

# The Translation and Transmission of ‘Son of God’ in Arabic

Insights from Gospel Manuscripts

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## Abstract

The purpose of this article is to examine manuscripts of five translations of the Arabic Gospels to learn more about the translation and transmission of the title ‘Son of God’. Learning more about the communication of Jesus’ identity as ‘Son of God’ among early Arabic-speaking Christians can help Bible translators in Arabic contexts today. In addition, this examination of Arabic manuscripts demonstrates the use of Arabic versions in the practice of contemporary New Testament textual criticism.

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## 1. Introduction

The study of ‘Son of God’ in Arabic Gospel manuscripts is relevant to two ongoing conversations in contemporary scholarship.

The first discussion relates to best practice for translating references to Jesus as ‘Son of God’ in Arabic contexts today.<sup>1</sup> Among early Arabic-speaking Christians, the title ‘Son of God’ received significant attention as they sought to understand and communicate their faith. The study of Arabic Gospel manuscripts can provide insight into the ways that Arabic-speaking Christian communities at that time received and communicated ‘Son of God’. Considering this evidence can provide important insight into how to approach this challenge today.

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1. For a survey of different perspectives on the issue and references to key contributors see J. Scott Horrell, ‘Translating “Son of God” for Muslim Contexts, Part 1: Tensions and the Witness of Scripture’, *BibSac* 172 (2015): 268–285.

The second topic, in which interest has been developing, is the use of Arabic Gospel manuscripts in New Testament textual criticism.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the work of grouping the manuscripts into families, individual manuscript and family studies have also become available. These studies highlight the importance of two issues for using versions, and specifically Arabic translations, in textual criticism of the New Testament. First, textual critics need to understand the translation technique of the version to ascertain its relationship to the source text.<sup>3</sup> Second, these studies address whether comparatively late translations, such as the Arabic versions, can provide significant support for variant readings.

## 2. The Manuscripts

The manuscripts used in this study come from five families, each with unique characteristics.<sup>4</sup>

Family *a* was a widely used Arabic translation of the Gospels made from a Greek source text.<sup>5</sup> The manuscript used in this study, *a*<sup>1</sup> (Sin.Ar.74), is an early representative copy of the translation.<sup>6</sup> It is a ninth-century manuscript of a translation that is probably from the eighth century and is valuable for this study because it is translated from Greek; by the ninth century, this translation was being used and copied widely.

Family *b* is an Arabic translation of the Gospels made from Greek.<sup>7</sup> The manuscript used in this study, *b*<sup>1</sup> (Sinai.Ar.NF8 and Sinai.Ar.NF28), was copied

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2. For a survey of contributions to the study of Arabic Gospel manuscripts until 2003, see Hikmat Kashouh, *The Arabic Versions of the Gospels: The Manuscripts and Their Families* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 9–37 and for research until 2020, see Robert Turnbull, ‘The Textual History of Codex Sinaiticus Arabicus and Its Family’ (PhD diss., Australian College of Theology, 2021), 19–41.

3. The importance of translation technique of the Latin, Syriac, and Coptic versions for textual criticism is demonstrated by Peter J. Williams, ‘“Where Two or Three Are Gathered Together”: The Witness of the Early Versions’ in *The Early Text of the New Testament*, ed. Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 239–258.

4. The families listed here are those established by Hikmat Kashouh. For a discussion of the complexities of establishing the families, see his *Arabic Versions*, 3–8, 84–85.

5. The description of family *a* given here, and of Kashouh’s choice of *a*<sup>1</sup> as the representative manuscript, is based on Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 86–96.

6. The images used for this research are available at Library of Congress, ‘Arabic Manuscripts 74’ <https://www.loc.gov/item/00279386036-ms>.

7. See Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 96–113 for his analysis of *b*<sup>1</sup>, which he names ‘Codex Sinaiticus Arabicus’. For a study of the textual character of family *b* as a whole, see Turnbull, ‘Textual History’.

in the eighth or ninth centuries. It is unique because of the readings that the translation contains, in contrast with the other Arabic translations in this study.<sup>8</sup>

Family *f* is a stylistically unique translation, made from a Syriac source text in the eighth to early tenth centuries.<sup>9</sup> Its uniqueness is due to its distinctive renderings that rhyme.<sup>10</sup> The manuscript chosen for this study, *f*<sup>2</sup> (Vat.Ar.17), is the earliest witness containing all four Gospels and is from the early eleventh century.<sup>11</sup> Because its script is very difficult to read at points, however, I have also consulted a fifteenth-century manuscript, *f*<sup>1</sup> (Leiden Or.561), with a very clear script.<sup>12</sup>

Family *h* is the earliest-known Arabic translation of the Gospels and employs language which is more archaic than other extant translations.<sup>13</sup> It was translated from Syriac, with evidence of both Peshitta and Old Syriac influence.<sup>14</sup> Its only known manuscript at this time, *h*<sup>1</sup> (Vat.Ar.13), is from the ninth century, and contains text from Matthew, Mark, and Luke, but all are incomplete.<sup>15</sup>

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8. Hikmat Kachouh, ‘Sinai Ar. NF Parchment 8 and 28: Its Contribution to Textual Criticism of the Gospel of Luke’, *NovT* 50.1 (2008): 28–57; Robert Turnbull, ‘The Textual Character of Codex Sinaiticus Arabicus and Its Family’ in *At One Remove: The Text of the New Testament in Early Translations and Quotations*, ed. H. A. G. Houghton and Peter Montoro (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2021), 87–106. Images of Sin.Ar.NF Parch 8, 28 used in this research are available at Sinai Palimpsests Project, ‘Arabic NF 8’ <https://sinai.library.ucla.edu> and Sinai Palimpsests Project, ‘Arabic NF 28’ <https://sinai.library.ucla.edu>.

9. Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 128–129.

10. For an analysis of the rhyming features of the translation, see Joséphine I. Nasr, *Une traduction arabe de l’Évangile de Luc* (Beirut: Saint Joseph University, 2011), 114–120.

11. The images of Vat.Ar.17 used in this research are available at Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ‘Vat.Ar.17’ [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.ar.17.pt.1](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.ar.17.pt.1) and [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.ar.17.pt.2](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.ar.17.pt.2).

12. Nasr, *Une traduction*, 97 describes the script of the eleventh-century Vat.Ar.17 as سيئ للغاية (‘extremely bad’). Images of Leiden Or.561 were accessed from Leiden University Libraries, ‘Or.561’ <https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/view/item/1871327>. The earliest witness to this family is the late tenth-century Vat.Ar.18, containing only two portions of the Gospel of Luke.

13. See Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 168–169 for a summary of the features of Vat.Ar.13 which point to this conclusion.

14. Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 520–533 provides detailed evidence of agreement with Syriac sources against Greek. Sara Schulthess, ‘Vaticanus Arabicus 13’, *JETS* 70 (2018): 63–84 surveys research on the source text of Vat.Ar.13 and argues that a multilingual Syriac–Greek–Arabic context is key to understanding the manuscript’s origins.

15. The images of *h*<sup>1</sup> used for this research are available at Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ‘Vat.Ar.13’ [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.ar.13](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.ar.13). The transcription of Vat.Ar.13 in Hikmat Kachouh, ‘The Arabic Versions of the Gospels’ (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2008), 499–578 provided a helpful index of folio numbers for locating references, and the transcription itself was valuable for comparison.

