suspense resulting from the fact that people born naturally could, on the basis of sharing in Jesus as the only begotten Son-of-God, also be born out of the Spirit of God and could therefore be designated children of God. More or less, the same idea also occurs in Paul. As far as Paul is concerned, people were, on the basis of sharing in the fate and suffering of the preexistent Son-of-God, adopted as children of God.

As said, parallel stories of both types (miraculous birth and victory over death) were well known in the first century and it comes as no surprise that both traditions were applied to Jesus. An example of the first type (virginal conception) is the story of Perseus. The story of the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Hercules is a combination of both types.

Ovid's Perseus

The mythological legend of Perseus is a model of a fatherless son becoming a hero. This story is told in Ovid's Metamorphoses.[20] According to the myth, Perseus was

the abandoned son of Danae by Zeus. Danae was the daughter of King Acrisius of Argos. The king was warned by prophecy that a son born to his daughter would kill him. So, he shut her away in a brazen tower. (According to another version, it was in an underground chamber.) There through a narrow window Zeus went to her in the form of a shower of gold and she became pregnant. Danae called her son Perseus. In an act of dynastic politics, Acrisius enclosed the son and his mother in a chest and set it afloat on the sea. Acrisius' name means "ill judgment" and Perseus means "the destroyer."

Earlier in this study I mentioned that cultural-anthropological studies show that resource competition among individuals and families in preindustrial societies, that is, competition for other valuables besides land and geopolitical power, was one of the reasons for infanticide.[21] Acrisius was threatened by the oracle, he denied his vocation of fatherhood, and he absented himself from the child Zeus provided. It is ironic that the very attempt to make sure an oracle's prediction would not come true caused it to happen as foretold. By getting rid of a male heir, Acrisius weakened his line and thereby harmed himself.[22]

Zeus was the "god of illegitimacy," and appeared whenever what was "legitimate" needs to be called into question. (See, e.g., the story of the infidelity of Coronis after she was impregnated by Apollo, son of Zeus, and Zeus who interfered to safeguard Coronis who was destined to die on a funeral pyre as punishment.) The implication is that the divine and the human cannot be separated. Though humans do not always realize it, there is a higher meaning to their bodily existence in the world. Against human heartlessness, Zeus combines divinity and humanity. The child that results from this union will carry forth this spirit. According to the myth, Acrisius did not believe that

it was the work of Zeus. The myth gives an indication of what awaits a person who is burdened with restoring meaning and value to human life. "Every single mother and fatherless son is playing our drama of a society in need of a new father, as surely as Mary and Jesus did."[23]

The chest (compare to this the "death basket" in which the endangered child, Moses, was set afloat) floated to the island of Seriphus. A fisherman named Dictys, the brother of Polydectes, the king of Seriphus, found the chest. He rescued the endangered mother and son, and gave them shelter. Polydectes tried without success to force Danae into marrying him. However, the protection of Perseus, who was growing into manhood, hindered him in his pursuit of Danae. To get rid of the son, Polydectes sent Perseus off on a quest to bring back the head of Medusa–according to Ovid, a "snaky-haired monster." Medusa was one of three winged sisters, the Gorgons, whose heads were wreathed with serpents instead of hair. The Gorgons had the power to turn whoever looked upon them into stone.

The goddess Athena, who hated the Medusa and who was responsible for the serpented heads of the Gorgons, aided Perseus in various ways. She gave him a brightly polished shield so that he could see Medusa's head reflected in it and not face her directly. Hermes, the son of Zeus and Maia, daughter of Atlas, was the messenger of the gods and the guide of travelers. He guided Perseus to the cave where the three Graeae ("Gray Ones"), sisters of the Gorgons, dwelt. These women were gray from birth and had among them just one tooth and one eye. Perseus seized the communal tooth and eye and would not give it back until the "Gray Ones" told him how to find certain nymphs

who could act as helpers. They had the equipment he needed to perform his commission. Thus Perseus was able to behead the Medusa.

During an eventful return trip, Perseus rescued Andromeda, the daughter of Cepheus and Cassiope, the king and queen of Joppa in Philistia. King Cepheus was of Ethiopian origin. Andromeda was sacrificed to a sea dragon to appease the furious Poseidon. After Perseus slayed the monster he was rewarded with Andromeda's hand in marriage. Ovid recounted that Cassiope and Cepheus "were filled with joy: they greeted Perseus as their son-in-law, calling him the saviour and preserver of their house." Perseus and Andromeda returned to Seriphus, where Polydectes was still harassing Danae. She, fearing Polydectes' violence, took shelter in a temple with the fisherman Dictys. There Perseus found them. Polydectes was petrified when Perseus showed him Medusa's head. The fisherman Dictys succeeded his deceased brother and he became the king of Seriphus. Perseus, Danae, and Andromeda set out for Argos. On hearing of their approach, Acrisius fled to Thessaly. (According to another version, it was Larissa.) Later Perseus went to Thessaly (or Larissa) to participate in athletic contests. These were the funeral games that the king (of Larissa) held in honor of his dead father.[24] At the games, Perseus threw the discus that was diverted by the wind and killed Acrisius, who was there as a spectator.

Perseus refused to succeed Acrisius as king of Argos. He established himself elsewhere as king and father of a new dynasty, the Tiryns. Thus he became the model of the destroyer of patriarchy and, at the same time, as the "father of outsiders," the savior of the endangered woman.

Perseus does not look back–but he does go back, to the beginning–by way of Seriphos to Argos…His first concern is with his mother and Polydectes: he goes back to the place in which he grew up but could not come to manhood: something must be resolved there. His second concern is with his origins, the place, the mystery of his birth. The myth doesn't clarify the extent of Perseus's knowledge of his relationship to Acrisius. It is unlikely that he knows of the oracle's prediction. There is a feeling, created by the silence of the myth, of some unknown guilty secret being tracked down. Was it maintained in silence by Danae? Perhaps Perseus has doubts about his patrimony, cannot believe his mother's story about Zeus–or whatever she has told him–suspects incest, rape, illegitimacy?[25]

Perseus' return to the "fatherland" can be seen as his search for kinship and ancestry. The loyalty shown to a blood-bond can be very strong, but is often betrayed. As adults, adopted and illegitimate children often attempt excessively to reconnect with the missing father or the original parents. As is often the case with such children, Perseus was proffered a kinship relationship in an imperfect way. He was thus separated from his origins–a common occurrence in times of social upheaval and restructuring.[26] Nevertheless, the image of Danae and Dictys in the temple is a powerful symbol. Perseus needed affirmation, which he received from the man who played a positive role in his life. Dictys, "the father in the temple,"[27] who had saved Perseus at birth, now became a father figure. The temple added a spiritual dimension to the qualities he brought to Perseus' life.

Paul's Son-of-God and Seneca's Hercules

Contemporary sketches and portrayals of divine birth and/or virginal conception and adoption (for instance of Hercules, Perseus, Horus, and Priapus) were well known in the time when the New Testament was written. Among these, the figure of "Herakles" ("Hercules" to the Romans)[28] stands out not only because of his divine conception but also his adoption as child of Zeus when he conquered death. The concept "adopted as child of God" is also eminent in Paul's writings. One can therefore imagine that Paul's use of this idea was a common feature with the surrounding world.

The word "adopted as child" (ui9oqesi/a) occurs four times in the epistles of Paul, namely in Romans 8:15; 8:23; 9:4, and Galatians 4:5. Apart from these four incidences, the word turns up only once in the remainder of the entire New Testament, in the deutero-Pauline epistle to the Ephesians (1:5). In the epistle to the Romans, Paul used the expression against the background of his argument that the "house of Israel" was expecting God to fulfil his promises.[29] Paul was concerned with a "new" Israel, with people who did not necessarily physically belong to the "children of Abraham" but who nonetheless were adopted as such by God. In Galatians, too, Paul used the metaphor "inheritance" in order to refer to the reception of God's promises. It would no longer be the physical "sons of Abraham" as "sons of God" who would inherit (Rm 9:8). *Children of God* are the people who *in Christ* have, in a fictional way, become part of Abraham's family.

Paul called Christ the "first of many brothers" in Romans 8:29. These "brothers" [and "sisters"] are "family," not because they are blood relatives, but because they shared

in the preexistent Son-of-God, "who made everything and gives us life" (1 Cor 8:6). They became part of "God's family" by God's having adopted them as God's children. God predestined that they would conform to Christ, the preexistent Son-of-God. The precise phrase employed by Paul in Romans 8:29 is "conforming to the image of [God's] Son." Paul apparently used the term "first" (prwto/tokon) to indicate that the aspect of "being the preexistent child of God" did not apply to other believers and that Christ Jesus, in this respect, was the "unique" child of God.

Some are of the opinion "that there are analogies in the ancient world that might serve as parallels or even sources for such an evaluation of Jesus."[30] According to this opinion, the expression "firstborn of many brothers" is a Pauline notion of "mass deification" (apotheosis). As far as Israel is concerned, this motif of "child of God" was spread throughout the First Testament and related literature. In Israel, the "children of God" are those who physically form part of the biological "family of orientation,"[31] the "children of Abraham." I will indicate that the concept "adoption as child" was also familiar to Israel and it too should be seen in light of other sociocultural motifs. The concept is not limited to Israel: it occurred widely in the ancient world. Paul's use of the expression "adoption as child" contained connotations, the background of which could be sought in the Greco-Roman world. I subsequently consider the Hellenistic-Semitic and Greco-Roman literature.

