

Remembering my dear friend 'Azim Shahbaz Butt who tragically passed away recently at an un-timely age of twenty-five. May Allaah Almighty wrap his soul in peace and blessings!

'SON OF GOD' RE-INTERPRETED

The following is a product worth months of study and conscious intent of hearing out what Scripture has to say regarding the enigmatic phrase 'Son of God' instead of instilling personal presupposition thereto, whereof both Christians as well as Muslims have been found guilty recurrently. What proceeds should be read in objectivity and deep religious concern, not out of futile fondness for debate and competition. Though we present our observation more clear and confident than ever of nearing proper understanding on the topic at hand, yet consent that our views are open to error, and in that respect, need not be considered the final say. If any misconception be indeed found in our work, we request of our reader kindly identify it with religious goodwill and concise accuracy, we'll amend our views willingly, whilst expecting our reader entertains similar truth-seeking spirit. Reader acquaintance is assumed and un-necessary dwelling on detail and verse repetition is avoided with citations alone being provided.

There is little doubt that Jesus[p]¹ claimed to be the Son of God in the New Testament. Muslims, perceiving in-consistency with Quranic teachings, have generally tried discrediting Gospel records. While others have opted interpreting

¹ [p] *peace be upon the addressed*, abbreviates a Muslim supplication exclaimed at mention of a noble's or specifically a prophet's name.

the Christian attached idea regarding the phrase to suit both the Bible and the Quran. Our 're-interpretation' falls mainly in the second of the two categories, but we've not only tried assimilating both scriptures whence present 'adequate' opinion of the term's native usage, but also tried our best to make sure that our conclusion fits well within Biblical boundaries even if the Quran be put in reserve. It may be possible that results here deduced may not satisfy every observer, but after going through the following few pages one thing you cannot do is accuse us of Muslim favoritism, or having Quranic ideas projected back into Judaeo-Christian texts, as our presentation is thoroughly founded on the holy Bible itself.

THE VINEYARD PARABLE

"A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed. He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But the tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. Haven't you read this scripture: " 'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord

has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes' ?” (Mark 12:1-11 NIV).

The vineyard is simulant of the kingdom of God vouchsafed the tenants or the Israelite elders who fail in yielding good fruit. God (owner) sends servants (prophets) seeking proper due only for them to receive maltreatment. The owner then sends His Son, authorized Heir to the Kingdom, hoping for a change of heart, only to increase the wicked tenants in rebellion, resulting in the Heir's disposal (rejection). At last, the owner comes condemning the tenants and leasing the vineyard to others (Christian Church) who now receive divine sovereignty for Christ's[p] sake [Act.13:46, 1Pet.2:9, Q.3:55, 61:14].

In studying the term's intended meaning, I've found no better passage in the Gospels than the parable of the wicked tenants, not only for its textual integrity, but also because it is of those few instances in the four Gospels which lucidly interprets what the 'Son of God' phrase designates. Despite the parable's main theme being symbolization of Israeli relegation as God's chosen people, the vineyard parable serves as an in-valuable narrative in un-raveling the true nature of Jesus'[p] claim to sonship. Christians have somewhat justifiably seen shelter in this saying, and have frequently referred to it as the most portent text in support of the doctrine of Jesus'[p] 'divine' sonship, "*It (the parable) tells us that he (Jesus) thought of himself as God's only Son, distinct from all the prophets, God's final messenger, and even the heir of Israel itself*" says one renowned evangelist². Truth be told, all four of these impressive assertions embody relevant truth, therefore, the following observation will be more explanatory rather than a typical Muslim counter-apology, aiming to elucidate the intended meaning of sonship from a broad-based Biblical perspective.

² William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*, Third Edition 2008, p.311 (Emphasis mine).

HEIR OF GOD

Gospel readers should embed in mind that whenever Jesus[p] uses the ‘Son of God’ phrase in self-designation ^[Mt.26:63-64, 16:13ff], or is so spoken by contemporaries ^[Mr.3:11, 15:39], it is to be understood and always translated to mean the ‘Heir of God’ ^[Mr.12:6-7]. So, the next time you read the Gospels, simply substitute *son* for *heir* in order to construe proper conceptual comprehension. The immediate question left for us to solve begs as to what *heir* signifies, since like the term *son*, *heir* is very much another metaphorical expression describing a correlation between Jesus[p] and God? To find out, we must go all the way back to genesis and re-visit man’s very origin. The answer, as simple and terse as it is, goes good length in resolving an issue that has long been a stalemate in Christian Muslim dialogue.