Family *k* is known as the Arabic Vulgate, a status it reached in the fourteenth century. Its translator(s) may have worked from Syriac and then corrected it against a Greek text, or possibly somehow translated it from both languages.<sup>16</sup> The thirteenth-century manuscript used in this study, *k*<sup>8</sup> (Sin.Ar.112), is one of more than 150 extant copies of this translation, which come from the tenth to nineteenth centuries.<sup>17</sup> In Kashouh's analysis, he concluded that the evidence of *k*<sup>8</sup> suggests it had been corrected against a Greek or Syriac source text.<sup>18</sup>

### 3. The Transmission and Translation of 'Son of God' in Arabic Gospel Manuscripts

In this section, representative examples of the transmission and translation of 'Son of God' are examined to illustrate the Arabic manuscripts' characteristic features. The examples were selected from seventy occurrences of υἱός in the manuscript tradition of the Gospels. All seventy are provided in Arabic, with their Greek and Syriac source texts, in the appendix to this article.

In Matthew 3:17, God speaks of the Messiah as his Son at his baptism. Manuscripts *a*<sup>1</sup> *b*<sup>1</sup> *h*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup> read 'my beloved son'.<sup>19</sup> Manuscript *f*<sup>2</sup> has a unique rhyming translation, 'a pleasing, beloved, chosen son', with 'pleasing' (مرتضى *murtada*) rhyming with 'chosen' (مصطفى *muṣṭafa*).<sup>20</sup> The 'my' seems to have been omitted to allow for a string of indefinite forms. As a result, in *f*<sup>2</sup>, although Jesus is identified as 'a son', it is not made explicit whose son he is.

The next speaker to address Jesus as 'son' in the Gospel of Matthew is the devil in 4:3,6. In manuscripts *a*<sup>1</sup> *b*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup>, the devil calls Jesus 'God's son' in 4:3,6. Manuscript *h*<sup>1</sup> has 'God's son' in 4:3, but 'a son of God' in 4:6, a change not based on the Syriac, which is the same in both verses. In *f*<sup>2</sup>, Jesus is called 'God's beloved one' rather than 'son'. This title may have been chosen to retain a semantic connection to

16. For these conclusions on the Arabic Vulgate, see Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 257.

17. Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 207–214. Images used for this study are from the Library of Congress, 'Arabic Manuscripts 112' <https://www.loc.gov/item/00279386784-ms>.

18. Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 241.

19. Arabic does not have capitalisation, so translations of Arabic words in this article are normally not capitalised, even when they would be in other English Bible translations. Accordingly, the lack of capitalisation for 'son' is not intended to have theological implications. However, as الله (*allāh* 'God') is graphically unique in Arabic, it is capitalised in translations of Arabic in this article.

20. These two terms may both reflect the translator's rendering of *ܕܘܨܝܢܐ ܕܝܗܘܐ ܕܝܗܘܐ ܕܝܗܘܐ* ('in whom I have been pleased'). The verb *ܕܝܗܘܐ* can mean 'to be pleased' and 'to choose' with the particle *ܕ* in the ethp<sup>e</sup>el. J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1902), 472.

3:17, with two different forms - حبيب (*ḥabīb*) and محبب (*muḥabbab*) - used, both meaning 'beloved'. This is in contrast to the source text of  $f^2$ , the Peshitta, in which the connection is established by the use of **כ** (*bar*, 'son'), in both 3:17 and 4:3,6.<sup>21</sup>

In Matthew 11:27, Jesus describes his unique relationship with the Father and his role in revealing the Father. Manuscripts  $a^1 b^1 h^1 k^8$  have 'the son' three times. In family  $f$ , the first 'son' is anarthrous, the second arthrous, and the third omitted, reading 'no (one) knows a son like the father, nor a father like the son'. In addition, in  $f$ , in 11:25 'Father' is omitted, in 11:26 it is rendered الله (*allāh*, 'God'), and in 11:27 it is also rendered الله (*allāh*, 'God'). These features confirm that in  $f$ , 11:27 is a general statement relating to fathers and sons rather than a specific reference to the relationship between Jesus and his Father.<sup>22</sup>

These Arabic manuscripts demonstrate variation related to the inclusion or omission of 'nor the Son' knowing the day and hour in Matthew 24:36.<sup>23</sup> In  $f^{1.2} h^1$  'nor the son' is not present in the main text or margin. However,  $b^1$  does include the phrase in its main text, and in  $a^1$  'nor the son' is written in the margin. In  $k^8$  the addition of ابن (*ibn* 'son') in the margin results in 'the son of the man does not know it', using a common form used to translate the title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

In Matthew 26:63, in  $b^1 h^1 k^8$ , the High Priest asks Jesus if he is 'God's son'. In  $a^1$ , the title is 'the son of the living God'. This reading may be a result of the influence of the previous 'the living God' in the same sentence.<sup>24</sup> When considering this proposal, the visual features of the manuscript are relevant. In  $a^1$ , the second occurrence of 'the living God' is directly below the first occurrence, with both appearing at the end of the line. Furthermore, the addition 'the living' to the second title is not written in line with 'God' but has been written below it. These features suggest that a scribe may have added the second 'living' under the influence of the first. Family  $f$  is split between 'son of the lord of the worlds' in  $f^2$  and 'the elect of the lord of the worlds' in  $f^1$ . The word 'elect' (صفي *ṣafī*) is related to مصطفى (*muṣṭafa* 'chosen') from Matthew 3:17. This is another example

21. On the connection between 'Son' in the temptation and the baptism, see Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, WBC 33a (Dallas: Word, 1995), 58–59.

22. W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *Matthew 8–18*, ICC (London: T&T Clark), 283 discuss emphatic forms in Aramaic having a generic referent.

23. Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 4th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 52 argues for doctrinal motivations for the variant, an argument extended by Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 91–92.

24. For this origin of the variant, see Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28*, WBC 33b (Dallas: Word, 1995), 794.

of a word group seen in Matthew 3:17 reappearing, not as a modifier of ‘son’, but as an independent title. The title ‘lord of the worlds’ was most likely known to the translation’s audience as a divine title. The word ‘worlds’ (عالمين *‘ālamīn*) maintains a rhyme with the ends of other lines, ‘the true ones’ (الصادقين *al-ṣādiqīn*) and ‘for those watching’ (لِلنَّازِرِينَ *lilnāzirīn*).

In Mark 1:1, according to *a*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup>, Jesus is identified as ‘God’s son’. Manuscript *b*<sup>1</sup> omits the title. This constitutes ninth-century support for the shorter text of Mark 1:1.<sup>25</sup> Manuscript *f*<sup>2</sup> reads ‘the son of the lord of the worlds’. As in Matthew 26:63, ‘worlds’ (عالمين *‘ālamīn*) rhymes, in this case with ‘the prophets’ (النبیین *al-nabiyīn*) in the next line. The text of *f*<sup>1</sup> is the result of erasure and rewriting. It reads ‘the spirit of God, the lord of the worlds’.

At Jesus’ baptism, in Mark 1:11, manuscripts *b*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup> translate the voice from heaven saying to Jesus ‘you are my beloved son’. In *a*<sup>1</sup>, the voice says ‘this is my beloved son’, perhaps under the influence of Mark 9:7 or Matthew 3:17. Manuscript *f*<sup>2</sup> has ‘you are the honourable and beloved one’, but in *f*<sup>1</sup> there is an erasure, leaving ‘you are the ... beloved one’.

In Mark 9:7, at Jesus’ transfiguration, the voice from the cloud declares that Jesus is ‘my son, the beloved’ or ‘my beloved son’ in families *a*<sup>1</sup> *b*<sup>1</sup> *f*<sup>1</sup> *h*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup>. In *f*<sup>2</sup>, the voice declares that Jesus is ‘the beloved near one’. The two words قَرِيب (qarīb ‘near’) and حَبِيب (ḥabīb ‘beloved’) rhyme. Jesus is most likely affirmed in *f*<sup>2</sup> as being near to God and beloved by him. However, some in the audience of this translation may have also understood القَرِيب (*al-qarīb*) ‘the near one’ as a divine name.