The notion "adoption as child" occurs once in Greek mythology.[32] This incident concerned Hercules. In the works of Diodorus of Sicily and in the tragedies of Lucius Annaeus Seneca (Hercules Furens and Hercules Oetaeus), it is clear that this Greek hero is the biological son of Zeus. According to the myth, Zeus, who was notorious for his

escapades, disguised himself as Alkmena's husband, and begot a child. Directly after this incident, Amphitryon slept with his wife. She gave birth to twins: the son of Zeus (Hercules) and the son of Amphitryon. Amphitryon was the son of Alcaeus, who in his turn was the son of Perseus, the fruit of a virginal conception and also the doing of Zeus.[33] Amphitryon took Alkmena, the widow of his deceased brother Electryon, as his wife. When he found out that Alkmena was pregnant (with Hercules) he was so angry that he built a pyre and would have burned her (and Hercules) alive had Zeus not sent "two clouds" that poured water on the flames and so saved the life of the woman (and her unborn child).[34] Amphitryon then fulfilled his role as Hercules' adoptive father with honor.

Diodorus Siculus reinterpreted this Greek myth in his Book Four[35] during the first century B.C.E., circa 60-30. The entire Book Four deals with Greek mythology and with the myths relating to Hercules, among others. It is assumed that it was in Alexandria where Diodorus derived the information pertaining to these myths from a certain Dionysios of Mytilene, and that he assembled his narratives with supplementary material from the library in Alexandria.[36] Diodorus himself said that the reason he retold the Greek myths was that the narratives concerning the "honored heroes and demi-gods"[37] had such an important effect on the everyday lives of people.[38]

Diodorus began by telling the divine birth of Dionysos because this deity brought about great bounty for humankind.[39] Earlier in his work, he referred to certain "barbarians", who did not speak Greek, who claimed the significance of the "birth of this god"[40] for themselves. By "barbarians," he meant the Egyptians, whose god Osiris was called Dionysos by the Greeks. Diodorus wrote that the Greeks related that Cadmus took

Harmonia, the daughter of Aphrodite, as his wife and that they had a daughther called Semele. Zeus was attracted to Semele because of her beauty and had sexual intercourse with her secretly. Because he did not talk to her during their sexual intercourse, Semele believed that Zeus held her in contempt. She therefore asked him to embrace her in the same way that he embraced his wife, the goddess Hera. He then appeared to her as it befitted a god: with thunder and lighting. He embraced her, but the pregnant Semele could not endure the majesty of such a divine presence and gave birth prematurely, while she herself was destroyed by the lightning. Zeus picked up the baby and ordered Hermes to lay it down in a cave in Nusa, somewhere between Phoenicia and the Nile river, while nymphs were ordered to bring it up with the greatest possible care. Diodorus wrote that Dionysos was therefore given a name made up of Zeus (in Greek: *Dios*) and Nusa (in Greek: *Nuses*). However, this Dionysos, according to Diodorus, must not be confused with the much earlier Dionysos, son of Zeus and Persephone.[41]

According to Diodorus, the birth of the "earlier" Dionysos, as well as the sacrifices and honor related to it, was celebrated secretly at night because of the shame of the orgiastic beastliness it involved. This religious practice is usually referred to as the Dionysian mysteries.[42] The "later" Dionysos gave people the "gift of the vine." The above-mentioned orgiastic feast was a result of confusion between the two Dionysoses. Fasting was followed by an ecstatic orgy, the slaughtering of cattle and the eating of bloody flesh. The "later" Dionysos (or Bacchus), as Diodorus related the myths told by the "ancient people,"[43] was under the influence of wine when he had an erotic urge and begat a son with Aphrodite. The son was named Priapus.[44]

Diodorus[45] mentioned that the Egyptians equated the birth of Priapus with the miraculous birth of Horus. Horus was the son of Isis and he was born after Isis' husband, Osiris, was murdered by the Titans.[46] The Isis-Osiris myth in Egypt gave rise to the practice of a phallic religion. On the island Philae (today an island in the Aswan dam), high in Upper Egypt, the temple of Isis, standing alongside the statues of emperors like Augustus and Claudius, indicates clearly the influence of the Ptolomeans and later the Romans in the Greco-Roman period.[47] To the western side of the temple court lies the "birth room" that contains reliefs of a papyrus marsh where, according to legend, Horus was born.[48] The northern wall contains a relief of Isis with the newborn Horus in her arms. This picture was an early influence on the Christian image of the Madonna and Jesus child. This can be seen in wall paintings from the Coptic period in Nubia and Egypt, which are being preserved in the Coptic Museum in Cairo.[49]

The Priapus cult was popular particularly in Alexandria.[50] The practices of a phallic religion entailed worshipping the creative power of nature as symbolized by the male sexual organ. Even though Diodorus did not mention the particulars of the Egyptian version of the birth of Priapus/Horus, he did refer to phallic religious practices in Egypt as well as to the beliefs regarding the "eye of Horus," the "evil eye," that related to these practices.[51]

Paul undoubtedly knew the beliefs relating to the "evil eye" well.[52] The apostle wrote in Galatians 3:1 (own translation): "Oh, foolish Celts, who cast the 'evil eye' on you? You before whose eyes Jesus Christ was exhibited as the crucified one"![53] The practice of crucifixion in ancient times served as a deterrent to evildoers.[54] According to the Israelites, a wrongdoer who was hanged on such a "pole of shame" was cursed by

God (Dt 21:23). In Galatians 3:13, Paul quoted from the Greek translation of Deuteronomy in order to argue that the crucified Jesus became a curse on behalf of his followers and in this way liberated them from the curse. Paul's contemporary Seneca (1 B.C.E.-65 C.E.), in his work Dialogi (6:20.3), refers to the Roman practice of crucifixion and says that some victims were nailed to the cross through their genitals. This type of deed evoked a greater degree of ridicule among the passersby and onlookers.

The following case to which Josephus[55] referred, and which was also mentioned in 1 Maccabees 1:60-61,[56] is another example of the cross as a particular object of ridicule: the Syrian monarch Antiochus Epiphanes IV had parents whose children were circumcised, seriously maltreated physically, and crucified alive. The children were strangled and hung over the necks of their crucified parents. The reference in 1 Maccabees 1:60-61 also mentions that the families of the victims, and those who had carried out the circumcision, were put to death as well. Massyingbaerde Ford's commentary on this is: "The motif of shame is important here; not only do the parents suffer the public shame of crucifixion, but a mockery is made of the very mark of the covenant, namely, circumcision (cf. Gen 17)."[57]

Paul's words in Romans 1:16 are an indication that he was not ashamed of the gospel of "Christ Jesus." As far as he was concerned, he says in 1 Corinthians 1:18 and 23, he proclaimed the "crucified Christ" who offended Israel and was considered something foolish by Gentiles (Greeks/Romans?). In Galatians 6:11-14, Paul wrote that the "cross of Christ" resulted in the persecution of Christians, but as a "new creature" he exulted in the cross of his *Kyrios*, Jesus Christ, and described the cross as "marks" that he too must bear.[58] By this he meant that the cross, seen against the background of magical

beliefs, was like an amulet that wards off the harmful influence of evil.[59] The historiographer Herodotus[60] used the word "marks" as well in the context of Egyptian slaves who fled into the temple of Hercules and burned "marks," that is, tattoos, onto their bodies as signs that they had become the property of the god Hercules and would be protected by that god.[61]

When, in the second century, the Greek philosopher Celsus attempted to make Christian belief as to Jesus' deification (apotheosis) seem ridiculous, he used the nature of Jesus' death as the deciding evidence.[62] According to Celsus, Jesus was a "magus" (ma/goj) rather than a "god" (qeo/j).[63] First Celsus ridiculed the illegitimate birth of Jesus and his humble peasant origins.[64] Mockingly, he wanted to know how someone with such a background could be assumed to have had a divine birth like that of Perseus, Amphion, Aecus, or Minos.[65] And, finally, from an Israelite perspective (cf. the first type of a divine figure as son-of-god): how could the shameful death of Jesus lead to him being called a god?[66] If God was his "Father," as Jesus himself and the Christians afterwards claimed, how can one begin to imagine, Celsus[67] asked, referring to Dionysos and Hercules whose "father" was Zeus, that a father could let his "divine son" undergo such a death?

An interesting graffito from the third century C.E. was found on the Palatine hill in the Roman Forum.[68] In this cartoon, to the right of a crucified man, is a figure with the head of a donkey and a young man is pointing his arm to the "crucified donkey." A badly written inscription reads: "Alexamenos worships God."[69] Polybius[70] also related how, in 214 B.C.E., Achaios was killed in Sardis by the Seleudic monarch Antiochus III after Achaios had attempted to usurp the throne. He was beheaded and his body woven

into the skinned hide of a donkey, after which it was crucified in public on a pole in order to serve as a deterrent. Tertullian,[71] in turn, described a painting in which Jesus is ridiculed by being portrayed as a teacher in a gown and with a book in the hand, but as a figure of something with the ears of a donkey and one hoofed leg.