When God created man He gave him two divine (godly) properties; conscience, or the quality of discernment; and authority, the faculty of free-will. By virtue of, ensouled and being made in God’s image ^[Gen.1:27, Q.15:29], man could now differentiate between good and evil ^[Gen.3:22, Q.76:2] whilst being able to exercise personal will and rule over all earthly creatures ^[Gen.1:26,28, Ps.8]. Thus, man was instituted as the highest representation of divine wisdom and power, wherefore, became the inheritor to God’s earth. It is in this simple sense does scripture call Adam[p] ‘Son of God’ ^[Lk.3:38]. The Quran only confirms this Biblical notion when it meticulously uses an equivalent term *khaleefah* (caliph), meaning vicegerent and successor to authority and sovereignty on land ^[Q.2:30]. Thus is man, in a general sense, son or heir of God in a paraphrased way of describing his relation and role on God’s earth. However, Jesus’[p] self-reference as ‘the Son of God’ does not receive self-same implication, for he un-mistakable used the appellation in a more superlative sense than the basic and primitive usage associated with common man alluded hitherto. In order to justly appreciate Jesus’[p] self-reference, an over-view of the historical background concerning the Israelite commission might well be needed.

THE COVENANT

Long after the great flood, there came a time when the full world, seemingly, was engulfed in idolatry, apart from a single individual, the lone torchbearer of monotheism, the man Abraham[p]. Seeing his zealousness for truth, upright righteousness, and staunch stance against shirk (baalism), God befriended him and chose Abraham[p] and his descendants for successive spiritual and political leadership over rest of mankind [Gen.15:18-21, 17:7-8, 22:15-18, 26:3-5, Q.2:47, 4:54], on the condition they too follow in the footsteps of their pious patriarchs [Gen.17:9, Deut.4:40, Q.2:124]. In doing so, God was not merely to reward their righteousness and uphold the pledge with Abraham[p] [Deut.9:5], but the Israelite commission served God's purpose of setting an endless impression of self-supremacy; insofar that a people despised [Isa.41:14] and a nation resourcefully futile [Ps.105:12] were now to become leaders of human race [Ps.118:22-23] and gain sovereignty over nations far greater in force and facility than they, in a spectacular demonstration of God's majesterial glory and wondrous doing so to establish beyond doubt the Lord's right of deity over gods of the earth [Ex.8:10, Deut.4:34-39, Jos.4:24, 2Sam.7:23-24, Ps.106:8, Q.21:25, ch.26].

This act of divine choosing (commissioning) [Ps.33:12, 1Ch.16:13, Isa.65:22] accompanied by the special grant of favor which saw the children of Israel[p] become recipients [Ps.115:16] of divine authority and promised perpetual lordship over heathen land [Ex.3:8, Num.21, Deut.28:1-14, Mic.4:8, Q.24:55], enabling Israel to possess treasures of allocated Canaanite nations as reckoning for upholding the ark of the covenant and God's ancient law [Deut.7:6-11, Jos.1:7-8, ch.3, Ps.37, 105:7-11, Eze.11:19-20], is recurrently represented in Biblical terminology in the manner of metaphor: God taking up Israel for His inheritance [Deut.4:20 NIV, Ps.28:8-9, 33:12, 2Esd.8:15-16,45], and Israel's holding (inheriting) this monumental status of authoritative vicegerency on earth makes them God's heir [Isa.65:9 NAS, 2Esd.7:1-16, cf. Heir of God], a relationship which likewise is frequently characterized as that of father and son in a figurative effort of expressing this bilateral bond. Thus, the Bible reads: **"This is what Yahweh says: Israel is my firstborn son"** (Exodus 4:22 NJB, See: Numbers 3:13, 2Esdras 6:55-59, Jeremiah 31:9).