In *a*<sup>1</sup> *b*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup>, in Mark 14:61, the high priest asks Jesus if he is the ‘son of the blessed’.<sup>26</sup> Manuscript *f*<sup>2</sup> omits the definite article from ‘blessed’, producing a phrase that could mean ‘a blessed son’ or ‘a son of a blessed one’. In *h*<sup>1</sup>, the identity of ‘the blessed’ is made explicit and expanded to the ‘son of the blessed high God’.

In Luke 3:22, at Jesus’ baptism, the voice from heaven addresses Jesus in *a*<sup>1</sup> *b*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup> as ‘my beloved son’. Manuscript *f*<sup>2</sup> reads ‘my elect and beloved one’. The noun ‘elect one’ (صَفْوَةٌ *ṣafwa*) is related to the term ‘chosen’ (مُصْطَفَى *muṣṭafa*) in Matthew 3:17. The use of a conjunction is also seen in the Sinaitic Syriac. However, in this

25. See Tommy Wasserman, ‘The “Son of God” was in the Beginning (Mark 1:1)’, *JTS* 62.1 (2011): 20–50 for the case for the longer reading, including reference to *b*<sup>1</sup> supporting the shorter reading, and other Arabic evidence for the longer reading (38). See Peter M. Head, ‘A Text-Critical Study of Mark 1.1 “The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ”’, *NTS* 37.4 (1991): 621–629 for the case for the shorter text.

26. In *k*<sup>8</sup>, المَبَارَك (‘the blessed’) is crossed out, with اللهُ (‘God’) written in the margin.

case, it is needed in Arabic to allow the grammatically feminine noun 'elect one' (صفوة *ṣafwa*) to be followed by a masculine adjective 'beloved' (حبيب *ḥabīb*).

Two times, in Luke 4:3 and 4:9, the devil asks, in  $a^1 b^1 k^8$ , if Jesus is 'God's son'. Manuscript  $h^1$  reads 'a son of God'. In 4:3, family  $f$  is split, with  $f^2$  reading 'an elect of God' with 'son' written above the line. Manuscript  $f^1$  has 'spirit of God', with evidence of erasure and rewriting. Rhyme is not obvious in any of these readings. In 4:9, family  $f$  has a secure reading 'elect of God', which was found in  $f^2$  at 4:3. In this case, rhyme in the immediate context supports the originality of this reading. The text reads 'if you were to God elect, then make yourself thrown down'. The rhyme here is based on 'elect' (صفيًا *ṣafīyyan*) and 'thrown down' (ملقيا *malqiyyan*).

The voice from the cloud, at Jesus' transfiguration in Luke 9:35, according to  $a^1 k^8$ , declares that Jesus is 'my beloved son'.<sup>27</sup> Manuscript  $b^1$  has 'my chosen son', which could be translated from a text agreeing with  $\delta \upsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma \mu\omicron\upsilon \delta \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  in  $\mathfrak{P}^{45,75}$   $\aleph$  B or  $\delta \upsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma \mu\omicron\upsilon \delta \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  in  $\Theta$ .<sup>28</sup> Family  $f$  reads 'my son, and he is beloved'. As in Luke 3:22, the use of a conjunction could be understood as agreement with the Old Syriac, in this case, Curetonian. However, this expansion follows a pattern in family  $f$  whereby the translation introduces new ideas with an emphatic particle.<sup>29</sup>

Jesus says, in Luke 10:22 in  $a^1 b^1$ , that only  $\text{الاب}$  (*al-āb* 'the father') knows  $\text{الابن}$  (*al-ibn* 'the son') and that only 'the son' knows 'the father', and that 'the son' reveals 'the father'. In  $k^8$ , the order of 'father' and 'son' is reversed the first two times, so it reads 'no one knows the father except the son nor the son except the father and to whom the son wills to reveal'. This variation is found in the manuscript tradition of the parallel in Matthew 11:27. Therefore, knowledge of a tradition of Matthew 11:27 may have led to this reading in  $k^8$ . In family  $f$  the first two occurrences of 'son' and 'father' are anarthrous, reading 'no (one) knows a son except a father and no (one) knows a father except a son'.

In Luke 23:35, manuscript  $a^1$  has 'the messiah, the chosen one of God', a direct translation of a text agreeing with BYZ<sup>RP</sup>.<sup>30</sup> Manuscripts  $b^1 k^8$  have 'the messiah, God's son, the chosen one', which appears to reflect a text that agrees with  $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$ ,

27. Metzger, *Commentary*, 124 sees ἀγαπητός as a scribal creation under influence of parallels such as Mark 9:7 and Luke 3:22.

28. Kachouh, 'Sinai Ar. N.F. Parchment 8 and 28', 45 considers agreement with ἐκλεκτός 'less likely', with citation of external evidence, suggesting this is due to manuscript agreement rather than semantic or translational issues. Fitzmyer, *Luke I-IX*, 803 sees ἐκλεκτός as 'a harmonization with 23:35'.

29. Nasr, *Une traduction*, 123.

30. Maurice A. Robinson and William G. Pierpont, *The New Testament in the Original Greek: Byzantine Textform* (Southborough: Chilton, 2005).

and in the case of *k*<sup>8</sup>, a text agreeing with *sy*<sup>h</sup> is also a possible source.<sup>31</sup> Family *f* has ‘the noble one of God ... the messiah’.

In John 1:18, according to *a*<sup>1</sup>, it is ‘the only eternal son’ who has made God known.<sup>32</sup> The ‘eternal’ (ازلي *azalī*) added here is used to communicate eternity in the sense of ‘without beginning’. It is related to the verb used to translate ἦν in 1:1.<sup>33</sup> The text of *b*<sup>1</sup> in 1:18 reads ‘No one has seen God, except the only eternal son in the bosom of the father, he has revealed (him) to us.’ Like *a*<sup>1</sup>, it adds ‘eternal’ (ازلي *azalī*), and also inserts the particle ‘except’ (لا *illa*) before *al-ibn* (الابن ‘the son’). In Arabic ‘except’ and the first three letters of ‘the son’ are identical, so this may be a case of dittography. The translation also adds ل (lana ‘to us’) at the end of the verse. This could be a clarifying addition of its translation of ἐξηγήσατο. However, in Luke 24:35, for the only other occurrence of ἐξηγέομαι in the gospels, *b*<sup>1</sup> does not add a pronoun to the verb, which is limited evidence that the addition in 1:18 is based on a source text. Both of these additions, ‘except’ (لا *illa*) and ‘to us’ (ل *lana*), agree with εἰ μὴ and ἡμῖν of *W*<sup>s</sup>, which may point to a source-text origin behind both variants in *b*<sup>1</sup>.<sup>34</sup> Family *f* has a direct translation, ‘the only God’, of its Peshitta source text. Manuscript *k*<sup>8</sup>, in contrast to the expanded title in *a*<sup>1</sup> *b*<sup>1</sup>, has ‘the only son’, which could reflect a text agreeing with *BYZ*<sup>RP</sup> or *sy*<sup>c,h</sup>.

Manuscripts *a*<sup>1</sup> *f*<sup>1,2</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup> in John 1:34 communicate John’s testimony that Jesus is ‘God’s son’, based on source texts agreeing with *NA*<sup>28</sup> *BYZ*<sup>RP</sup> and *sy*<sup>p</sup>.<sup>35</sup> None of the Arabic translations directly translate a text in agreement with *ℵ*<sup>\*</sup>: ‘the chosen one of God’. However, *b*<sup>1</sup> contains the combined reading ‘the chosen one, God’s son’. There are a few possible scenarios that led to this reading. It may have

31. Kachouh, ‘Sinai Ar. N.F. Parchment 8 and 28’, 53 records this variant and extensive external evidence with which it agrees.

32. For a detailed survey of a wide range of Arabic Gospel manuscripts of John 1:18, see Hikmat Kachouh, ‘The Arabic Versions of the Gospels: A Case Study of John 1:1 and 1:18’ in *The Bible in Arab Christianity*, ed. David Thomas (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 9–36.