Such satires ridiculing gods occurred regularly in Roman literature. In Seneca's tragedies about Hercules, Hercules Furens[72] and Hercules Oetaeus,[73] it is particularly evident how the triumphant "descent into Hades" of the hero correlates with his "divine birth" and how his deification is confirmed by his "ascension." Carolyn Osiek[74] referred to this mythical constituent as follows:

> Most texts [about the relationship between resurrection beliefs and resuscitated body in the first-century Mediterranean world] are ambiguous, but some...seem to suggest a close connection, as does one Greco-Roman apotheosis story, that of Hercules by the first-century BCE, historian, Diodorus Siculus.[75] Hercules mounts the funeral pyre, which is consumed by a bolt of lightning. Those who came afterwards to gather the remains find no bones, and conclude that Hercules has been translated to the realm of the gods. Paul's analogies to seed sown and astral bodies in 1 Cor 15:35-44 are open to a variety of interpretations, but it does seem as if some continuity with the physical is supposed in the pneumatic transformation.

Yet in Seneca's satire on the "deification" of the emperor Claudius, which should rather be called a "pumpkinification," Seneca reached the apogee of his satiric discourse "Apocolocyntosis" when he mockingly described the "descent to Hades" of Claudius. This Latin writer-philosopher used a Greek expression derived from the Isis-Osiris myth relating to the "incarnation" of the god Osiris in the form of a bull, the annual "rebirth" of this Egyptian god: "We have discovered him; let us be glad."[76] Seneca's ridicule was

sharp: it is not the discovery of the "incarnated god" but the "descent to Hades," from which one "never returns,"[77] that is the source of joy. Seneca clearly had his knife into Claudius. In his satire, he implied that the emperor was a "pumpkin" and that it was ridiculous to call him a god. Instead of having "immortality" (a0paqanati/sij), the pumpkin was "yanked by the neck"[78] from heaven, from Olympus: a motif that suggests condemnation.[79]

The strong suspicion that we are dealing here with satiric wordplay on "pumpkinification" and "immortality" is derived from Seneca's brother Lucius Junius Gallio, proconsul of Achaia in C.E. 51/52, resident in Corinth (cf. Acts 18:12-17). It is the writer Dio Cassius[80] who told us that Gallio was aware of his brother's intentional wordplay. Claudius was poisoned with mushrooms, "heavenly food," by his wife Agrippina and his son Nero (ironically the very people who requested the senate to "deify" him). According to the satirist, his death was characteristic of Claudius (blood relative of the first emperor Augustus,[81] but murderer of members of his own family). At his death, Seneca[82] mockingly said that the truth comes from the mouths of the "magi" (in Latin: *mathematicos*). His premature birth and the probable cause of his physical disablement resulted in no one announcing his birth; for this reason, his existence may be ignored and he may be delivered to death![83]

Seneca[84] let the heroic divine figure Hercules ridicule Claudius by having Hercules say that it was only the "barbarians" in Britannia who have erected a temple for the fool and who honored him as if he was a god. Hercules asked the fool in Greek: "Who are you and from where? From what town are you and who are your parents?"[85] How ironic! The "divine Augustus,"[86] himself a blood relative of Claudius, so Seneca

continued with his ridicule, asked how it was possible that such a person could have been made a god! "Look at his body, born when the gods were angry!"[87]

In chapter 3 I mentioned that, according to the Gospel of John (19:9), a similar question was addressed to Jesus of Nazareth by the governor in Jerusalem, Pontius Pilate. In John's report on the trial of Jesus by the governor, Pilate reacted to the accusation of the head priests that Jesus claimed to be a "king" and the "Son-of-God." Pilate asked: "From where are you?" According to the Gospel of John (chapters 7-8), everyone, the brothers of Jesus as well as the bystanders, knew that Jesus was from Galilee. But what good can come from Nazareth (Jn 1:46)? Right at the beginning of John's narrative, an aspirant disciple of Jesus first had to overcome the offense created by this paradoxical question before he could become a follower of the "Man of Nazareth." At the beginning of his narrative (Jn 1:41, 45), the narrator identified Jesus, through his followers, as the "Son of Joseph" and the "Messiah of Israel." The offense in question was thus overcome by acknowledging that Jesus was "Rabbi," "the Son-of-God," and "King of Israel" (Jn 1:49).

However, it is significant that Jesus did not respond to Pilate's question with regard to his social identity (Jn 19:9). According to Rabbinical literature (Qiddushin 4:2), a person had to remain silent when confronted with a question as to his origins if he did not know who his father was. John's reason for Jesus' silence cannot be accepted as being historical. However, we are told that Jesus was more than the "Son of Joseph." In the Gospel of John (1:18), Jesus was the preexistent Son-of-God, unique in kind,[88] the one best-beloved.[89] Jesus' sonship was, according to the Johannine vision, related to the conviction that Jesus ws the "one sent by God." Jesus also had the authority to grant the

right to all "those who believe in his name," an expression that is "typically and exclusively Johannine,"[90] to be called "children of God" (Jn 1:12). They are children "not born from sexual union, not from physical desire, and not from male willfulness: they were born of God."[91] Therefore, Jesus said to Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jn 18:36). This is the way in which John deals with the ridicule that the "Man of Nazareth" was confessed to be "God" after his shameful death.

However, in terms of the ridicule that followed the poisoning of Claudius, there were no devotees who could react apologetically to Seneca's satire following the deification of the emperor. The fact that the appellation "pumpkin" (in Greek: koloku/nth; in Latin, *cucurbita*)[92] rather than "god" was used to name Claudius, is most probably related to the fact that the *cucurbita* has a phallic form.[93] This comparison places the climatic denouement of Seneca's Apocolocyntosis in a particular context. We have seen that Seneca's ridicule resulted in the ironic comparison of the "godlike human" Claudius with the "godlike human" Osiris, the symbol of phallic religious practice. This reminds us of the Priapus cult and the satires in the contemporary Greek-Roman literature that ridicule this god and his characteristic phallic representation.

It is understandable that Amy Richlin too, in her work *The Garden of Priapus: Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humor*, related Seneca's Apocolocyntosis to the *Priapea*.[94] The *Priapea* are poems that were either written about, addressed to, spoken by, or meant to ridicule Priapus.[95] Because the male sexual organ was seen as an amulet to ward off the "evil eye," the representation of Priapus with an erection made him the "god of the garden"–the symbol of fertility and the protector of the fruits of the garden. The first references to Priapus in Greek appeared from the third century B.C.E. and were

found in literature until the sixth century C.E.. The reference to the function of Priapus as the protector of the garden already appeared in the earliest Greek *Priapea*. Furthermore, he was also honored in the Greek *Priapea* as the god of fishermen in particular. This is seen in, among other works, those of Antipater of Sidon, written around the turn of the century, as well as of Antiphilus, written during the first century C.E.[96] The earliest available fragment in Latin[97] in which a reference to Priapus appeared can be found in the comical writer Aphranius, circa 150 B.C.E. In this fragment, Priapus said: "What people say of me, namely that I was born of a long-eared parent [in other words, a donkey], is simply not true."[98] Catullus (circa 84-circa 54 B.C.E.) also mentioned that Priapus came from Lampsacos and that the god was honored by fishermen.

Children Calling God Abba

We got to Priapus, who wards off the *evil eye*, via our earlier sidenotes on the *eye of Horus*, the son of Isis and Osiris. We saw that Diodorus, in the run-up to his narrative of the divine adoption of Hercules, equated Osiris with Priapus. Diodorus' material about Hercules was probably taken from the Encomium (Praises) of Hercules by Matris of Thebes.[99] In the course of retelling the story, Diodorus[100] referred to the deification of Hercules. According to the story, Zeus persuaded his wife, the goddess Hera, to *deify* Hercules by *adopting* him as his son. The jealousy of Zeus' wife towards Hercules was therefore reversed and she symbolically "adopted him as son" to protect him against the shame of adultery and to legitimize his deification. The way she passed Hercules off as

her own son is important. Its importance lies in the fact that, according to Diodorus,[101] this same ceremony was still used in his time by "barbarians" when they wanted to adopt a son. According to the myth, Hera lay down on the bed, held Hercules close to her body and let him fall, through her clothes, onto the floor to imitate a real birth.[102] This action by which the adoption of the child was symbolized is important as it is relates to the question of who the "barbarians" (who did not speak Greek) might be,[103] and who, according to Diodorus, practiced this ceremony in his time.

We have seen that Diodorus retold these myths during his residence in Alexandria in the first century B.C.E. and that he counted the Egyptians as being among the "barbarians."[104] We are, furthermore, also aware of the stories about divine intervention at the births of the children of Israelite women like Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah.[105] As far as Rachel is concerned, in Genesis 30:1-8 (Septuagint) we read that she, as in the story of Sarah and Hagar (Gen 16:1-3),[106] offered the slave Bilhah to her husband Jacob so Bilhah could fall pregnant, give birth upon the knees of Rachel[107] and Rachel, "through her [Bilhah], could have a child."[108] The expression "to make into a child" may be seen as being interchangeable with "to adopt as child."[109]

The expression "to give birth on one's knees" is, in a Dutch study on "adoption in ancient Israel,"[110] understood as constituting a reference to the assistance rendered to Bilhah during the birth of her child. When the reference of Diodorus Siculus is taken into account, however, this explanation becomes improbable. In Job (3:12a), the expression "knees to put me down on"[111] was used as a symbolic reference to the birth of Job. This expression was, then, also followed in the second half of the verse with "breasts to feed me." Apart from the possibility that this is a reference to someone's birth,[112] we might

also be dealing here with an adoption formula.[113] In Genesis 30:3 and 50:23, the expression was clearly used as an adoption formula. The reference would in this case be to a father who took the child onto his knees as an indication that he recognized the child as his own.[114] In chapter 4 we saw that these references in Genesis pertain to Joseph's children and grandchildren born in Egypt.