But things weren't always that rosy. Within years of Joseph's[p] death, Israelites had fallen prey to luxuries of Egyptian idols [See: Ex.32, Jdg.2]. As a consequence, they were plunged into Egyptian slavery whose Pharaoh would come to inflict them harsh trials, none more painful than mass-slaughter of all Israelite male-children [Ex.1:15-16, Q.14:6]. This rather severe suffering was part of the divine process of chastisement operationalized through the Israelite commission wherein this chosen nation now stood as witness of God's mercy and justice over other nations inasmuch as when Israel forsook divine directives, immediate and intense chastisement seized them, but whenever they hearkened to God's command and upheld the ancient covenant, they'd multiply exceedingly and gain abundance in provision, acquire awesome might in the land and subdue her iniquitous enemies into self-service; a law well-known to Bible readers as the law of devotion (herem) [See: Deut.28, 1Ch.16:13-22, Ps.106]. It so happened that when Israel remembered the Lord, groaned and repentantly cried out to Him [Ex.2:24], God re-called (re-established) His covenant and delegated (appointed) a divine (god-like) savior to bring Israel redemption and lead them back en route to the promised land [Ex.3].

This was no ordinary man, vouchsafed wonders beyond human capacity and thought, Moses[p] could perform feats awe inspiring; from transforming a staff into serpent [Ex.7:9, Q.20:18-21], to partitioning a pathway through Yam Suph via single stroke thereof [Ex.14:16, Q.26:63]. This was the mandate with which Moses[p] was commissioned so that God recompense Egypt thru him, just as Lot[p] brought judgment on Sodom [Gen.19], and Abraham[p] on Elam afore [Gen.14]. Such men are vested (given) god-like authority [Q.26:21] so to demonstratively substantiate the Lord's supremacy, and bring God's heavenly court, His judgment seat down to earth prototyping the grand apocalypse [Ex.12:12, Deut.34:9-12, 2Esd.7:127-131 NRS, 14:27-35, Ps.9, Isa.26, Q.4:165, 30:9-11,47]. It is through such mortal messengers does God visit and intervene in earthly events [cf. Gen.50:24-25, Ex.3, 4:31 ESV, Ps.77:20, Mt.1:23, Q.42:51], posing as definitive truth whereby God differentiates the righteous from the wicked, inasmuch as adhering their way is deemed the only path onto life-eternal [Jn.14:6, Act.4:12, Q.24:54]; for the word of a messenger is the command of God and his obedience is service to the Almighty [Ex.4:8-9, Deut.11:8-9, Jos.1:7-9, 2Ki.21:8, Lk.10:16, Q.4:80].

Delegated envoys, who stand representatives and ambassadors for the Almighty, personify divine wisdom and power to the highest human level [Q.28:14,35], seemingly, to the extent of theophanizing the Most-High [Ex.3:8,10, 1k.1:68, Jn.3:2], therefore, oft-receive the very name (divine appellation) of whom they serve delegates. Thus, God with regards to Moses[p], said: **“Behold! I have set you as Elohim (divine authority) to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron to be your prophet”** (Exodus 7:1, See: Quran 8:17).

Due to in-different circumstances [Num.14:35, Deut.32:48-52], Moses[p] left the Israelites on the threshold, with Yehoshua[p] and Caleb[p] now delegated to carry the Israelites into the promised land [Deut.1:37-38]. However, covenantal infringements [Jos.13:1-2,13, Jdg.1:27-28] meant that Israel failed in acquiring her due inheritance (allotted land) in totality, and as those violations grew severely ill [Deut.11:16-17, Jdg.2:11-13, 3:6], it stirred a regressive decline into slavery with Israel turning portion in the land over which she once laid claim [Jos.23:4-14, Ps.106:36-43]. Prone to polytheistic tendencies and recognizing their failure in living up to required standards of abiding as God’s sovereign torchbearers, the Israelites began demanding a human king (melek) who’d be a military warrior similar to those of neighboring nations, whose kings tangibly (physically) led in the battle-field [1Sam.8:20, Q.2:246, cf. Ex.32:1, 1Sam.8:7-8], that, despite having God as their King who’d (spiritually) walk before them in battles subduing their enemies [Jos.23:9-10]; in what was deemed by God as idolatrous rejection of His preferred and personal way of acting amid the Israelites via designated emissaries (prophets, judges, e.g. Moses[p], Joshua[p]) in a theocratic institution [10:18-19, 2Sam.7:7].

