

Focus on the Kingdom

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The Trinity: Who Knows?

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“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone” (Matt. 24:36, NASB).

Nor the Son — This verse has always been problematic. How can Yeshua be God and not know? And if, as He says, He actually doesn't know, then how can we continue to claim that He is God? God knows. According to Yeshua, no one else does. Including him.

The usual theological answer to this apparently intractable dilemma is as follows:

“What He predicates of Himself, namely ignorance as to the day and hour of His return in heavenly splendor, is true of Him as human, though it is not true of Him as divine. As the God-Man, He is simultaneously omniscient as God (in company with the other persons of the Godhead) and ignorant of some things as a man (in company with other persons of the human race)” (Robert Raymond, *Jesus Divine Messiah*, p. 79).

Ah, I get it. Yeshua is *simultaneously* aware and ignorant of this fact. Do you suppose that means he knows the truth (since according to the Trinitarian doctrine he is omniscient) but then informs himself that he does not know this fact because he is simultaneously human? So he knows that he doesn't know what he knows, right?

Does this strike you as complete nonsense? What if we just took the verse at its face value? What if Yeshua actually meant *that he doesn't know*? Why is that so difficult to accept? Do you suppose *any* of the disciples who heard him say this thought, “Oh, that means he doesn't know *as a human*, but of course he knows as God”? No wonder it took the Church three hundred years to come up with this answer.

It seems to me the problem is not what the text says. The problem is reading the text *according to the paradigm of the Trinity*. The text doesn't present any difficulties at all. There are lots of things human beings don't know. There are lots of things chosen messengers of YHWH don't know. There are even some things that the Messiah doesn't know. In fact, he tells us at least one of these things. The text is clear. What causes all the confusion is not the text. It is the *subsequent ancillary textually-unsupported* idea that Yeshua is also, at the same time, God. As Patrick Navas astutely points out, “In other words, somehow Jesus *knows* all things and

does not know all things simultaneously!?” (*Divine Truth or Human Tradition*, p. 131).

So how would you like your theology cooked? Plain, according to what the text says, or with plenty of added spices, according to what the Church decided the text *must* say in order to fit its dogma? And what really happens if Yeshua is the Messiah, God's appointed messenger/Son, tasked with bringing about the Kingdom and defeating the last enemy? Will your belief system collapse if somehow that doesn't mean he is YHWH, the one true God? Have you been so indoctrinated by Christian dogma that you simply can't read this text for what it says? Was Yeshua simply deluded or trying to fool us? Did he lie to us when he said he didn't know? Or are we putting words in his mouth when we try to make his denial into an affirmation of his “omniscience”?

I warned you about the pain, didn't I?✧

The Psalm Which Will Change Your Life

“Paul and his contemporaries freely ran together Ps. 110:1 (the key text validating Christ's lordship) and Ps. 8:4-6, the key text for Adam Christology, in appointing Christ as lord” (Dr. James Dunn, *The Christ and the Spirit*, Vol. 1, *Christology*, p. 232).

This statement is lucid and correct. Intelligent Bible study demands that we pay the closest attention to the inspired word of YHVH's prophetic oracle to David concerning the Messiah. His identity is declared in that verse, Psalm 110:1. But the content of that verse has been amazingly neglected or even misreported by churches and even commentaries. Prepare for some eye-opening truth as we consider the relationship of the One God, YHVH, to His unique Son Jesus. Psalm 110:1 relates a prophetic oracle from YHVH concerning David's lord, “my lord.”

Most are in need of a basic lesson on the Hebrew words for Lord/lord. There are two different words which designate the all-important difference between Deity and non-Deity, human (or occasionally angelic) dignitaries.

In order to understand the meaning of the words “Adonai” (Lord God) and “adoni” (my [human] lord), it is essential to consider how these two words are used in the Hebrew Bible. We will look at them as they appear in the text of the Hebrew (OT) Scripture. These two words

are אֲדֹנָי ('adōnāi) and אֲדֹנִי (adoni). Please inspect these two words in the Hebrew with great care

and attention. Their meaning is crucial to understanding who God is and who the Messiah is in Scripture.

The first word, **Adonai** (rhymes with **El Shaddai**), refers to the One God of Israel, the one true God. The second word pronounced with the ending “-ee” (“adonee”) *never refers to Deity*.

That second word **adoni** (“adonee”) is a combination of the Hebrew for “lord” which is **ADON**, with an added first personal singular personal pronoun “my.” It then becomes **adoni** and it is correctly translated “my lord.” It should not have a capital, since it is never the title of Deity.

The critical fact is that this word (**adoni**) is used of a **man** who is over his servants or his house. The word is used of kings, rulers and governors, people who are superior to other people (Gen. 23:6). The word is also used of a husband as the lord over his wife (Gen. 18:12).

Now here is the amazing fact to be grasped. In Psalm 110:1 the second lord, whom Jesus identifies as the Messiah, himself, is **adoni, my lord (no capital), not Adonai, the Lord God**.

Note carefully that the word for the Lord God אֲדֹנָי (**Adonai**) occurs some 450 times in the Hebrew Bible, 50 times in the Psalms. It is invariably and correctly rendered as “Lord” with a capital letter, since it designates the one Lord God.