When God let Ruth fall pregnant (Ruth 4:13), Ruth was compared to Rachel, among others (Ruth 4:11). We are told that, at the birth of Obed, the "ancestor of David" (Ruth 4:17), Naomi "laid him in her lap," "and became his nurse."[115] As to the first part of the verse, "took the boy onto her lap," commentaries are unanimous that we are dealing with an adoption formula.[116] Similarly, we learn,[117] as far as the adoption of the two sons of Joseph born in Egypt (see again chapter 4) is concerned, that the ceremony consisted of Jacob picking up the boys and putting them "on his lap" while Joseph picked them up from there (Gen [LXX] 48:12).[118] Joseph, just prior to his death and funeral in Egypt, still had the opportunity to adopt his grandchildren born in Egypt "as his own." In a more literal translation, "they were born on Joseph's thighs" (Gen [LXX] 50:23).[119] By means of this act of adoption, he included the children, whose grandmother (Asenath) was an impure foreigner, into God's covenant with Israel.

Gerleman,[120] in his commentary on the adoption formula in Ruth 4:16, related Joseph's adoption of the children (the Makarites who were born outside the fatherland and who later became the forefathers of the Samaritans) and their subsequent inclusion among the people of the covenant to Naomi's adoption of Obed, the son of the foreigner Ruth, in the following way:

Boas took Ruth as his wife and she gave birth to a son. It is, however, notable that the final scene of the Ruth narrative does not focus on Ruth, but on Naomi. She [Naomi] today received a redeemer [a substituting patron]; in other words, the newly born child will become a patron and provider to her. It did not suffice, for the narrator, to let Ruth be included within the Israelite community. He takes care to give the newborn a true Israelite mother by means of a distinctive act of adoption. Naomi (therefore) presses the child to her bosom and the bystanders say: "A son has been born to Naomi." This widespread ancient Eastern legal act is not mentioned in the First Testament. Different narratives (in the First Testament), however, indicate that this manner of adopting children was not unknown to Israel. In this way the children of Bilhah and Zilpah and Rachel and Leah were adopted (Gen 30:3-13). Traces of the same rite of "taking on the knees" [*Kniesetzungsritus*, translated above as: "laid him in her lap"] is found in the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen 48). The sons of Makir are, similarly, born "on the knees" of Joseph; in other words, they are through this action adopted (legally) as children of Joseph.

Apart from the apologetic context in the case of Diodorus of Sicily, where the illegitimacy of Hercules was hidden so he could enjoy the right of being "son-of-god," the Greek word for "adoption as child" (u9ioqesi/a) occurs in ancient Greece only within a juridical context. The context here is the provision of an heir where there was none.[121] The same applies to Latin documents. Apart from the precaution that someone could inherit legally, the adoption appears particularly within the context of ensuring the continuation of the imperial dynasty of the Julius-Claudius family.[122]

Even before Augustus became the first emperor of the Roman Empire, we learn that Julius Caesar (49-44 B.C.E.) adopted Augustus (44 B.C.E.-14 C.E.), the son of the daughter (Atia) of Caesar's son (Atius Balbus) with Iulia, as his son. Although such a grandson (the son of the daughter of the heir's son) was recognized by the Romans as

being equal in status with the son of the heir, Augustus' adoption by Caesar probably took place in order to ensure that Augustus would be more than merely the equivalent of a son, but, in fact, a son in the full sense of the word.[123] In the same manner, Augustus, in order to continue the line of imperial succession within the Julius-Claudius family, adopted his corresponding grandsons, Gaius and Lucius, while Tiberius adopted his daughter's son, Germanicus, and Claudius his daughter's spouse, Nero. In the last two cases, the genealogical relation with an "own son" was therefore bypassed.

I have now reached a point of conclusion. Paul's usage of the expression "adoption as child of God" in Romans 8 is not only an example of what is merely one of a number of widely recurring motifs related to the way Christians see themselves in the New Testament: indeed, it may be described as a "root metaphor." The roots of this metaphor lie deep. According to the First Testament and intertestamental evidence, Israel regarded itself as "people of the covenant" and as "children" who were adopted by God. For Israel, this metaphor possessed an enduring power, as over many years it remained one of the basic ways by means of which the "family Israel" saw themselves as being distinguished from other nations.

As for Paul, in both his epistle to the Romans and his epistle to the Galatians, he used the metaphor "inheritance" to refer to the reception of God's promises. It is no longer the biological "sons of Abraham" as the "sons of God" who are to enjoy the inheritance (Rm 9:8), but those who, in Christ, have in a fictional way become part of Abraham's family, and therefore have become children of God. In order to express the idea that believers in Christ are not by nature *children of Abraham*, in other words *children of God*, but on the ground that they believe as Abraham believed and therefore

have become part of God's household in a non-biological way, Paul used, among others, the metaphors "children of the promise" and "adoption as child."

It is clear that Paul's use of the expression "adopted as God's child" contained connotations that can be understood against the background of the Greco-Roman and Hellenistic-Semitic world. However, biblical scholarship does not at present have much new to add regarding the usage of the term "adoption as child" in the New Testament. Research progresses not only through the dissemination of new information about a particular topic, but is served too through the development of different interpretations of well-known data. One way to do this is to indicate the extent to which Paul found the term "adoption as child" useful as a means of emphasizing his conviction that all people have equal access to the presence of God. The adjectives "all" and "equal" relate, respectively, to the values of inclusivity and egalitarianism.

I already indicated the considerable extent to which these values stand in opposition to the conventional views that were and are prevalent in the world of the inhabitants of the area surrounding the Mediterranean. These are values that can be traced back to Jesus himself and have been handed down by Christians who have communicated the cause of Jesus. When Paul explained who really constituted the true "Israel of God," he used the metaphors "Israel as family" and "adoption as child of God." By doing this he continued to transmit the "heart" of Jesus' message about children entering God's kingdom.

One can expect rhetoric related to this "alternative wisdom" to occur particularly in those New Testament documents where the tension between the conventional wisdom of the temple cult of Jerusalem and the "new" wisdom is in the foreground. In this

regard, I am thinking in particular of the authentic letters of Paul. We have seen that the New Testament reflects the tradition of the Jesus faction in Jerusalem as being in opposition to the Pauline (cf., e.g., Gl 2:2-14), even though authentic writings by representatives of the Jerusalem faction, such as James and Peter, do not occur in the New Testament. This ironic situation is sketched in the following way by Robert Funk:[124]

> Broadly speaking, in the rivalry with Paul, Peter represents the connection with the historical Jesus. After all, Peter had been a close companion and confidant of Jesus until his arrest. Paul, on the other hand, claimed only to know the risen Jesus, the Christ of vision and spirit possession. It is perhaps ironic that it was Paul, and not Peter, who understood the heart of Jesus' parables and aphorisms.

The "heart" of Jesus' message consisted of his vision of how God is present to people. Jesus used the metaphor "Kingdom of God" as an image to communicate this message. We have seen that this is in itself shocking, as the concept "kingdom" presupposes domination and hierarchies. Those in Israelite society, who were the victims of the abuse of power by monarchs avidly looked forward to a future ideal "kingdom." In this apocalyptic and messianic kingdom, God will govern in the "heavenly Jerusalem" and "a temple will not be seen in the city, for its temple is the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb" (Rev 21:22). Jesus' alternative definition of the "Kingdom of God" was not portrayed in apocalyptic symbols. God's domain was for Jesus something already present.[125] Paul's pronouncement that circumcision was superfluous echoed Jesus' message that God's kingdom represents an unbrokered relationship to God. His use of

the notion "adoption as child" forms part of the above-mentioned rhetoric. It is therefore also not surprising that this concept, or the matter to which it relates, occurs especially in Paul's letters to the Galatians and Romans. The expression "blameless children of God" also occurs in Philippians 2:15 as an allusion to the concept "Israelite sonship of God" that appears in the Greek translation (Septuagint) of Deuteronomy 32:5. The same polemical tendency occurs in 2 Corinthians 6:18, where Paul quoted from a different part of the Septuagint. His argument here is that Christians constitute the "Temple of God" (2 Cor 6:16). In this case, Paul referred to them as "sons and daughters" of God the "Father." I am focusing however on Paul's usage of the expression "adoption as child of God" in Romans 8.

In order to express the idea that believers in Christ are not by nature "children of Abraham," in other words "children of God," but that they believe as Abraham believed and therefore have become part of "God's household" in a non-physical way, Paul proceeded with, *inter alia*, the metaphors "children of the promise" and "adoption as child."[126] For Paul there were two Israels: the "Israel of God" and the "Israel according to the flesh." Physically speaking, the latter refers to Paul's fellow Israelites.[127] Paul admitted that they were the people who God previously allowed to share in God's glory, made covenants with them, gave them the law of Moses and the temple service and let Jesus (the Christ) be born in their midst. Yet, because Paul surrendered to God (Rm 9:5b), he, on the basis of the work of the Holy Spirit (Rm 9:1), became conscious of the fact that God in a new way places people into a proper relationship with God (Rm 10:3-4). Because Paul knew that God welcomed anyone who believed, Paul proclaimed that Jesus redefined the meaningfulness of the things mentioned above. Paul summarized this

concisely in Romans 10:4 by saying: Christ is the end of the law.[128] The matter that was

given a new meaning in Jesus, and that, for now, interests me, is Paul's agreement with

the notion that Israel was adopted as child of God.