SON OF GOD

Nevertheless, their wish, under covenantal restrictions [Deut.17:14-20, 1Sam.12:14-15, 1Kg.2:4, Ps.45:7, 89:19, 132:1-5], was permitted, and after Saul’s[p] un-successful tenure, kingship was transferred David[p], who served God in wholehearted submissiveness and un-wavering devotion [2Sam.6:21-22, Ps.132:1, cf. Jos.14:13-14, Gen.22:17-18], so much so, that God chose David[p] for a special covenant, in which kingship (leadership) over Israel

would be confined to Davidic descendants ^[Ps.89:3-4], in a similar manner to how God favored Abraham[p] by pledging his clan religio-political hierarchy. Henceforth, if the son of David[p] were to be a righteous ruler keeping God's statutes and observing His law ^[Ps.132:12], then his kingdom would not see end and last forever generation after generation via a salt covenant ^[2Ch.13:5]; he would stand as the live (human) impersonation of divine will, with people being judged according to their loyalty or disobedience to the king ^[1Sam.26:9, 2Sam.2:5-6, Ecc.8:2-4, Q.2:249, cf. Deut.28]; and he would embody universal sovereignty serving as God's anointed prince (mashiach negid) over the elect nation ^[2Sam.6:21 NRS, Q.38:26] authorized to lead God's heritage to ascendancy and subdue his enemies into serfdom ^[1Sam.10:1, 2Sam.3:17-18, 5:20,24, ch.8, Ps.18:47 NIV, 72:9-11, Isa.45:1, cf. Gen.1:26,28].

Now because the prince is the divinely appointed leader who shares possession and reigns successively ^[Ps.18:50, 45:6 NAB, 132:11-12, Jer.33:17] in God's portioned heritage (allotted land of Canaan) ^[Ex.6:4, Num.34:2, 35:34, Act.13:19] over His prized inheritance (children of Israel[p]) ^[1Sam.26:19, 2Esd.8:15-16, Ps.78:71, Jer.10:16 NIV], the Lord's anointed prince is depicted as the Son of God, or the authorized Heir to the King's throne over Israel and His kingdom ^[See: Vineyard Parable], in an expression that simulates the special covenantal relationship between the heavenly King (Father) ^[Jer.3:19], His anointed prince (Son) ^[1Sam.25:30 NRS], and His treasured possession (children) ^[Ex.19:5 NIV]. God decreed to David[p]: **"The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you ... I will raise up your offspring to succeed you ... and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. But my love will never be taken away from him ... Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever"** (2Samuel 7:13-14, *Emphasis added*. Also: 1Chronicles 28:6). The Royal Psalm 2 reads: **"But I am appointed king by him over Sion, his holy mountain, preaching his commandment. The Lord hath said to me: Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance, and the**

utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, and shalt break them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Psalms 2:6-9 RHE, *Emphasis added*. See: 89:26-27).

These verses show that sonship, par excellence, relates kingdom (inheritance), throne (rule) and house (dynasty). The vocabularian usage out of the familial sphere was apparently quite common in ancient semantics to denote diplomatic and political ties. For instance, if a suzerain were to reward his loyal subject by gifting power and land, he'd make use of phrases denoting blood-relations so to add legitimacy to the grant. The 'son' metaphor reflects the perpetual and successive nature of the vassal's prerogative, as in case of a begotten son, who may receive chastisement even banishment for misdemeanor and transgression, yet his legal right to heirship and the father's inheritance does not depart. Likewise God's relationship with the children of Israel[p] ^[See: The Covenant] and the sons of David[p] ^[Ps.89:30ff]; upon disobedience they were immediately disciplined, while as they set aright the Lord evoked His promise, empowering the king to liberate and lead Israel, establishing his kingdom and subduing his enemies before him ^[Ps.110, 18, cf. Gen.1-26,28]. The 'begotten' idiom ^[2Esd.6:58, Ps.2:7] tends to symbolize God's adopting His servant, or in other words, signifies his formal induction into the covenantal bondage, whereas, proneness to add literalism hereto is entirely in-admissible.

Thus, whether particular or communal, peculiar or common, sonship and the act of divine adoption signifies the suzarain's grant of patrimony and successive possession of land, and the empowerment of the vassal to gain governmental supremacy over its inhabitants, whilst subjugating adversaries into self-serfdom ^[cf. Heir of God]. Whence, it should become easy for us to understand the intent and nature of Jesus' [p] self-same claim.