33. *a*<sup>1</sup> has لم تزل (‘it was still present’) for the second and third occurrence of ἦν, and *b*<sup>1</sup> has لم تزل (‘it was still present’) for the first and second with الكلمة (‘the word’) and لم يزال (‘he was still present’) for the third occurrence with اله (‘god’).

34. Robert Turnbull, ‘Codex Sinaiticus Arabicus and Its Family’ (MDiv diss., Australian College of Theology, 2016), 32 observed agreement between *b*<sup>1</sup> and *W*<sup>s</sup>, including the εἰ μὴ in 1:18 and also in 1:27, 1:36 and 1:51. The addition of a second point of agreement with ἡμῖν in 1:18 may provide further evidence of Turnbull’s identification of a relationship between *b*<sup>1</sup> and *W*<sup>s</sup>.

35. Metzger, *Commentary*, 172 describes this reading as ‘in harmony with the theological terminology of the Fourth Evangelist’. On this variant, see Christopher W. Skinner, ‘“Son of God” or “God’s Chosen One”? A Text-Critical Problem and Its Narrative-Critical Solution (John 1:34)’, *BBR* 25 (2015): 341–357.



been a direct translation of ὁ ἐκλεκτὸς υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, which is found in  $\aleph^{Ca}$ .<sup>36</sup> Alternatively, an original translation 'chosen one of God' may have been expanded by the insertion of 'son' from a text agreeing with NA<sup>28</sup> BYZ<sup>RP</sup> sy<sup>P</sup>. This would have also required the addition of 'the' to 'chosen'. Alternatively, an original phrase 'God's son' may have been expanded by the insertion of 'the chosen one' from a source reflecting  $\aleph^*$  sy<sup>c.s</sup>.

In John 10:36, according to manuscripts  $a^1 b^1 k^8$ , Jesus refers to his own declaration that he is 'God's son'.<sup>37</sup> In contrast to the definite 'the son' in  $a^1 b^1 k^8$ , family *f* uses a different, indefinite noun and reads 'an offspring of God'. The indefinite form may reflect Jesus' interlocutors' belief that he was claiming to be 'a son' rather than 'the Son'. Second, the use of 'offspring' (ولد, *walad*) may reflect the kind of misunderstanding witnessed in the narrative previously, when Jesus' listeners understood filial language as referring to physical, biological relationships (8:41).<sup>38</sup>

In manuscripts  $a^1 b^1 k^8$ , in John 11:4, Jesus says that Lazarus' sickness is for the glorification of the 'God's son'. In contrast, family *f* has 'son of man' and reads 'This sickness is not for his death, but it is for the glorification of God, and praise will be for the son of man due to it.' In  $a^1 b^1 k^8$ , 'God' (الله *allāh*) is repeated in this verse, with 'God's glory' and 'God's son'. The reading of *f* may reflect a goal of Arabic poetry to achieve rhyme without relying on repetition of a key word.<sup>39</sup> In this verse, the rhyme depends on the first occurrence of 'God' (الله *allāhi*) and also 'for his death' (لميته *limaytihi*), and 'due to it' (لأجله *li'ajlihi*).

In John 12:28, according to  $a^1 f^{1.2} k^8$ , Jesus prays to God 'glorify your name'. Manuscript  $b^1$  reads 'your son', agreeing with σου τὸν υἱόν of L, reflecting its unique textual character among these Arabic manuscripts.

36. Turnbull, 'Codex Sinaiticus Arabicus and Its Family', 31 sees the value of the reading of  $b^1$  as providing additional support for the reading 'Chosen One'.

37. Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruption*, 160 argues that the addition of the article in  $\aleph^{45}$  is 'to emphasize that Jesus himself is ... the Son of God'. James R. Royse, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri*, NTTSD 38 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 194 includes 10:36 as an example of  $\aleph^{45}$  containing a harmonisation to general usage.

38. Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols; Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003), 828–830 considers 8:41 as background to 10:36 and examines the issue of Jesus as 'a son' or 'the Son'.

39. W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 3rd ed. (2 vols; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898), 2: 357.

#### 4. Relevance for Translation

These manuscripts provide clear evidence of their translation technique with regard to Jesus as ‘Son of God’. Of the five translations studied, complete unity is found among manuscripts  $a^1 b^1 h^1 k^8$ , which have ابن (*ibn* ‘son’) in one hundred percent of the places that their source texts contained a reference to Jesus as υἱός or ٱ (bar ‘son’). Three conclusions can be drawn from this evidence. These conclusions are relevant for contemporary translation projects in Modern Standard Arabic and Arabic dialects.

First, the identification of Jesus as *ibn* was an early phenomenon in Arabic-speaking Christianity. Family *h* is the earliest translation of the gospels in Arabic and it uses *ibn* without exception to translate references to Jesus as ٱ (bar ‘son’) in the Syriac gospels. Translators today who use *ibn* in Scripture translation continue a tradition among Arabic-speaking followers of Christ that extends back as far as the evidence of these translations can show.

Second, constraints on the translators can help explain the unity around ابن (*ibn* ‘son’). There are two types of constraints: conventional and contextual.<sup>40</sup> Conventional constraints consist of the wider usage of a term in a speech community. This wider usage can constrain users of the language when they use the same term. However, the translators of *a b h* do not appear to have been significantly constrained by each other. If this had occurred, we would expect a greater level of transfer from one translation to the other. In contrast, the linguistic features of  $a^1 b^1 h^1$ , including word order and word choice, indicate that they were completed independently.<sup>41</sup> Another more likely conventional constraint was the Arabic *kerygma* – the proclamation of fundamental Christian truth claims about Jesus, including his identity as *ibn*.<sup>42</sup> With this constraint affecting the translators,

40. I am utilising the concepts of conventional and contextual constraints from Alan Cruse, *Meaning in Language: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 119–124.

41. Mark 13:32 demonstrates this widespread diversity when key elements are translated differently. For οὐδείς οἶδεν, ليس احد يعلم,  $a^1$  (‘there is not one (who) knows’),  $b^1$  (‘a person does not know’), ليس احد يعرف,  $h^1$  (‘there is not one (who) knows’), with  $h^1$  using a different word for ‘knows’ to  $a^1$ . For οἱ ἄγγελοι ἐν οὐρανῷ, الملائكة الذين,  $a^1$  (‘the angels who are in heaven’),  $b^1$  (‘the angels in heaven’),  $h^1$  (‘angels of heaven’), with ‘heaven’ spelt differently in  $a^1$ , and ‘angels’ spelt differently in  $b^1$ . For εἰ μὴ, الا,  $a^1$  ‘except’,  $b^1$  غير,  $h^1$  بل ‘but’.

42. For the development of the Arabic *kerygma*, see Sidney H. Griffith, ‘Stephen of Ramlah and the Christian Kerygma in Arabic in Ninth-Century Palestine’, *JEH* 36.1 (1985): 23–45.

they might continue to use the term heard in the ongoing proclamation of the gospel, rather than innovate.

In addition to the constraint of conventional use, there is also a contextual constraint that can affect translators. For the translation of key biblical terms, the context is the text of Scripture in which the key term appears.<sup>43</sup> In general, the features of *a b h* reflect a concern to accurately communicate the meaning of their source texts. This means they were constrained by the meaning of the text of the gospels and the contexts in which terms occurred. Therefore, it is expected that their use of *ibn* also stems from this general concern for faithfulness to the meaning of the text of Scripture. As a result, we can infer that the translators judged that *ibn* provided sufficient semantic overlap with  $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\text{ابن}$  (*bar* 'son') to translate this key term in the gospels.