The conviction that something radical changed led Paul to distinguish between a

life that is of "nature," and a life in which transience is transcended. Participation in the

latter by the believer is not possible through physical means but through spiritual means.

This can only be expressed with the aid of metaphors. Participants may therefore be

described as the "fictive house of Abraham." In Romans 11:17, the metaphor of the

"wild olive" that has been grafted onto the "tame olive" is used in this regard. In

Galatians 6:16, Paul referred to this "fictive" household as the "Israel of God." This

Israel represents a life beyond that which is "of nature." And where there is life–be it the

life that is "of nature" or the life that is beyond the "physical"–the (S)pirit is active: the

human spirit or the Spirit of God. Paul wrote that the first way of life is a life of bondage.

Bondage is dependence. Slaves are not free people, but dependent. The "physical"

person is like a slave, someone bound to nature, transience, death. In Romans 8:15,

among others, Paul said that the Spirit of God liberates. The Spirit of God does not lead

to slavery. The Spirit leads to "adoption as child."[129] Children of God are free (Rm

8:21), free from slavery, from bondage, from that which is physical. On the basis of

these events that lead to one's adoption as child, one may call God "Father" (*Abba*) as a

teenager would in her of his relationship towards a father.

According to Romans 8:15, Paul referred to these "spiritual" (*pneumatic*) events

concerning the adoption of the believer as child of God as something that occurred in the

past. Grammatically, the past tense is used.[130] In Romans 8:23, however, it was said that

the Spirit received by the children of God is merely a "deposit gift," a "first gift."[131] Paul

continued by saying that the children of God are therefore "freed in hope"[132] (Rm 8:24).

And "hope" really does mean "hope!"[133] Hope is the situation in which believers live.[134]

A reality built on hope is a reality that cannot be seen (Rm 8:24-25). The reality of

"adoption as God's children," that is, as "children of Abraham," is a real event that

occurred in the past. This reality must, however, be distinguished from the reality that is

"of nature." The latter reality can be seen. Being "child of God," while not being "son of

Abraham" by nature, is something that cannot be seen, unlike circumcision, as a visible

sign. Being a "child of God" is something one hopes will eventually become visible

beyond this transient life, the life that is "of nature."

Paul looked forward to the liberation from a stressful, physical existence.[135] He

described this (future?) liberation in Romans 8:23 as "a redemption from our body,"[136]

that is: God will free us from transience. This is definitely a reference to the

"resurrection of the body."[137] Paul did not employ the idea of "immortality" or that of the

"raising of the flesh."[138] He was thinking of the transition of the earthly body into a new

kind of corporeality. In 1 Corinthians 15:44, the body of resurrection is called the

"spiritual body" as opposed to the "physical body."[139]

As already mentioned, the resurrection faith of the earliest Christians was

embedded in apocalypticism. This belief must be understood against the background of

the post-exilic notion of a general resurrection from death. The resurrection of the body

was an unacceptable idea to Gnosticism that despised physical corporeality. The

assertions in Romans 8:11 about the resurrection of Jesus therefore indeed make it

impossible to interpret the expression "redemption of our body" in Romans 8:23 as

Gnostic.**140** In Romans 7:14-8:30, as a literary unit, we are dealing with a transition from a Gnostic mind-set to an apocalyptic one. The apocalyptic mind-set is closely related to the idea of switching from the transient world of daily experience to the imaginary transcendental world. The conviction that there will be a general resurrection from death is embedded in this (mythological) idea of the switching of worlds. For the earliest Christians, the resurrection of Jesus was taken to be the start of the general resurrection from death. The Gnostic-dualistic elements, such as the dichotomy between "flesh" (sa/rc) and "spirit" (pneu~ma) that occurs in Romans 8:2-11 and Galatians 4:21-31, are not found in strongly marked apocalyptic passages of Paul's epistles.**141** On the other hand, apocalyptic concepts are connected by Paul with the Gnostic-dualistic aspect of his thought. Both Romans 7:14-8:30 and Galatians 4:4ff are examples of this.**142**

The motif "fullness of time" (that is related to the apocalyptic switching of the world of experience and the imaginary world) is in Galatians 4:4-7 associated with the Gnostic preexistence christology that God sent God's Son in order that the believer "may receive adoption as child of God"**143** (verse 5). Similarly, in Romans 8:12-16, Paul commenced with the Gnostic "presentist eschatology," and proceeded from verse 17 to the idea of a "futuristic eschatology."**144** In this regard, he called Christ, in Romans 8:29, the "first of many brothers."

We have seen that Paul, in Romans 8:23, related the announcement that God adopted believers as God's children and, therefore, predestined them to the resurrection from death. But we must not assume that to Paul this is only a question of hope with reference to the end of time. We must remember that the reality of faith is not dependent on "physical sight." And to be a "son-of-god" is perfectly real in faith. There is

therefore no tension between the past tense of Romans 8:15 and the usage in Romans 8:23 that describes the same reality as an occurrence of hope, of the future.[145] Within the framework of Paul's apocalyptic worldview, the reality of being "adopted" as God's child is not something "physical" and does not create any tension.

To interpret Romans 8:24 as meaning that being a child of God can only be fully realized at the end of the time[146] is incorrect. According to Paul, being child of God is made possible by Jesus in the world of everyday experience. The problem here lies with the usage of the adverb "fully," and not with the conviction that "childhood" has already been realized. This problem is related to the well-known tension in Paul's letters between what "is already" and what "is not yet."[147] The question is, however, whether it is correct to describe Paul's usage of the expression "adoption as child" as only a future and transcendent reality. Such an "eschatological" view may perhaps agree with John the Baptist's beliefs, as we saw earlier, but it certainly does not continue those of Jesus![148]

Paul's linking of Christians' "adoption as children" to a *future* liberation from the body," that is, the "resurrection from death," must not be read separately from the apostle's conviction that Christians have *already* "died with Christ" (Rm 6:8) and now *already* believe that they live with Christ for God (Rm 6:10). According to Paul, Christ Jesus was, after all, on the basis of his resurrection from death, declared to be the "Son-of-God" (Rm 1:4)–a "sonship" that Jesus, according to Paul, possessed *already* before his resurrection (Plp 2:6). Paul argued that the Spirit *already* lives (Rm 8:11) in the life of believers too and "will also quicken our [the believers'] mortal bodies" (Rm 8:11), but now *already* "makes us children of God and lets us call to God: 'Abba!' that means Father" (Rm 8:15).[149]

In chapter 5 I indicated that the arrangements around the temple cult of Jerusalem were in essence related to the idea of who the "children of God" were. At the most basic level, the post-exilic marriage regulations of this cult created the parameters of their view of social identity and their relationship with God. These regulations not only robbed "outsiders" of honor and status and of familial security, but attempted to alienate them from God. Against this background, the fatherless Jesus, victim of this systemic evil, went to John the Baptist. While he acknowledged his position as "sinner," he went with the expectation to receive "forgiveness" in an unconventional way. The Baptizer was busy planting, as it were, "ticking time bombs":[150]

> When people came to him [John], he kept sending them back from the wilderness, through the Jordan, purified and forgiven into the Promised Land, there to await the imminent coming of the avenging, saving God. In essence, John was forming a giant system of purified individuals a network of ticking time bombs all over the Jewish homeland. Because of John, when Jesus began his ministry, he found already a vast network of people expectant, eager, waiting for God's power to be revealed.

One of these time bombs already exploded before the time intended by John, that is, before the "general resurrection from death" could happen! Since Jesus of Nazareth, the notion of being *child of God* has changed for Israel! In other words, John still belonged to the old dispensation, like all of those who, up to today, still wait for God to intervene. Nonetheless, John began to invert roles. After his baptism, Jesus became convinced that the Kingdom of God was a reality, and that it had already come. Radically

opposed to what the conventions of the temple cult of Jerusalem prescribed, he, as an unmarried "outsider," addressed God as "Father" and, like a child who, as it were, did not know what "sin" was, put his trust in God. Jesus went even further and called the other "outsiders" children and invited them to live now already as "children of their heavenly Father." In other words, he wanted the other "time bombs" to explode as well, but not in the sense of the revolutionary political activists who were feared by monarchs whose power was threatened! To enter God's kingdom as children is certainly no military coup d'état, but the image has a dynamite affect. The Gospel of Thomas, Saying 46 (cf. Sayings Gospel Q 7:28) gives some witness to this: "Jesus said, 'From Adam to John the Baptist, among those born of women, no one is so much greater than John the Baptist that his eyes should not be averted. But I have said that whoever among you becomes a child will recognize the (Father's) imperial rule and will become greater than John'."[151]

The traditions about Jesus' life and work, as they have been handed down in the gospel tradition, including within the circle of the Johannine school, carried further the "heart" of this message of inclusivity and egalitarianism, of "new life." Among the witnesses in the documents of early Christianity, the unmarried Paul, in my view, did this most clearly. Even though he was influenced strongly by a Greco-Roman mind-set and by Hellenistic-Semitic wisdom traditions when he referred to Jesus as preexistent "Son-of-God," Paul's usage of the expression "adoption as child of God" was a striking way to verbalize Jesus' invitation to enter the new world of God.

We have seen that the myths of virginal conceptions, ascensions to heaven and being adopted by the gods are almost "recycled language." In this regard, Seneca's tragedies of Hercules' adoption and Ovid's story of Perseus' conception are most striking. These stories were not only very familiar in the first-century Greco-Roman world, but also came to mind when (Gentile) philosophers of that period reflected on what Christians said about Jesus, child of God.