Granted divine authority ^[Ps.110:1, Mt.28:18, 9:6-8, 13:54, Jn.3:35-36, cf. Gen.1:26,28], Jesus[p] was God's chosen prince (Messiah) ^[Isa.9:6, Lk.2:26, 9:35, Act.4:25-27, cf. Ps.106:23, 2Sam.22:51], and the Heir (Son) to the King's throne over Zion ^[Isa.9:7, Mt.21:5,9, Lk.3:4-5,15-16,22, 19:27,38], comis-

sioned to redeem and reign over Israel [Zech.9:9-10, Mt.2:6, 10:40, Lk.1:67ff, 2:30, 3:4-6, 4:43] ala Moses[p] [Isa.11:16] and David[p] [9:7], establishing that much anticipated ideal kingdom [Isa.11] and embodying Israel's last hope of regaining lost glory [Hos.1:10-11, Lk.2:11,32, 3:4-6, Mt.21:41-43]. The celebrated angel Gabriel[p] proclaimed: **"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him *Jesus*. He will be great and will be called *Son of the Most High*, and the Lord God will give him the *throne* of David *his father*, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his *kingdom* there will be no end ... The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God"** (Luke 1:31-35 NAB, *Emphasis added*. See: Isaiah 9:6-7). The prophecy [vv.32-34] comprises of a single sentence with the conjunctive 'and' serving to expound each clause. Note-worthy is how the prophecy particularizes Jesus'[p] greatness, connecting it directly to the appellation 'Son of God'. Greatness here obviously alludes spiritual sublimity, but more significantly political glory in light of David's[p] recognition as being 'of the greatest' kings the world has seen, a statement likewise associated with divine sonship [Gen.12:2, 2Sam.7:9,14]. The sonship (royal glory) of Jesus[p] as the promised Messiah[p] is subtly [cf. v.15] predicted here to supercede even his illustrious predecessor, pertaining to the caliber of primogeniture, or Jesus'[p] divine right of the firstborn Son: most exalted of all earthly kings [Ps.89:27, Rev.1:5]. As greatness is explained in sonship, sonship is crystalized in the grant of the Davidic throne (rule) and inheritance (kingdom) of Israel, followed by assurance of everlasting success and dominance in the same but grander manner to previous heirs (kings). The consecration of Jesus[p] as well does not only refer moral purity, but specifically his divine designation for the special station of being Israel's ideal shepherd [cf. Ps.89:20-27, Dan.9:24, Act.4:27, 10:38], another idiomatic expression of sonship [Mr.1:24, 5:7 Jn.6:69, cf. Deut.7:6, Ps.16:10 NIV, 45:6-7 NAB]. As such we can safely suggest that in his self-designation as the Son of God and the Danielic Son of Man (both are messianic subtitles [See: Dan.7:13-14, Mt.16:16, Mr.14:61-62 Lk.1:32, 4:41, 23:2, cf. Mt.1:16, 27:17]), Jesus[p] paraphrased his divinely gifted prerogative to priestly rulership, wherein he acts as the perfect proxy [Act.10:34-43] and mediatorial

sovereign [4:26-30] of the Almighty, ministering and reigning as the crown-jewel over an elite nation of God-worshippers [2Esd.2:33ff, Mt.24:30-31].

ESSENCE OF INHERITANCE

Christians have insisted that by sonship is meant an exclusive and absolute self-consciousness of deity on Jesus' [p] part, and that sonship conveys God's unique and full self-revelation in the person of Christ[p]³. However, this idea of sonship runs parallel to Jewish thought which ne'er conceived a deified Messiah[p], on the contrary, deems the hypothesis wholly foreign [Ex.23:13, Deut.4:15-24, 5:6:11, Ps.81:9 NIV] to the Bible's painted image of divine sonship above-described. Moreover, recount that sonship (heirship) is intrinsically linked to the covenant [Ex.19:5-6, Lev,18:28, Deut.7:9-11, 1Kg.8:23, 2Kg.21:8, 1Ch.28:7, Mt.5:9-10, 6:33, Lk.22:24-30, Q.24:55ff], and for Jesus[p] to be the Messiah, Son of God, he like all predecessors is confined to covenantal conditions [Deut.17:14-20, 1Kg.2:4, 8:25, 9:4-9, 1Ch.28:8, 2Ch.7:19ff, Mt.3:15, 6:33, 12:18]. The basis of the covenant is the command of God, and the spirit of the Law is service (worship) to the Lord [Gen.17:4ff, Ex.4:23, 7:16, Deut.10:12-13, Isa.56:6-7, Mt.4:10, Lk.1:74]. The essence of servitude (abodah) is meekness and humility [2Esd.8:49, Ps.37:11, 51:16-17 NAB, Isa.62:2, Mt.5:5, 18:1ff, 20:25-28, 1Pet.5:5-6], and since humility is really a condition of weakness and dependency, it follows logically that the 'Son of God' phrase necessarily pertains mortality (prae-inexistence) as oppose to deity [Ps.103:11-18], and if Jesus[p] is the Son or Heir to God's throne over Israel, then his sonship is naturally of the same (human) nature as of those anointed before him.

