

xiv. Yet it appears that St. Thomas Aquinas has gone too far in distinguishing in this connection "adoptive" sonship (for Matt. xiv), and "natural" sonship (for Matt. xvi). This clear-cut distinction joined with the manifest superiority of Peter's confession has led in some commentators (e.g. Knabenbauer, cp. his notes on xiv, 33 with those on xvi, 16) to self-contradiction, in others (e.g. Lagrange, Prat) to a denial of the full (divine) significance of "son of God" in Matt. xiv, 33. In the ontological order the Thomistic distinction is, of course, exhaustive; in the psychological order it may be inadequate and therefore misleading. In the ontological order there is no question of degree in natural sonship but in the mind of the Apostles we may distinguish degrees of appreciation and motives which accompany or prompt an affirmation of natural sonship. Now from the surrounding circumstances (the only deciding factor) it is evident that the declaration of Matt. xiv, 33 excels Nathanael's even more than it falls short of Peter's. It needed no walking on the waters (Matt. xiv, 25—32) to convince the Apostles of Our Lord's royal Messiahship (cf. Jn. vi, 15), nor of His surpassing holiness. There is something more than this "adoptive" sonship here. In the enthusiastic atmosphere of Matthew's account it would be exegetically imprudent to set limits to the Apostles' outburst. Hence the Biblical Commission (June 19th, 1911; DB 2154) assumes that the confession of Matt. xiv, 33 is a confession of divinity (i.e. "natural" sonship). Nevertheless, the vagueness of the Apostles' words (the definite article is omitted) coupled with the fact that they are evoked by sudden shock keep them inferior in degree to the clear and calm pronouncement of Peter prompted by revelation from the Father.

A. JONES.

*From Gen. ix, 13, may we conclude that no rainbow appeared before the Flood?*

Neither the context nor the words of God in Gen. ix, 13, justify this conclusion. After the Flood God made a covenant with Noe and his sons (Gen. ix, 8—17), which was also to hold good for posterity: viz. that He would never again destroy mankind by a flood, nor should there be a flood to waste the earth. He appointed the rainbow as a token of His mercy, "which is over all his works" (Ps. cxliv, 9), and as a reminder of His promise. God is free to choose natural phenomena as symbols of His wrath or His mercy. In the circumstances, the rainbow was a particularly apt symbol. It is a sign taken in nature itself, visible to all men, and most suitable as a reminder of God's promise. The contrast between its soft beauty and the dark and lowering rainclouds fittingly symbolizes the Divine mercy. In the heavenly visions (Ezech. i, 28; Apoc. iv, 3), the rainbow is one of the chief ornaments of God's throne,

and doubtless as representing His mercy. The verb translated in the Douay (Vulg.) "I will set" (natatti: literally: I have given) carries with it no implication of creation. It is employed rather of something already existing which is now appointed to serve a new purpose. Thus it is used in Exod. vii, 1, of the appointment of Moses as God's spokesman before Pharaoh; in I Kings xii, 13, of God's confirmation of the people's choice of Saul as king; in Jer. i, 5, of the appointment of Jeremias to the prophetic office.

P. MORRIS.

*What is the exact translation of the original Hebrew word of the sixth commandment rendered as "adultery"? Does it refer to the conduct of married persons only, or does it specifically include the loose conduct of single persons?*

The sixth commandment is recorded twice in the Old Testament, Exod. xx, 14 and Deut. v, 18. The verb used in both cases is the same and is correctly translated in the Douay Version as "to commit adultery." The word is normally used of men elsewhere in the Bible, and always of intercourse with another's wife, e.g. Levit. xx, 10, Osee iv, 13—14, Isaias lviii, 3. Sometimes it is applied to women, e.g. Levit. xx, 10.

Violation of the marriage rights was regarded predominantly as an injury to property and honour. Thus intercourse with another's wife or even with his betrothed was punished by putting to death both the guilty parties, Levit. xx, 10, Deut. xxii, 22—24, John viii, 5. The man has "humbled his neighbour's wife." [It is interesting to note that the death-penalty for the same offence is prescribed in the Code of Hammurabi, section 129, but if the injured husband was willing to pardon the guilty parties this pardon was ratified by the law.] Since a man could take more than one wife he did not belong to his wife in the same exclusive way in which she belonged to him. Hence intercourse with another (unmarried) woman by a married man was not regarded, in Israel, as adultery properly so-called, and there was no penalty for it comparable with that for adultery in the sense given above.

Insofar as intercourse with an unmarried woman is punished in the Law of Moses it is because it is a violation of another's rights. In Exod. xx, 16 the man who seduces a virgin is commanded to endow her and take her to wife. If, however, her father is unwilling to give her in marriage to the man, the latter must still pay the dowry (verse 17), cf. also Deut. xxii, 28—29. If the woman is a slave, relations with her are forbidden on the grounds of her belonging to someone else, Levit. xix—xx, Exod. xxi, 7—11. In Deut. xxii, 21, loose conduct before marriage on the part of the woman is to be punished by death, but the penalty supposes that the woman was already betrothed. Hence this is no more than a reiteration of Deut. xxii, 23—24, cf. Clamer, *La Sainte Bible* (ed. Pirot), in loc.