Translators in Arabic contexts today also can consider conventional and contextual constraints because they are as relevant today as they were in the first millennium. For conventional constraints, there is the widespread identification of Jesus as *ibn* in contemporary proclamation of the gospel in Arabic. This is easily accessible given the proliferation of Arabic-language evangelistic resources through the internet and satellite television. In addition, the contextual constraint of the text of Scripture is also as relevant today as it was for earlier translators. There are no relevant recent developments in our understanding of the meaning of  $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$  in the gospels. In addition, there has not been a semantic shift in the use of *ibn* since the production of these early Arabic translations. Therefore, the semantic judgements made by these early translators deserve priority when considering the translation of this key term today.

Third, the evidence shows that Arabic-speaking Christians continued to use *ibn*, despite the challenges that it presented. Family *k*, the most widely used Arabic translation before the printing press, did not move away from *ibn*, but continued to employ it without exception, as in *a*<sup>1</sup>, *b*<sup>1</sup>, and *h*<sup>1</sup>. This occurred despite significant challenges for the Arabic-speaking Christian community when identifying Jesus as *ibn* in their communication of the gospel. The writings of Arabic-speaking apologists show that the term could be seriously misunderstood by outsiders. This led to these theologians expending significant effort in writing

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43. Bryan Harmelink, 'Lexical Pragmatics and Hermeneutical Issues in the Translation of Key Terms', *SIL Journal of Translation* 8.1 (2012): 25–35 (25) writes that 'key terms' are commonly understood 'as a special set of biblical words with such rich and complex meanings that even the best terms in the vernacular will only allow a small part of those meanings to come through in the translation'.

clarifications and responses, explaining how Jesus could be identified as *ibn*.<sup>44</sup> In this context, the continued use of *ibn* in family *k* shows that Arabic-speaking translators understood their task as being restricted to translation only. The output of the church's teaching and apologetics, however, was made available in other genres of literature.<sup>45</sup>

Contemporary translations of the Gospels into Arabic also encounter misunderstanding and opposition to the identification of Jesus as *ibn*. Given the parallels with the situation in the first millennium and today, contemporary translators can continue to do the work of translation in modern Arabic, considering the constraints described above. At the same time, as the term can be seriously misunderstood, this is an opportunity for Arabic-speaking evangelists, teachers and preachers. They need to continue the long tradition of explaining how Jesus can be identified as *ibn* and responding to queries and objections.

Family *f* is unique when compared to *a*<sup>1</sup> *b*<sup>1</sup> *h*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup>, but does continue the tradition of identifying Jesus as *ibn* 'son' in the vast majority of cases. Of sixty-six opportunities to translate *بن* (*bar* 'son'), at least one of the two family *f* manuscripts in this study has *ابن* (*ibn* 'son') in its translation forty-nine times.<sup>46</sup> There are two features of family *f* from which contemporary translators can learn.

The evidence of family *f* is a reminder to consider style as a feature of Arabic Bible translation. However, this translation is also a reminder that balancing style and semantic fidelity is complex. In the pursuit of rhyme, family *f* at times omits meaning that is explicit in the source text, and at other times adds meaning that is not explicit or implicit in the source text.<sup>47</sup> This characteristic of *f* can serve as a reminder not to compromise a translation's accuracy with respect to the meaning of its source text in order to achieve a stylistic goal.

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44. See, for example, Najib G. Awad, *Orthodoxy in Arabic Terms: A Study of Theodore Abū Qurrah's Theology in Its Islamic Context* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 314–358 and Sandra T. Keating, *Defending the 'People of Truth' in the Early Islamic Period: The Christian Apologies of Abū Rā'īṭah* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 217–297.

45. In the evidence examined in this study, a blurring of roles can be witnessed in John 1:18 in family *a* and *b*, where the translations explicate a conclusion inferred from John 1:1.

46. Or 74.24%. Of those, 36 were in both *f*<sup>1</sup> and *f*<sup>2</sup>, 5 were only in *f*<sup>1</sup> against *f*<sup>2</sup>, 6 were in *f*<sup>2</sup> against *f*<sup>1</sup>, and for 2 only the text of *f*<sup>2</sup> could be analysed.

47. For omissions of explicit meaning, see the discussions of the representative examples Matt. 4:3,6; 11:27 above. Additions not based on the source text include Matt. 2:15 *ارض الصعيد* ('the land of the upper (area)'), Matt. 16:16 *وكان قولاً سداداً* ('and it was a right saying'), and Matt. 17:5, *الذي اصطفاه الله* ('whom God chose').

Family *f* also provides an opportunity to reconsider the importance of acceptability for contemporary Arabic translations.<sup>48</sup> The translation of *f* is not only unique when compared to the other four manuscripts in this study, but also when compared to all other manuscripts of the Gospels in Arabic.<sup>49</sup> Differences between *f*<sup>1</sup> and *f*<sup>2</sup> in the translation of **ابن** (*bar* 'son'), and corrections made within the manuscripts themselves, appear to be evidence that some of its translation choices were not accepted in its reception history.<sup>50</sup> The translator(s) of *f* may not have foreseen the diversity of the audience of the translation. When considering how to translate references to 'Son of God' in Arabic today, it is important to test acceptability beyond the immediate audience of a translation in order to help ensure its acceptance.

## 5. Relevance for Textual Criticism

For determining support for variants at particular points, a range of issues were identified when considering the evidence of families *a*, *b*, *f*, *h*, and *k*. These lessons can provide guidance for the ongoing use of Arabic manuscripts in New Testament textual criticism. First, familiarity with the layout of the manuscript can help with identifying possible causes for readings. This was seen with *a*<sup>1</sup> in Matthew 26:63. Second, the possibility of transcriptional probabilities being relevant are connected to the version's script, such as in the case of possible dittography in *b*<sup>1</sup> at John 1:18. Third, when a feature appears only once in the manuscript, it is difficult to identify translation technique. However, agreement with the same source text in close proximity may assist, such as in *b*<sup>1</sup> in John 1:18. Fourth, it is very difficult to reach conclusions on a combined reading such as John 1:34 in *b*<sup>1</sup>, as to whether it stems from a source text or the translator, and if from the translation, which part was original or added. Fifth, when a translation is free, such as family *f*, its text can reflect the creativity of the translator rather than its source text. Sixth, translators make meaning explicit, and this can be the source of new readings, such as Mark 14:61 in *h*<sup>1</sup>. Seventh, previously unknown readings can appear in a translation, and their origins may be complex, including not only a translator and a source text, but also oral memory and synoptic parallels, such as Matthew 24:36 and Luke 10:22 in *k*<sup>8</sup>.

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48. Carl Gross, 'Acceptability – the Supreme Translation Principle?' *TBT* 54 (2003): 424–434.

49. Kashouh, *Arabic Versions*, 130.

50. The two manuscripts were split at Matt. 26:63; 27:40; Mark 1:1; 9:7; 14:33; Luke 1:32,35; 3:22; 4:41; 22:70; John 8:36. Corrections were found at Matt. 14:33; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:32,35; 3:22; 4:3,9.

In this study, seventy occurrences of  $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$  in the manuscript tradition of the Gospels were analysed. While considering the unique features of the translations and source texts as described above, it was possible to calculate how many were assessable for text-critical purposes.

**Table 1: Assessable translations of  $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$  in Arabic Gospel manuscripts**

	Lacunose		Extant		Unclear		Assessable	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
$a^1$	2	2.86	68	97.14	6	8.82	62	91.18
$b^1$	0	0.00	70	100.00	5	7.14	65	92.86
$f^1$	1	1.43	69	98.57	39	56.52	30	43.48
$f^2$	3	4.29	67	95.71	40	59.70	27	40.30
$h^1$	45	64.29	25	35.71	5	20.00	20	80.00
$k^8$	0	0.00	70	100.00	8	11.43	62	88.57

The category ‘unclear’ indicates that I was not certain regarding the translation’s source text. This was decided based upon factors discussed in the study above, including transcriptional probabilities and translation technique, and also when known Greek variants differed in ways that could not be distinguished in Arabic. From the table, it can be seen that  $a^1$   $b^1$  were unclear in a small number of cases, reflecting their relatively direct translations throughout. However, the translation technique exhibited in family  $f$  meant that it was difficult to consider it as supporting a particular source text in approximately half of the extant readings in  $f^1$   $f^2$ .