Having said that, the title does denote 'divinity' inasmuch as divinity relates god-likeness [Gen.1:26, 3:22], and divine envoys (e.g. Moses[p] [cf. Deut.18:18-21]) who embody the judgment of God and bring with them His verdict upon men [Mt.12:28, Lk.2:34] personify that divine wisdom and power to theophoric heights [Ex.7:1, Ps.82:6-7, Jn.10:31ff, Mt.13:54, Q.2:251-253]. Jesus[p], who is the dedicated Priestly-King similar to Melchizedek[p], would naturally supercede in rank all his predecessors. Yet his superlative status does not detract from discerning between divinity and deity

³ *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*, p.312.

(object-served as God) which the holy Bible emphasizes ought only be the entity comprising of attributes and qualities like spacelessness, timelessness, omniscience, omnipotence; identified with the person of Yahweh, the sole and unique deity [Mr.10:18, 12:28ff, Jn.5:40, 17:3, Mt.11:25].

The hypothesis of a deified Christ, however, falls outside the sonship concept delineated in the Bible, which of frequency highlights mortality and servitude as essential characteristics of messiahship [2Esd.7:27, Isa.11:1-3]. The Christian concept, on the other hand, causes disturbance to the very nature and sequence (continuity) of the messianic hope which had long anticipated a Davidic savior whose sonship would be of the same nature and function as David's [p], in other words, based on the same premise of acquiring divine inheritance through covenantal orientation. To suggest Jesus' [p] sonship denotes deity means his heirship is essentially and necessarily different in nature to previous heirs, thus creating an un-assailable vacuum between the notion of sonship defined in the Old Testament and that postulated by Christians out of Gospel records. The latter fails to appreciate that sonship, in Israelite context, refers heirship granted via act of divine grace due to covenantal affiliation. If Jesus' [p] sonship be considered unique and emphatically divine, then the law of divine inheritance is rendered void, and the above-cited angelic prophecy left is in-explicable. Moreover, if Jesus' [p] sonship was indeed of Davidic descend, as both Matthew [Mt.1] and Luke [Lk.3:23ff] avidly emphasize, it becomes un-ceremonious for us to exclude previous heirs (sons, kings) from deity (be it sub-standard), but if their divinity (godliness) was cultivated on grounds of humility and righteousness, then Jesus' [p] sonship, regardless of its superlativeness, cannot lay claim to the deity of Yahweh to whom it is essentially and qualitatively subservient.

To sum up, we've seen how in its common connotation the phrase 'Son of God' in the holy Bible denotes authority and rule, not mere 'servant' as some Muslims prevalently posit, and also how the term then received prominence in the religio-political ascendancy and dominance of one special nation. The particularization of the phrase occurred when combative champions were installed leaders (kings)

over the elect heritage Israel, embodying divine command and vested paranormal powers so to subjugate adversaries and reign successively in the land of Canaan, God's own inheritance. Hence, the prince, being recipient of share in both sacred possessions, and assured in-severable forensic privilege thereto, was described in the familiar familial metaphor 'Son' with the purpose of adding legitimacy to the vassal's prerogative. Peerless yet of the same nature, Jesus'[p] heirship must cohesively be re-interpreted to fit the historic framework of the Israelite commission, in which Christ[p] shall "*serve as God's vice-regent and reign over all the nations as the perfect mediatorial king (Mic. 4:1-8).*"⁴

M.Usman Rafique

[facebook.com/6sman](https://www.facebook.com/6sman)

6sman.wordpress.com

⁴ See: *Constable's Notes* on 1Samuel 8:4-9.