END NOTES

1. Cf. Ricoeur, P. 1974, "Philosophische und theologische Hermeneutik," p. 26.

2. See Ricoeur, P. 1974, p. 38.

3. See Ricoeur, P. 1974, pp. 42-43.

4. A sizeable amount of research has already been done in this field. See *inter alia* Bultmann, R. [1958] 1968, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, pp. 130-135; Porkorny, P. 1971*, Der Gottessohn: Literarische Übersicht und Fragestellung*; Hahn, F. 1974, *Christologische Hoheitstiteln: Ihre Geschichte im frühen Christentum*; Hengel, M. 1976, *The Son-of-God The Origin of Christology and the History of Jewish-Hellenistic Religion*.

5. Cf. Bultmann, R. 1968, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, p. 130.

6. See Bultmann, R. 1968, *Theologie*, p. 125.

7. See Sand, A. 1974, *Das Gezetz und die Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Theologie des Evangeliums nach Matthäus*, p. 164; Van Aarde, A.G. 1994*, God-with-us: The Dominant Perspective in Matthew's Story, and Other Essays*, p. 62.

8. See Bultmann, R. 1968, p. 131.

9. See Bultmann, R. 1968, p. 132.

10. In works by Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius and Plotinus, we learn that those who were deemed to be people with "good sense" were taken to be people with a "god in them." See Harris, M.J. 1992, *Jesus as God: The New Testament's Use of "Theos" in Reference to Jesus*, p. 28 note 38.

11. See Bultmann, R. 1968, p. 132.

12. Cf. Bultmann, R. 1968, *Theologie*, p. 133; Betz, H.D. 1968, "Jesus as Divine Man," pp. 114-133; Koester, H. 1971, "One Jesus and Four Primitive Gospels," pp. 158-204.

13. Cf. Bultmann, R. 1968, *Theologie*, p. 133. According to Mark (1:9-11), Jesus manifested himself as Son-of-God when, on the occasion of his baptism, he was filled with the Spirit of God. Bultmann points out that this same view appears quite clearly in the "Western" manuscript tradition of Luke 3:22 up to Augustine (*inter alia*, the Latin version of the fifth-century Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis [Dit], Justine, Clement, and Latin documents by a number of Western church fathers–see Aland *et al* (ed.) [1966] 1994, *The Greek New Testament*, p. 207. According to this tradition, a voice came from heaven that said, in the words of Psalm 2:7: "You are my Son; today I have begotten you." In line with

14. See, for instance, the Similitudes of Enoch (1 En 39:4ff; 70:4–cf. Casey, M. 1991, *From Jewish Prophet to Gentile God: The Origins and Development of New Testament Christology*, pp. 79-85) and in the "love romance" Joseph and Asenath, in which Joseph is not only called the "son-of-god" (JosAs 6:3, 5; 18:11; 21:4–see Chesnutt, R.D. 1996, "From Text to Context: The Social Matrix of Joseph and Aseneth," p. 296), but also the "firstborn" (JosAs 18:11; 21:4; 23:10 see Standhartinger, A. 1995, *Das Frauenbild im Judentum der hellenistischen Zeit: Ein Beitrag anhand von "Joseph & Aseneth,"* p. 203; Standhartinger, A. 1996, "From Fictional Text to Socio-Historical Context: Some Considerations from a Textcritical Perspective on Joseph and Aseneth," p. 314. The view in Paul that the preexistent Son-of-God became human should be seen in connection with the above-mentioned paradox of the redemptive events. The total emphasis in this regard is on the fact of the humanity and the human fate of Jesus the Son-of-God who became human. This fact, as clearly witnessed in Philippians 2:6-11, is, however, contradicted by the idea that Jesus, in the last days of his (earthly) life, showed himself to be God's son through miracles.

15. Cf. Bultmann, R. 1968, *Theologie*, p. 134.

16. Ignatius, Ad Ephesios 19:1; cf. also Ad Smyrnaeos 1:1.

17. Bultmann, R. 1968, *Theologie*, p. 134. The Gnostic notion of the divine son has not only a soteriological but also a cosmological meaning. In fact, the cosmological meaning was probably the primary one that developed independently in mythologies and religio-philosophical speculations like those of Philo. In Philo, the cosmic Logos is the Son-of-God. A similar development is also found in Hermetic writings. A parallel phenomenon is the personification of Wisdom as a cosmic figure that is found, too, in the wisdom literature in the Israelite tradition (cf. Proverbs 8:22-30), and which became an object of speculation in Judaism, especially among Greek-speaking Israelites. Very early, this speculation about the Logos and Wisdom opened a way into Hellenistic Christianity. Early in the fifties Paul already refers, in 1 Corinthians 8:6, to Jesus as "he through whom everything exists and through whom we live," a formula in which the cosmological and soteriological roles of Jesus have been combined. Whether it was Paul who first attributed a cosmic role to Christ as "creation mediator" cannot be determined with certainty. The way in which he refers to it does create an impression of generality and

18.   Funk, R.W. 1996, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium*, p. 44.

19.   Paul describes in Romans 1:3-4 Jesus' adoption as Son-of-God in terms of the antinomy spirit-flesh. The expression "spirit of holiness" used here is not a reference to the Holy Spirit within the sphere of the (later formed) ontological dogma regarding the Triune God. The expression "according to the spirit of holiness" in Romans 1:4 must be seen as

20. Ovid, Metamorphoses (IV, V), translated by Innes, M.M 1955, see esp. pp. 110-122. Cf. Kirkwood, G.M. [1959] 1966, *A Short Guide to Classical Mythology*, pp. 76-77. A version of the myth is also to be found as *The Doom of King Acrisius* in William Morris's *The Earthly Paradise* (1868) and as *Andromeda*, written by Charles Kingsley (1858) (see Pirani, A. [1988] 1989, *The Absent Father: Crisis and Creativity*, p. 3. My discussion of the story of Perseus is heavily dependent on Pirani's work.

21. See Dickemann, M. 1984, "Concepts and Classification in the Study of Human Infanticide," pp. 427-438.

22. See Pirani, A. 1989, *The Absent Father*, p. 9.

23. Pirani, A. 1989, pp. 13, 14, 18.

24. Cf. Pirani, A. 1989, pp. 3, 101-107.

25. Pirani, A. 1989, p. 95.

26. See Pirani, A. 1989, p. 97.

27. Pirani, A. 1989, pp. 98-99.

28. See Kirkwood, G.M. [1959] 1966, *A Short Guide to Classical Mythology*, pp. 48-54.

29. See Atkins, R.A. 1991, *Egalitarian Community: Ethnography and Exegesis*, p. 172.

30. Tabor, J. 1984, "Firstborn of Many Brothers: A Pauline Notion of Apotheosis," p. 295.

31. See Malina, B.J. 1993, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, pp. 48-55.

32. In Greek: ui(oqesi/a / ui(opoih/sasqai / qeto\n ui(o\n poiei~sqai. Cf. Schweizer, E. 1985, s.v. ui(oqesi/a, in Bromiley, G., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, p. 1215.

33. Cf. Kirkwood, G.M. [1959] 1966, *Classical Mythology*, pp. 76-77.

34. See Burn, L. [1990] 1996, *Greek Myths*, pp. 16-17.

35. Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARH. See Oldfather, C.H. 1935, "Introduction," in Diodorus of Sicily (*The Loeb Classical Library*); Wulfing von Martitz, P. 1969, s.v. ui(o/j, ui(oqesi/a, in *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Band VIII, p. 401.

36. See Oldfather, C.H. 1935, "Introduction," in Diodorus of Sicily, p. ix.

37. Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 1, 5.

38. Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 1, 5.

39. Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 1, 6-2, 3.

40. Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 1, 6-2, 3.

41. Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 4, 1-2. Cf. Van Aarde, A.G. 1994, *Kultuurhistoriese Agtergrond van die Nuwe Testament: Die Eerste-eeuse Mediterreense Sosiale Konteks*, p. 23.

42. See Van Aarde, A.G. 1994, *Kultuurhistoriese Agtergrond*, p. 23.

43. Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 4, 6, 1-4.

44. See Parker, W.H. 1988, *Priapea: Poems for a Phallic God*, p. 1.

45. Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 6, 3.

46. According to Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH (1, 21-22), by Typhon.

47. See Farid, S. & Busath, D. 1990, *The Temple of Philae*.

48. Farid, S. & Busath, D. 1990, *The Temple of Philae*, p. 16.

49. Cf. Gabra, G. 1993, *Cairo: The Coptic Museum & Old Churches*, pp. 44, 92.

50. See Parker, W.H. 1988, *Priapea*, p. 1.

51. Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 6, 4.

52. See Elliott, J.H. 1990, "Paul, Galatians, and the Evil Eye," pp. 262-273.

53. Galatians 3:1 (own translation): "who cast the "evil eye" on you"? (ti/j u(ma~j e)ba/skanen); "You before whose eyes Jesus Christ was exhibited as the crucified one!" (Ooi[j kat 0 o0fqalmou\j...proegra/fh e0staurwme/noj;).

54. Cf. Van der Watt, J.G. & Joubert, S.J, 1996, "Hoe is Jesus Gekruisig?," p. 535.

55. See Josephus, De Bello Judaeorum 5.551; cf. Van der Watt, J.G. & Joubert, S.J, 1996, "Hoe is Jesus Gekruisig?," p. 636.

