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See also: ADOPTION, ANONYMOUS MENTIONS, BIRTH, CHILDREN, CHRONICLES OF THE QUR‘ĀN, CREATION, GOLD AND SILVER, IBRĀHĪM, UPON HIM PEACE, ‘ĪSĀ, UPON HIM PEACE, MENSTRUATION, PARADISE, PARENTS, PEOPLE OF THE CAVE, PEOPLE OF UKHDŪD, SACRIFICE, VEIL, WOMB, YAHYĀ, UPON HIM PEACE.

GIBRIL FOUAD HADDAD

CHILDREN

IBN (BANŪN), WALAD (AWLĀD), DHURRIYYA, NASL, ‘AQIB, MAW’ŪDA

This article comprises the following sections: (i) Definitions and usage; (ii) *Ibn* and its cognates; (iii) Seven Qur’anic constructs of *ibn* as tropes: “Son of the road;” (iv) “Son of my mother;” (v) Sons as a reminder of how Allah saved the Israelites from Fir‘awn; (vi) Sons as a warning about the primacy of love for Allah over offspring; (vii) Sons as markers of the hubris of pagans and the bad faith of Jews and Christians; (viii) Sons as

the marker of the Prophet’s self-confidence and truthfulness; (ix) Filiation, step-filiation, foster-milk, adoption, marriage and vestimentary laws; (x) The prohibition for a son to marry his father’s former wife; (xi) Unmarriageability of sons, milk-sons, stepdaughters and daughters-in-law; (xii) Relaxation of *purdah* before fathers, in-laws, sons, stepsons, and nephews; (xiii) Abolishment of the Jāhiliyya mores of adoptive fosterage; (xiv) *W-l-d* as “begotten,” “giving birth,” and “being born;” (xv) *Dhurriyya* as children or past and future generations; (xvi) *Nasl* and ‘*aqib*’ as “human race” and “posterity;” (xvii) *Maw’ūda* as the killing of daughters; (xviii) Bibliography.

Definitions and usage

“Children” here refer to “sons” and “daughters,” the male or female offspring or descendants of a man and a woman or of a human community, cited either in the identifying filiations “child of” (*ibn Maryam* Q 2:87 etc.; *ibnat ‘Imrān* Q 66:12), “your/their children” (*wa-abnā’ukum* Q 4:11, *awlādihim* Q 6:137, etc.), “begotten child” (*walad* 56 times, *walīd/wildān* seven, *ma’wūd* three), “my/our/her/his/their issue” (*dhurriyya*, Q 2:124, 128; 3:36, etc.)—or in absolute terms, as in “offspring” (*nasl* 2:205; *dhurriyya*, Q 2:266; *banī/ūn* 3:14; 18:46; 26:88; etc.). This identifier applies regardless of age and indefinitely; one can be called someone’s son, daughter, child or offspring from birth to death and through patrilineal posterity. For “child” in the sense of young age, see CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

The Qur’ān refers to children with six main nouns from the roots *b-n-w*, *w-l-d*, *dh-r-ʿ*, *n-s-l*, ‘*q-b*, and *w-ʿ-d* in the following forms:

- i. masc. sing. noun *ibn* (son), masc. pl. *banūn*, *abnā’*, dim. *bunay*, fem. sing. *ibna*, *bint* (daughter) and fem. pl. *banāt*, originally *banawun* (Ibn Fāris, 1:303, *sub b-n-w*; Rāghib, *sub b-n-y*) or *banayun*, denotes “that which is begotten from something, such as the child of a human or other being” (Ibn Fāris, *op. cit.*), “so called because he is an edifice (*binā’*) for his father” (Zabīdī, *op. cit.*);
- ii. sing. and coll. masc. noun *walad/wuld*, “begotten son/daughter,” (child, issue), “which comprises male, female, singular and other [i.e. dual and plural]” (Ibn al-Ṭayyib, *Tahrīr* p. 219; cf. Farāhīdī, 8:71, *sub w-l-d*), “young and old” (Rāghib, *sub w-l-d*), as does, gender and agewise, its pl. *awlād* (Ṭabarī, *sub* Q 4:11), synonymous with *walīd* (male newborn, young male slave), fem. *walīda*, pl. *wildān/walā’id* in