**Table 2: Agreement for assessable variants between Arabic gospel manuscripts and other texts**

	NA <sup>28</sup> + BYZ <sup>RP</sup>		NA <sup>28</sup>		BYZ <sup>RP</sup>		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
$a^1$	53	85.48	0	0.00	7	12.90	1	1.61
$b^1$	54	83.08	2	3.08	5	7.69	4	6.15
$f^1$	24	80.00	0	0.00	6	20.00	0	0.00
$f^2$	23	85.19	0	0.00	4	14.81	0	0.00
$h^1$	19	95.00	0	0.00	1	5.00	0	0.00
$k^8$	54	87.10	0	0.00	7	11.29	1	1.61

There are four conclusions that are relevant for contemporary textual criticism. First, all manuscripts were found to have translations that can be traced to a source text that is in agreement with both NA<sup>28</sup> and BYZ<sup>RP</sup> in the vast majority of the cases. This is evidence of the relative stability of the transmission of references to Jesus as 'son' in Arabic Gospel manuscripts and that their evidence does not lead to a significant shift in our understanding of the transmission and translation of the New Testament. Second, all manuscripts agreed with BYZ<sup>RP</sup> against NA<sup>28</sup> more often than they agreed with NA<sup>28</sup> against BYZ<sup>RP</sup>, suggesting an overall tendency for later translations like Arabic to agree with the Byzantine text. Third, agreements with NA<sup>28</sup> against BYZ<sup>RP</sup> occurred in Matthew 24:36 and Luke 9:35 for *b*<sup>1</sup>. These represent opportunities for the evidence of *b*<sup>1</sup> to be taken seriously, potentially making its way into future apparatuses. Finally, agreements against both NA<sup>28</sup> and BYZ<sup>RP</sup> were found in Mark 1:11 for *a*<sup>1</sup>, Mark 1:1, Luke 23:35, John 1:34 and 12:28 for *b*<sup>1</sup>, and Luke 23:35 for *k*<sup>8</sup>. These readings particularly highlight the special nature of the text of *b*<sup>1</sup> and support the ongoing study of the manuscript for greater inclusion in the practice of contemporary textual criticism.

## 6. Conclusion

It is hoped this study will provide some helpful background for those working in Bible translation in Arabic contexts and give further impetus for the use of Arabic manuscripts in New Testament textual criticism today.

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## Appendix

The following seventy occurrences of 'son' include the two source-text languages, Greek and Syriac, followed by the readings of the five Arabic versions. For Greek, the texts of NA<sup>28</sup> and BYZ<sup>RP</sup> are always provided. These two contemporary printed texts cover almost all of the readings in Arabic manuscripts *a*<sup>1</sup> *b*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup>. When an additional Greek reading is relevant, at least one key manuscript witness is listed. Three Syriac versions, the Peshitta, the Sinaitic, and the Curetonian, are consistently cited, providing textual evidence for studying *f*<sup>1.2</sup> *h*<sup>1</sup> *k*<sup>8</sup>.





## Matthew (cont.)

26:63	ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>   ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος C* N W Δ	ܩܠܘܠܐ ܕܥܒܕܝܢ sy <sup>p,5</sup> 'God's son'	بن الله الحي   <i>b<sup>1</sup> h<sup>1</sup> k<sup>8</sup></i> 'God's son'   <i>a<sup>1</sup></i> 'son of the living God'   صفي رب   <i>f<sup>1</sup></i> 'elect of the lord of the worlds'   ابن رب العالمين   <i>f<sup>2</sup></i> 'son of the lord of the worlds'
27:40	εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>   εἰ υἱὸς θεοῦ εἶ B	ܩܠܘܠܐ ܕܥܒܕܝܢ ܩܠܘܠܐ sy <sup>p,5</sup> 'if you are God's son'	ان كنت انت بن الله   <i>a<sup>1</sup> b<sup>1</sup></i> 'if you were God's son'   ان تكن ابن الله   <i>f<sup>1</sup></i> 'if you are God's son'   ان تكن ولي الله   <i>f<sup>2</sup></i> 'if you are God's vice-regent'   ان كنت ابنه   <i>h<sup>1</sup></i> 'if you were a son of God'   ان كنت بن الله   <i>k<sup>8</sup></i> 'if you were God's son'
27:43	θεοῦ ... υἱός BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܠܘܠܐ ... ܕܥܒܕܝܢ sy <sup>p,5</sup> 'God's son'	بن الله   <i>a<sup>1</sup> k<sup>8</sup></i> 'God's son'   بن الاله   <i>b<sup>1</sup></i> 'the god's son'   ابن الله   <i>h<sup>1</sup></i> 'God's son'   رضي الله الكريم   <i>f<sup>1,2</sup></i> 'pleasing to the honourable God'
27:54	θεοῦ υἱός BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܠܘܠܐ ... ܕܥܒܕܝܢ sy <sup>p,5</sup> 'God's son'	بن الله   <i>a<sup>1</sup> k<sup>8</sup></i> 'God's son'   بن الاله   <i>b<sup>1</sup></i> 'the god's son'   المصطفى لله   <i>f<sup>1,2</sup></i> 'God's chosen one'   ابن الله   <i>h<sup>1</sup></i> 'God's son'
28:19	τοῦ υἱοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܒܝܢ sy <sup>p</sup> 'the son'	بن الابن   <i>a<sup>1</sup> b<sup>1</sup> k<sup>8</sup></i> 'the son'   بنوة   <i>f<sup>1,2</sup></i> 'sonship'   lac <i>h<sup>1</sup></i>

## Mark

1:1	υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   υἱοῦ θεοῦ NA <sup>28</sup>   omit <b>Ⲭ</b> * Θ	ܩܠܘܠܐ ܕܥܒܕܝܢ sy <sup>p</sup> 'God's son'	ابن   <i>a<sup>1</sup> k<sup>8</sup></i> 'God's son'   omit <i>b<sup>1</sup></i>   ابن رب العالمين   <i>f<sup>2</sup></i> 'son of the lord of the worlds'   الف روح الله رب العالمين   <i>f<sup>1</sup></i> 'the spirit of God, the lord of the worlds'   lac <i>h<sup>1</sup></i>
1:11	σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܠܘܠܐ ܕܥܒܕܝܢ ܩܠܘܠܐ sy <sup>p</sup> 'you are my son, the beloved / you are my beloved son'	<i>a<sup>1</sup></i> 'this is my son, the beloved / this is my beloved son'   <i>b<sup>1</sup> k<sup>8</sup></i> 'you are my son, the beloved / you are my beloved son'   انت ابنه الحبيب   <i>f<sup>2</sup></i> 'you are the beloved, honourable one'   انت الحبيب   <i>f<sup>1</sup></i> 'you are the beloved'   lac <i>h<sup>1</sup></i>
3:11	σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܠܘܠܐ ܕܥܒܕܝܢ sy <sup>p,5</sup> 'God's son'	بن الله   <i>a<sup>1</sup> b<sup>1</sup> k<sup>8</sup></i> 'God's son'   ابن الله   <i>f<sup>1,2</sup></i> 'God's son'