56. See Ford, Massyingbaerde J. 1996, "The Crucifixion of Women in Antiquity," p. 294.

57. Ford, Massyingbaerde J. 1996. "The Crucifixion of Women," p. 295.

58. Galatians 6:17 – ta\ sti/gmata tou~ 0Ihsou~ e0n tw~| sw/mati/ mou.

59. See Oepke, A. 1973, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater*, pp. 206-207.

60. Herodotus, Historiae II.113.

61. See Schlier, H. [1949] 1971, *Der Brief an die Galater*, p. 2824; Oepke, A. 1973, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater*, pp. 206-207.

62. See Callagher, E.V. 1982, *Divine Man or Magician? Celsus and Origen on Jesus*, p. 127.

63. See Callagher, E.V. 1982, p. 49.

64. See Callagher, E.V. 1982, p. 49.

65. Celsus, 0Alhqh\j Lo/goj I.28; cf. Callagher, E.V. 1982, *Divine Man or Magician?*, p. 53.

66. Celsus, 0Alhqh\j Lo/goj I.67; cf. Callagher, E.V. 1982, p. 61.

67. Celsus, Ἀληθὴς Λόγος VIII.41. cf. Callagher, E.V. 1982, p. 127.

68. See Hanfmann, G.M.A. 1979. "The Crucified Donkey Man: Achaios and Jesus," p. 206.

69. In Greek: ALECAMENOS SEBE QEON.

70. Polybius, VIII.21; cf. Hanfmann, G.M.A. 1979. "The Crucified Donkey Man: Achaios and Jesus," p. 206.

71. Tertullian, Adversus Nationes I.14, 1; Apologia 16,12.

72. See Pratt, N.T. 1939, *Dramatic Suspense in Seneca and in His Greek Precursors*, p. 27.

73. See Pratt, N.T. 1939, *Dramatic Suspense in Seneca*, p. 27.

74. Osiek, C. 1993. "The Women at the Tomb: What Are They Doing There?," p. 102.

75. Diodorus Siculus, Bibliotheca Historica 38.3-5.

76. Seneca, Apocolocyntosis 13.12. See Ball, A.P. 1902, *The Satire of Seneca on the Apotheosis of Claudius*, pp. 231-232; Eden, P.T. (ed.) 1984, *Seneca "Apocolocyntosis,"* p. 139; Schönberger, O. 1990, *Lucius Annaeus Seneca−Apocolocyntosis Divi Claudii: Einführung, Text und Kommentar*, p. 54.

77. Seneca, Apocolocyntosis 11.28− *unde negant redire quemquam*.

78. Eden, P.T. (ed.) 1984, *Seneca "Apocolocyntosis,"* p. 3.

79. Seneca, Apocolocyntosis 11.27 − *collo obtorto*.

80. Eden, P.T. (ed.) 1984, *Seneca "Apocolocyntosis,"* p. 127.

81. Dio Cassius, Historiae Romanae 60.35.3ff; cf. Eden, P.T. (ed.) 1984*, Seneca "Apocolocyntosis,"* p. 1.

82. See Ball, A.P. 1902, *The Satire of Seneca on the Apotheosis of Claudius*, p. 203.

83. Seneca, Apocolocyntosis 3:2.

84. See Eden, P.T. (ed.) 1984, *Seneca "Apocolocyntosis,"* p. 73.

85. Seneca, Apocolocyntosis 8.3.

86. Seneca, Apocolocyntosis 5.19−τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν, πίε πόλις εἰς ἔδε τοκέες;

87. Seneca, Apocolocyntosis 10.1−*diuus Augustus*.

88. Seneca, Apocolocyntosis 11.3−*videte corpus eius dis iratis natum*.

89. The phrase "only begotten [unique in kind] Son-of-God" appears only in a certain manuscript, translation and patristic tradition; see Aland, B., Aland, K. *et al*. (ed.) [1966] 1994, *The Greek New Testament*, p. 314 note 18. Another tradition reads the word "God" (θεός) in the place of the word "son" (υἱός). In any case, that Jesus is "the only begotten Son-of-God" is further professed in John 3:16 and 18, as well as in 1 John 4:9; see Metzger, B.M. 1971, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, p. 198.

90. William Whiston [1960] 1978, *Josephus–Complete Works*, p. 415, translator of Josephus'
     works, refers in a footnote to Izates, the "only-begotten" son of Helena, the queen of
     Adiabene, as the "one best-beloved": "Josephus here [Ant. xx.ii.1] uses the word
     monogene, as only-begotten son, for no other than one best-beloved, as does both the Old
     and the New Testament; I mean where there were one or more sons besides, (Gen. xxii.2;
     Heb. xi.7.)"

91. Schnackenburg, R.[1965] 1968, *The Gospel according to St John, Volume One:
     Introduction and Commentary on Chapters* 1-4, pp. 262f. For references about the link
     between fatherlessness and silence when one was asked about his heritage, see Fiensy, D
     1991, The Social History of Palestine, pp. 164-165.

92. Translation in Miller, R.J. (ed.) [1992] 1994, *The Complete Gospels: Annotated Scholars
     Version*, p. 200.

93. Eden, P.T. (ed.) 1984, *Seneca "Apocolocyntosis,"* p. 3.

94. Richlin, A. 1983, *The Garden of Priapus: Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humor*,
     pp. 160-161.

95. It would seem that the Priapus cult originated in Lampsacos on the Hellespontic straits
     (see Parker, W.H. 1988, *Priapea: Poems for a Phallic God*, p. 1). These straits connect
     the Achaian Sea with the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea. The Priapus cult
     presumably spread from Lampsacos to Greece and from there to the remainder of the
     Mediterranean world. A Greek inscription found at Thera, the old city on the Achaian
     island (today Santorini), reads as follows: "I, Priapus, came from Lampsacos to the city
     Thera, and I brought along sustained prosperity. I came to help all of you and render you
     assistance, both citizens and foreigners" (*IG* 12.3–Parker, W.H. 1988, *Priapea: Poems
     for a Phallic God*, p. 1). The southern seaboard of the Sea of Marmara is blessed with
     fertile valleys where olive and fruit orchards, as well as sunflower fields, are bountiful
     (Brosnahan, T. 1990, *Turkey*, p. 230.

96. Parker, W.H. 1988, *Priapea*, pp. 3-9.

97. We can, however, not be sure of who compiled the *Carmina Priapea*, a corpus of 80
     poems earlier included among the minor works of Vergil. Similarities to the works of
     Catullus, Ovid, and Martial can certainly be indicated (see Richlin, A. 1983, *The Garden
     of Priapus*, p. 143). Even though the date of Catullus' Epigramma Dedicatorum is
     uncertain (see Berkowitz, L. & Squitier, K.A. [1977] 1986, *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae:
     Canon of Greek Authors and Works*, p. 78), we may date the *Priapea*, on the basis of
     similarities with the work of Ovid, to be from the period of the emperor Nero. The

A fig-tree once I was, which useless wood

The carpenter in doubt was if he should

To a priapus turn, or to a chair.

He chose the god, and so my job's to scare

Away the thieves with penis painted red

From loins erect; the wreath upon my head,

From gardens new deters the birds.

Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum,

cum faber, incertus scamnum faceretne Priapum,

maluit esse deum, deus inde ego,

furum aviumque maxima formido;

nam fures dextra coercet obscenoque ruber porrectus ab inguine palus;

ast importunas volucres in vertice harundo terret fixa vetatque novis considere in hortis.

Horace here mockingly refers to an extension to the gardens of Maecenas on the Esquiline hill in Rome as the "new gardens"–the place where, earlier, slaves and other poverty-stricken "expendables" had been buried (Parker, W.H. 1988, *Priapea*, p. 15) and "where, among the tombs, witches practiced their weird and infernal rites. Here, however, Maecenas, co-operating with Augustus in the work of city improvement, had laid out beautiful gradens, in which he later built himself a palace with a conspicuous tower" (Page, T. E. [ed.] 1960, *Seneca's Tragedies*, p. 95). During the first century B.C.E., Columella (10.29–Parker, W.H. 1988, *Priapea*, pp. 82-83) writes that such wooden sculptures are not exactly works of art it is merely a trunk from an old tree (*sed truncum forte dolatum*). And in the Inscriptio Harleianus (2578–Parker, W.H. 1988, *Priapea*, p. 82), Priapus is annoyed by a "stupid girl" (*insulsissima puella*), who laughs at the image of a comical piece of wood and takes him to be a joke he is not a god who was

portrayed by famed Athenian sculptors, but was carved from wood by a rustic hand (*sed lignum rude vilicus dolavit*). It is precisely "his status as a ridiculous god, a god to be mocked something of a contradiction in terms" (Richlin, A. 1983, *The Garden of Priapus*, p. 141) which is accorded attention in the poems by Martial.

98.   Parker, W.H. 1988, *Priapea*, p. 11.

99.   See Oldfather, C.H. 1935, "Introduction," in Diodorus of Sicily (*The Loeb Classical Library*), p. ix.

100.   Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 39, 2; `a0poqewsi/j` (deification); `ui(opoih/sasqai` (adopting).

101.   Diodorus Siculus, BIBLOS TETARTH 39, 2; `qeto\n ui(o\n poiei~sqai`.

102.   In Greek: `mimoume/nh th\n a0lhqi/nhn gene\sin`.

103.   See the uncertainty in Wulfing von Martitz, P 1969, s.v. `ui(o/j, ui(oqesi/a`, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Band VIII, p. 401 note 10.

