

EVENING MEDITATIONS STUDY FOUR

ADOPTED AS SONS



In English law it refers to the legal taking of someone else's child and bringing it up as one's own. The Biblical idea of adoption is that someone else's child is given the place and the rights of a son. So, whether male or female, slave or free, we are received as sons. This has a strong connection with inheritance. However, the purpose of God, before time began was/is to bring many sons to glory. It is important to see that believers receive the status of sonship when they first believe. The consequence of this should be a very different way of life that displays to the world what it means to be a son of God. This is why we are described as followers of Jesus - God's True Son.

Galatians 4:4-7 NIV But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (5) to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. (6) Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." (7) So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

Adoption as sons demanded a drastic act of redemption. God acted in the Person of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in order to make the adoption legal, permanent and obvious. The Father purposed all this and sent His Son. Jesus dealt with the Law and its claims. The Holy Spirit keeps the connection and provides the power to live in the good of being sons.

Esther 2:15 NIV When the turn came for Esther (the young woman Mordecai had adopted, the daughter of his uncle Abihail) to go to the king, she asked for nothing other than what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the harem, suggested. And Esther won the favour of everyone who saw her.

Esther was an orphan, living in a foreign land. Her cousin adopted her. The world tried to absorb her. If we see a picture of the word of God and the Holy Spirit in Hegai, then we can see that Esther followed instructions and did as she was advised. Living God's way while in the world! Esther means "star". Like her we can shine like stars. We can live as sons of God.

Ephesians 1:4-5 NIV For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love (5) he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.

In Deuteronomy, God explains to the young nation of Israel that he did not choose them because they had merit or glory that attracted Him. He chose them because He loved them. This is the key to predestination. God loves His Son, Jesus. Those who repent and trust in Jesus Christ are hidden in Him and so are loved as He is loved. God planned this, to accept, to adopt everyone who seeks God in and through the holy and faultless person of Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:23 NIV Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

We have been redeemed from the slave market, we have received our adoption papers, we have been given the guarantee that the Father will keep His Word. However, Paul reminds us that, while in the world, the adoption is not complete. The physical body - with its problems and weaknesses needs replacing with its heavenly counterpart [see 2Corinthians 5:2]. So we groan, we sigh with the whole creation until God completes all His purposes in Christ.

Romans 8:15 NKJV For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

So, spiritually, we are already sons. Scripture makes no distinction here between male and female - we are all sons. In this blessed state, we ought not to fear or live as though orphaned slaves. What might we fear? Losing our adoption papers? Being dragged to hell by our "bodies of death"? Fearing the world and its attitudes? The context is that of slavery, of condemnation, of being judged by the Law? All these things I suppose. The remedy is in the spiritual real where we find ourselves calling to God as ABBA - a term of endearment, a term used by a child who is truly loved.

Hebrews 12:8 NKJV But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

Very difficult - this one! The point being made is that children who are truly loved are disciplined or chastened. This is not widely accepted nowadays. However, chastening describes teaching, educating, correcting rather than beating. So, God allows in our live things that teach us how do live like Jesus Christ. Things happen that strengthen our faith. Jesus spoke of inevitable "persecutions" - which means suffering for being a Christian - and spoke of blessings associated with such experiences. So, having an "easy life" is not the portion for sons!

Hebrews 2:10 NIV In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered.

God is working out His purpose. Nothing will prevent it. He will have many sons in glory! Because part of this involves a struggle on earth, being tried and tested, Jesus the True Son experienced the same. In fact he was tested more than we could ever imagine. Scripture tells us that testing

(proving) gold in the fire makes the gold purer! For Jesus the testing simply made His glory and sinlessness more obvious.