## Mark (cont.)

5:7	υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܘܡܪܐ ܩܘܡܪܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>p</sup> 'son of the high God' ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܪܐ ܩܘܡܐ   sy <sup>s</sup> 'son of the high God'	بن الله العليٰ a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> 'son of the high God'   ابن الله العليٰ f <sup>1,2</sup> 'son of the high God'   بن الله k <sup>8</sup> 'God's son'
9:7	ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>p,5</sup> 'my son, the beloved / my beloved son'	ابني الحبيب a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> h <sup>1</sup> f <sup>1</sup> 'my son, the beloved / my beloved son'   القريب الحبيب f <sup>2</sup> 'the beloved near one'
13:32	οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>   omit X	ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>p</sup> 'nor the son'   ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>s</sup> 'not even the son'	ولا الابن a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> h <sup>1</sup> f <sup>1,2</sup> 'nor the son'
14:61	ὁ υἱός τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>p,5</sup> 'son of the blessed one'	ابن المبارك a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'son of the blessed one'   ابن مبارك f <sup>2</sup> 'blessed son'   ابن تبارك f <sup>1</sup> 'blessed son'   بن الله العليٰ المبارك h <sup>1</sup> 'son of the high, blessed God'
15:39	υἱὸς ἦν θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   υἱὸς θεοῦ ἦν NA <sup>28</sup>   θεοῦ υἱὸς ἦν D   υἱὸς θεοῦ ἔστιν 579	ܩܘܡܪܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>p</sup> 'he is God's son'   ܩܘܡܪܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>s</sup> 'he is God's son'	كان بن الله a <sup>1</sup> 'he was God's son'   كان لاله b <sup>1</sup> 'the god's son'   كان لله ابنا f <sup>2</sup> 'he was a son of a god'   كان لله ابنا f <sup>1</sup> 'he was a son of God'   كان هذا ابن الله h <sup>1</sup> 'this one was God's son'   بن الله k <sup>8</sup> 'God's son'

## Luke

1:32	υἱὸς ὑψίστου BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܘܡܪܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>p</sup> 'son of the high one'	ابن العليٰ a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> f <sup>2</sup> 'son of the high one'   نجل العليٰ f <sup>1</sup> 'son of the high one'   lac. h <sup>1</sup>   ابن الله k <sup>8</sup> 'God's son'
1:35	υἱὸς θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܘܡܪܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>s</sup> 'God's son'	ابن الله a <sup>1</sup> 'God's son'   بن اللاه b <sup>1</sup> 'the god's son'   بن الال f <sup>2</sup> 'the god's son'   روح الله f <sup>2c</sup> God's son   ابن الله f <sup>1</sup> 'God's spirit'   lac. h <sup>1</sup>   ابن العليٰ k <sup>8</sup> 'son of the high one'
3:22	ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>p</sup> 'my son, the beloved / my beloved son'   ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ sy <sup>s</sup> 'my son and my beloved'	ابني الحبيب a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> f <sup>1</sup> f <sup>2c</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'my son, the beloved / my beloved son'   lac. h <sup>1</sup>   صفتي والحبيب f <sup>2*</sup> 'my elect one and the beloved'

## Luke (cont.)

4:3	εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܟܠܡܢܐ ܕܘܨ ܒܘܨ ܕܥܠܝܐ sy <sup>p,s</sup> ‘if you are God’s son’	ا <sup>1</sup> ان كنت بن الله ‘if you were God’s son’   ب <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘if you were God’s son’   ه <sup>1</sup> ان كنت لله ابنا ‘if you were a son of God’   ف <sup>1</sup> ان تك روح الله ‘if you are God’s spirit’   ف <sup>2</sup> ان تكن صفي الله ‘if you are God’s elect’   ف <sup>2c</sup> ان تكن ابن الله ‘if you are God’s son’
4:9	εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܟܠܡܢܐ ܕܘܨ ܒܘܨ ܕܥܠܝܐ sy <sup>p,s</sup> ‘if you are God’s son’	ا <sup>1</sup> ب <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘if you were God’s son’   ان كنت لله ابنا ‘if you were a son of God’   ف <sup>1,2</sup> ‘if you were an elect of God’
4:41	ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܟܠܡܢܐ ܒܘܨ sy <sup>p,s</sup> ‘God’s son’	ف <sup>1</sup> h <sup>1</sup> ابن الله ‘God’s son’   الف <sup>2</sup> الصفة من الله ‘the elect one of God’
8:28 <sup>51</sup>	υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>   υἱὲ τοῦ ὑψίστου D Ɛ	ܟܠܡܢܐ ܒܘܨ ܥܠܝܐ sy <sup>p</sup> ‘son of the high God’   ܟܠܡܢܐ ܒܘܨ ܥܠܝܐ sy <sup>s,c</sup> ‘son of the high God’	ا <sup>1</sup> ب <sup>1</sup> f <sup>2</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘son of the high God’   ف <sup>1</sup> ابن رب العالمين ‘son of the lord of the worlds’   lac. h <sup>1</sup>
9:35	ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἀγαπητός BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἐκλεγμένος NA28   ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἐκλεκτός Θ	ܟܠܡܢܐ ܒܘܨ sy <sup>p</sup> ‘my son, the beloved / my beloved son’   ܟܠܡܢܐ ܒܘܨ sy <sup>s</sup> ‘my son, the chosen one / my chosen son’   ܟܠܡܢܐ ܒܘܨ sy <sup>c</sup> ‘my son and my beloved’	ا <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘my son, the beloved / my beloved son’   ابني المنتخب ب <sup>1</sup> ‘my son, the chosen one / my chosen son’   lac. h <sup>1</sup> ابني وانه للحبيب f <sup>1,2</sup> ‘my son and he is the beloved’
10:22	ὁ υἱὸς ... ὁ υἱὸς ... ὁ υἱὸς BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܟܠܡܢܐ ... ܟܠܡܢܐ ... ܟܠܡܢܐ sy <sup>p,s,c</sup> ‘the son ... the son ... the son’	ا <sup>1</sup> ب <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘the son ... the son ... the son’   ابن ... ابن ... ابن f <sup>1,2</sup> ‘a son ... a son ... a son’   lac. h <sup>1</sup>
22:70	ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܟܠܡܢܐ ܒܘܨ sy <sup>p,s,c</sup> ‘God’s son’	ا <sup>1</sup> ب <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘God’s son’   ف <sup>2</sup> ‘son of the lord of the worlds’   صفي رب العالمين f <sup>1</sup> ‘elect of the lord of the worlds’   lac. h <sup>1</sup>

51. I cannot read f<sup>2</sup> at this point, so am dependent on Nasr, *Une traduction*, 215 for the transcription بن الله العلي.

## Luke (cont.)

23:35	ὁ χριστός, ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκλεκτός BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   ὁ χριστός τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ ἐκλεκτός NA <sup>28</sup>   ὁ χριστός ὁ υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ ἐκλεκτός $\Phi$ <sup>75</sup>	ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ ܘܚܝܫܬܘܫ sy <sup>p,s,c</sup> ‘the messiah, the chosen one of God’	المسيح مختار الله a <sup>1</sup> ‘the messiah, the chosen one of God’   المسيح بن الله المنتخب b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘the messiah, the son of God, the chosen one’   المسيح ... نجيب الله f <sup>1,2</sup> ‘the noble one of God ... the messiah’   lac. h <sup>1</sup>
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## John