104.   Diodorus Siculus 1, 15, 6ff.

105.   See Sheres, I. & Blau, A.K. 1995, *The Truth about the Virgin: Sex and Ritual in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp. 48- 73.

106.   "There was no greater sorrow for an Israelite or Oriental woman than childlessness. Even today among the Arabs the barren woman is exposed to disgrace and even grievous wrongs. These views, which derive from the human code of honor, and the customs to which they give birth also play a role in the patriarchal stories. For there was a legitimate way to avoid all these difficulties, the way that Sarah proposed to Abraham in v. 2b. To understand the conflict that now ensues, one must refer to legal customs that were apparently widespread at that time. The wife could bring to marriage her own personal maid, who was not available to her husband as a concubine in the same way his own female slaves were. If she gave her personal maid to her husband, in the event of her own childlessness, then the child born of the maid was considered the wife's child: The slave was born "on the knees" of the wife, so that the child then came symbolically from the womb of the wife herself (cf. ch. 30.3, 9)!" (Von Rad, G. [1961] 1972, *Genesis: A Commentary*, p. 191.

107.   Von Rad, G. [1961] 1972, *Genesis*, p. 294.

108.   In Greek: `tekno/poihsomai ka0gw`.

109.   `tekno/poihmai` ("to make into a child"); `ui(oqesi/a` ("to adopt as child").

110.   David, M. 1955, "Adoptie in het Oude Israel," pp. 13-15.

111.   The Septuagint reads: `i9na ti/ de\ sunenth/san moi gwna/ta`.

112.   Rowley, H.H. 1970, *Job*, p. 46.

113.   Van Selms, A. 1967, *Genesis*, II, p. 103.

114.   E. Dhorme, in Rowley, H.H. 1970, *Job*, p. 46.

115.   ("laid him in her lap" – *New International Version*); ("and became his nurse" – *Revised Standard Version*).

116.   See Köhler, L. 1909, "Die Adoptionsform von Ruth 4,16," pp. 312-314.

117.   Van Selms, A. 1967, *Genesis*, II, p. 103.

118.   The Septuagint reads: `a0po to\n gwna/ton au0tou~`.

119.   The Septuagint reads: `e0texqe/san e0pi\ me\rw~n 0Iwshf`.

120.   Gerleman, G. 1963, *Ruth–Das Hohelied*, pp 37-38. My translation of and additions to the original German.

121.   Schweizer, E. 1985, s. v. `ui(oqesi/a`, in Bromiley, G., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Abridged in one volume), p. 1215.

122.   See Bush, A.C. 1982, *Studies in Roman Social Structure*, pp. 93-96.

123.   See Bush, A.C. 1982, *Studies in Roman Social Structure*, p. 93.

124.   Funk, R.W. 1996, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium*, p. 136.

125.   Funk, R.W. 1996, *Honest to Jesus*, p. 41.

126.   Rm 9:8– `ta\ te/kna th~j e0paggeli/aj` ("children of the promise").

127.   Rm 9:3–`oi3 suggenai/ mou kata\ sa/rka` (Paul's fellow-Israelites); `h3 do/ca` (God allows the Israelites to share in God's glory); `ai9 diaqh~kai` (concluded covenants); `h9 nomoqesi/a` (gave them he law of Moses); `h9 latrei/a` (the Temple service); `oi9 pate/rej` (the ancestors); `e0c w[n o9 Xristo\j to\ kata\ sa/rka` (the Christ who as human came from them).

128.   Rm 10:4–`te/loj ga\r no/mou Xristo\j ei0j dikaiosu/nhn panti\ tw~| pisteu/onti`.

129.   Rm 8:21–`pneu~ma doulei/aj` (the Spirit of God does not lead to slavery); `pneu~ma ui9oqesi/aj` (to adoption as child).

130.   In Greek, the aoristus: `e0la/bete` (Rm 8:15).

131.   Rm 8:23 –`a0parxh/` ("deposit gift"/"first gift").

132.   Rm 8:24–`th~| ga\r e0lpi/di e0sw/qhmen` ("freed in hope").

133.   See C.K. Barrett's, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 161, translation of Rm 8:24b.

134. E. Käsemann, *An die Römer*, p. 230: "Hoffnung ist die Situation, in der wir...als Geretteten leben." The dative translated with "in hope" (e0lpi/di) must be understood as a dative of modality.

135. Käsemann, E. 1974, *An die Römer*, p. 229.

136. Rm 8:23–a0polu/trwsij tou~ sw/matoj h9mw~n ("a redemption from our body").

137. Cf. Byrne, B. 1979, "Sons of God"–"Seed of Abraham," p. 109.

138. Cf. Käsemann, E. 1974, *An die Römer*, p. 229.

139. 1 Cor 15:44–sw~ma pneumatiko/n ("spiritual body"); sw~ma yuxiko/n ("physical body").

140. Interpreting the expression "of our body" (in the phrase "a redemption from our body") as a "genetivus separationis" might, create the impression that we are dealing here with a Gnostic redemption idea (cf. H. Lietzmann 1933, *An die Römer*, p. 85). If it is taken as an "objective genitive," as in Rm 8:11, then the idea of apocalyptic liberation from afflictions at the end of time would figure more strongly (cf. E. Käsemann, 1974, *An die Römer*, p. 229; B. Byrne 1979, "Sons of God"–"Seed of Abraham," p. 109 note 120). However, it is not necessary to see gnosticism and apocalypticism as mutually exclusive mind-sets. On the one hand it seems as if all of Rm 7:14-8:30, which may be seen as an independent unit dealing with the total degeneration of humanity, as well as with the redemption of humanity from that state of sin, is cast in Gnostic presuppositions and mind-sets. Against the Gnostic notion that redemption primarily has the quality of presence, redemption is in apocalypticism understood as being something belonging to the end of time. Walter Schmithals 1994, *Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums: Eine problemgeschichtliche Darstellung*, p. 82, explains this distinction by means of the respective images of Christ in apocalypticism and gnosticism: in apocalypticism, Christ is primarily "der Kommende" (salvation is a future occurrence), while in gnosticism he is "der Gekommene" (salvation is a present occurrence).

141. Schmithals, W. 1994, *Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums*, p. 70.

142. Schmithals, W. 1994, *Theologiegeschichte*, pp. 76, 82. Cf. the combination of the second and third type christologies discussed earlier.

143. Gl 4:5–i3na th\n ui9oqesi/an a0pola/bwmen ("may receive adoption as child of God").

144. Schmithals, W. 1994, *Theologiegeschichte*, p. 83.

145. Some scholars (see Byrne, B. 1979, "Sons of God" – "Seed of Abraham," p. 2 note 1, pp. 108-11) are of the opinion that the omission of the expression "adoption as child" (ui9oqesi/a) in Rm 8:23 in, for instance, the second-century papyrus manuscript Chester Beatti *P*[46vid] (which is damaged and legible only with difficulty at this point) may be attributed to such a tension (see Metzger, B. 1971, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, p. 517). However, the reading without the omission is without doubt the more difficult one (*lectio difficilior*) and also preferable (cf. Käsemann, E. 1974, *An die Römer*, p. 229). This omission was unnecessary.

146. See De Villiers, J.L. 1950, *Die Betekenis van HUIOTHESIA in die Briewe van Paulus*, pp. 69, 160.

147. See Ridderbos, H. 1973, *Paulus: Ontwerp van zijn Theologie*, pp. 214, 217, 218.

148. Similarly, the attempt to solve this supposed tension by imposing on the text the idea of an "eschatological order of salvation" cannot be endorsed. Such a perspective yields to a "salvation-historical" explanation of Galatians 3:25, 26 (as well as Eph 1:5) (see Ridderbos, H. 1973, *Paulus*, pp. 216-217). According to this view, Paul would argue that God acted within a linear temporal order by first electing Israel (Eph 1:5) and then, when the "fullness of time" came (Gl 4:4ff.), God sent Jesus as God's son so that believers could receive the "adoption as children" which will be revealed fully at the end of time. However, the above-mentioned "salvation-historical explanation – the linear "yet-not-yet" time scheme–lacks persuasiveness in view of what we today know about the concept "time" in the world of the Bible (see Malina, B.J. 1996, "Christ and Time: Swiss or Mediterranean?," pp. 179-214). Bruce Malina 1996, "Christ and Time," p. 210, 185, concludes his contribution by saying: "...in the New Testament period there was no tension between the 'now' and the 'not yet'. When those writings were written and collected, there was only emphasis on a rather broad 'now'. On the other hand, the 'not yet', is a continual concern of persons from future-oriented societies." Malina argues that "the only scholarly evidence for the existence of anxiety and concern about a perceived delay of a parousia, for interest in eschatology, or some future-oriented apocalyptic was in the eyes of liberal, Enlightenment-oriented, nineteenth-century northern European biblical interpreters and their twentieth-century heirs."

149. Rm 8:11–e0noikou~ntoj au0tou~ pneu/matoj ("the Spirit lives); zw|opoih/sei kai\ ta\ qnhta\ sw/mata ("will also quicken [our] mortal bodies"); Rm 8:15–a0lla\ e0la/bete pneu~ma ui9oqesi/aj e0n w[|

150.   Crossan, J.D. 1996, Who is Jesus? Answers to Your Questions About the Historical Jesus, pp. 45-47 (my emphasis).

151.   Gospel of Thomas, 46. Translation by Miller, R.J. (ed.) 1992, *The Complete Gospels*, p. 312.