1:18 <sup>52</sup>	ὁ μονογενής υἱός BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   μονογενής θεός NA <sup>28</sup>   ὁ μονογενής θεός $\Phi$ <sup>75</sup> $\aleph$ <sup>ca</sup>   εἰ μὴ ὁ μονογενής υἱός W <sup>s</sup>	ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ ܘܚܝܫܬܘܫ sy <sup>p</sup> ‘the only God’   ܟܝܘܢ ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ sy <sup>c</sup> ‘the only son’	الابن الالهي الوحيد a <sup>1</sup> ‘the only eternal son’   الا الابن الوحيد الالهي b <sup>1</sup> ‘except the only eternal son’   الال الواحد f <sup>1,2</sup> ‘the only god’   الابن الوحيد k <sup>8</sup> ‘the only son’
1:34	ὁ υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>   ὁ ἐκλεκτός τοῦ θεοῦ $\aleph$ <sup>*</sup>   ὁ ἐκλεκτός υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ $\aleph$ <sup>ca</sup>	ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ ܟܝܘܢ sy <sup>p</sup> ‘God’s son’   ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ ܘܚܝܫܬܘܫ sy <sup>s,c</sup> ‘God’s chosen one’	ابن الله a <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘God’s son’   ابن الله f <sup>1,2</sup> ‘God’s son’   المختار بن الله b <sup>1</sup> ‘the chosen one, God’s son’
1:49	ὁ υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ ܟܝܘܢ sy <sup>p</sup> ‘God’s son’	ابن الله a <sup>1</sup> f <sup>1,2</sup> ‘God’s son’   ابن الله b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘God’s son’
3:16	τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ NA <sup>28</sup>	ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ ܟܝܘܢ sy <sup>p</sup> ‘his only son’   ܟܝܘܢ ܟܝܘܢ sy <sup>s</sup> ‘his only son’   ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ ܟܝܘܢ sy <sup>c</sup> ‘his only son’	ابنه الوحيد a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> ‘his only son’   الواحد f <sup>2</sup> ‘his only elect one’   ابنه الوحيد f <sup>1</sup> ‘his only son’
3:17	τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   τὸν υἱὸν NA <sup>28</sup>	ܟܝܘܢ sy <sup>p,s,c</sup> ‘his son’	ابنه a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> f <sup>1</sup> ‘his son’   الواحد f <sup>2</sup> ‘his elect one’
3:18	τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ ܟܝܘܢ ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ sy <sup>p</sup> ‘the only son of God’   ܟܝܘܢ ܟܝܘܢ sy <sup>s</sup> ‘the approved son’   ܟܝܘܢ ܟܪܝܫܬܘܫ sy <sup>c</sup> ‘the only son of God’	الواحد بن الله a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> f <sup>1,2</sup> ‘the only son of God’   ابن الله الوحيد k <sup>8</sup> ‘the only son of God’

52. Family h does not contain the Gospel of John.

## John (cont.)

3:35-36	τὸν υἱόν ... τὸν υἱόν ... τῷ υἱῷ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>p</sup> 'the son ... the son ... the son'   ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>s</sup> 'his son ... the son ... the son'   ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>c</sup> 'him ... the son ... the son'	الابن ... الابن ... الابن a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> f <sup>1-2</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'the son ... the son ... the son'
5:19-26	ὁ υἱός ... ὁ υἱός ... τὸν υἱόν ... ὁ υἱός ... τῷ υἱῷ ... τὸν υἱόν ... τὸν υἱόν ... τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ... τὸν υἱόν BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>p</sup> 'the son ... the son ... his son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... God's son ... the son'   lac. ... lac. ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... sy <sup>s</sup> 'the son ... the son ... his son ... the son ... his son ... the son ... the son ... lac. ... lac.'   ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ... ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>c</sup> 'the son ... the son ... his son ... the son ... his son ... the son ... the son ... God's son ... the son'	... الابن ... الابن ... الابن ... الابن ... الابن الابن ... الابن ... ابن الله ... الابن a <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'the son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... God's son ... the son'   ... الابن ... الابن ... الابن ... الابن ... الابن الابن ... الابن ... ابن الله ... الابن b <sup>1</sup> 'the son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... the son ... the god's son ... the son'   ... الابن ... الابن ... ابنا ... الابن ... الابن ابنا ... ابنا ... ابنا ... ابن الله ... الابن f <sup>1,2</sup> 'the son ... the son ... a son ... the son ... the son ... a son ... a son ... God's son ... the son'
6:40	τὸν υἱόν BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>p,s,c</sup> 'the son'	الابن a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'the son'   ابن f <sup>1,2</sup> 'a son'
6:69	ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ NA <sup>28</sup>   ὁ χριστὸς ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ Ɔ <sup>75</sup>   ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ C <sup>3</sup> Ө*	ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>p</sup> 'the messiah, the son of the living God'   ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>s</sup> 'the messiah, God's son'   ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>c</sup> 'God's son'	ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'the messiah, the son of the living God'   ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ f <sup>1,2</sup> 'the messiah, son of a living god'
8:36	ὁ υἱός BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>   omit W	ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>p,s</sup> 'the son'	الابن a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> f <sup>2</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'the son'   الاب f <sup>1</sup> 'the father'
9:35	τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου NA <sup>28</sup>	ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>p</sup> 'God's son'   ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ sy <sup>s</sup> 'son of the man'	ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ ܐܒܝܢ a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> 'God's son'   ابن الله f <sup>2</sup> 'the god's son'   ابن الله f <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'God's son'

## John (cont.)

10:36	υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>   υἱὸς θεοῦ ϩ <sup>66</sup> ϩ   ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ϩ <sup>45</sup>	ܠܠܗܘܢ ... ܘܒܢܝܢ sy <sup>p</sup> 'God's son'   ܠܠܗܘܢ ܘܒܢܝܢ sy <sup>s</sup> 'God's son'	الله بن ا <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'God's son'   بن الاله b <sup>1</sup> 'the god's son'   ولد f <sup>1.2</sup> 'an offspring of God'
11:4	ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>   ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ϩ <sup>45</sup>   ὁ υἱὸς ϩ <sup>66</sup>	ܠܠܗܘܢ ܘܒܢܝܢ sy <sup>p</sup> 'God's son'   ܘܒܢܝܢ sy <sup>s</sup> 'his son'	الله بن ا <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'God's son'   بن الاله b <sup>1</sup> 'the god's son'   ابن البشر f <sup>1.2</sup> 'son of the human'
11:27	υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܠܠܗܘܢ ܘܒܢܝܢ sy <sup>p.5</sup> 'God's son'	الله بن ا <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'God's son'   ابن الاله f <sup>1.2</sup> 'the god's son'
12:28	σου τὸ ὄνομα BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>   σου τὸν υἱόν L	ܘܗܘܝܘ sy <sup>p.5</sup> 'your name'	اسمك a <sup>1</sup> f <sup>1.2</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'your name'   ابنك b <sup>1</sup> 'your son'
14:13	τῷ υἱῷ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܘܒܢܝܢ sy <sup>p.5</sup> 'his son'	ا <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'the son'   ابنه f <sup>2</sup> 'his son'   omit 14:13b and 14:14 f <sup>1</sup>
15:16	τω υιω f <sup>13</sup>   omit BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	omit sy <sup>p.5</sup>	omit a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> f <sup>1.2</sup> k <sup>8</sup>
17:1	σου τὸν υἱόν ... ὁ υἱὸς σου BYZ <sup>RP</sup>   σου τὸν υἱόν ... ὁ υἱὸς NA <sup>28</sup>	ܘܒܢܝܢ ... ܘܒܢܝܢ sy <sup>p.5</sup> 'your son ... your son'	ابنك ... ابنك a <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> f <sup>1.2</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'your son ... your son'
19:7	υἱὸν θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܠܠܗܘܢ ܘܒܢܝܢ sy <sup>p</sup> 'God's son'	بن الاله b <sup>1</sup> 'the god's son'   بن الله k <sup>8</sup> 'God's son'   ولد لله f <sup>1.2</sup> 'a son of God'   lac. scan a <sup>1</sup>
20:31	ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ BYZ <sup>RP</sup> NA <sup>28</sup>	ܠܠܗܘܢ ܘܒܢܝܢ sy <sup>p.5</sup> 'God's son'	الله بن ا <sup>1</sup> b <sup>1</sup> f <sup>2</sup> k <sup>8</sup> 'God's son'   lac. f <sup>1</sup>

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