Now please consider this astonishing fact: In Psalm 110:1 the second lord appears in your translation, probably, as “Lord” (with capital “L”). That capital letter is severely misleading, and it has been forced on to the original Hebrew, because translators want you to think that the Messiah is the Lord GOD! The Hebrew does not support this at all, since the Hebrew word here describing the Messiah is “**adoni**,” my lord (no capital letter). The Messiah is thus explicitly given the title of non-Deity. I hardly need to remind you that Jews to this day believe that God is one Person, YHVH! That is what Jesus believed, too.

Until you arrive at Psalm 110:1 your OT translation has faithfully rendered **adoni** as “my lord” or “my master.” Only in Psalm 110:1 do most translations break their own rules and make you think that the second lord is Lord God. But it is not! **Adoni appears no less than 195 times!** The Hebrew Bible, carefully preserved by the Jewish Massorettes, is utterly clear about who is God, and who is not!

The significance of this fact is that in Psalm 110:1 we are meant to understand that the Messiah is “the **man** Messiah” (1 Tim. 2:5), not a second Lord God! To repeat the point (no pun intended, since as you will see, we are discussing a difference of vowel point) your translation is

almost certainly leading you to think that the second lord, the Messiah, is אֲדֹנָי Adonai, the Lord God.

Please remember this. The word **adoni** (my lord) occurs 195 times in the OT, and never once does it refer to God. If you look carefully at the Hebrew words for Lord God and lord, you will see that the difference depends on the final vowel point. The vowel points are written under the consonants, and you read from right to left. Note that under the last letter of the word *adoni* there is a dot, which makes the sound “ee.” Hence ADON plus “ee” = *adoni*.

This may be the only gem of Hebrew you learn, but it is worth its weight in solid gold! Please fully examine the facts. If you have access to good software for Bible study (say BibleWorks) treat yourself to an examination of some 50 translations of Psalm 110:1, and you will easily see that only a few of the translations tell you the truth about the second lord. There should be no capital letter. That second lord is not Lord God (*Adonai*) but a **non-Deity superior, adoni**. This is Jesus promoted to the right hand of God (Acts 2:34-36, Peter quoting Ps. 110:1).

Why is all this so critically important? Simply because this verse (Ps. 110:1) is cited or alluded to more often in the NT than any other verse! **It is the most significant verse for Christology** (who is Jesus). It is of supreme importance in teaching us that YHVH (**Adonai**, the Lord God) is one Person (not three) and that David under inspiration defines the Messiah as “my lord” (**adoni**), in this golden psalm alluded to or cited in the NT some 23 times.

Take a pen and strike down the capital letter on that second lord in Psalm 110:1. Then you will be thinking like Jesus and like Paul who restated our point as follows: “God wants all men to be saved [contradicting Calvinism] and to come to the knowledge of the truth: that there is one God and one mediator between God and man, **the man** Messiah Jesus” — the **adoni**, “my lord” of Psalm 110:1 (1 Tim. 2:4-5).

You will be amazed to learn that many commentaries actually misstate the facts here. There is an unconscious conspiracy at work. I will cite just one to alert you to the problem. Campbell Morgan in his *Notes on the Psalms* (1947) reports the second lord of Psalm 110:1 as **Adonai!** He is wrong. He states that both the word YHVH and **Adonai** are used for God. But the second lord in our psalm is *not Adonai*. According to Campbell Morgan God would be speaking to God! ✧

Rev. 11:1-2: Is This a Literal Temple and City, or Does This Represent the Church?

“Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for 42 months” (Rev. 11:1-2).

Amillennial and some historical pre-millennial commentators argue that “the temple” must be symbolic of God protecting the church through the tribulation. Jesus said, “The gates of Hades will not overpower” the church (Matt. 16:18). Therefore, this must be an apocalyptic way to explain how God will protect His church in the future. They offer this argument in support of this view: John uses the terms “temple” and “holy city” to refer to believers — not a literal building. John writes, “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the **temple of my God**, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God, and my new name” (Rev. 3:12). John also uses the term “holy city” to refer to believers (Rev. 21:2, 10; 22:19; cp. 20:9). Here, John seems to be equating the church with “the temple” and the “holy city.” Thus these should be taken symbolically, not literally.

But other interpreters reply as follows. Even in Revelation 11, we see that John sees both an *earthly* temple (v. 1-2) and a *heavenly* Temple (v. 19). At the end of the chapter, John writes, “The temple of God **which is in heaven** was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple” (Rev. 11:19). Clearly, two temples are in view here.

Second, in Revelation 11:1 there are worshippers *in* the temple. This doesn’t seem to fit with the believers also *being* the temple. To fit the symbolism that believers are the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21), we would need to believe that the temple is identical to Christian believers. But the passage states that believers are separate from the temple. This strongly suggests that a real building is meant.

Third, Paul refers to a literal temple at the end of the age. For instance, Paul writes, “He [the antichrist] will oppose and exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God” (2 Thess. 2:4). Here we must note that Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians was *not* written in the style of Revelation, an apocalypse. This is an epistle. And Paul believed that there would be a literal temple into which the antichrist would intrude and install himself, claiming to be God.

Fourthly Jesus explicitly instructed that there would be a literal temple close to the time of his return (Parousia). He said, “Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains” (Matt. 24:15-16). Here we must note that Jesus was referring to Daniel 9:27 (“spoken of through Daniel the prophet”). Daniel was describing a real building and Jesus knew that.

In Daniel 9, we read, “**The city and the sanctuary** [i.e. the temple] will be destroyed by the people of the prince who is to come, and **his end** will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations he will come desolating, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate” (Dan. 9:26b-27; cp. 12:11). **This entire prophecy makes no sense unless there is to be a literal temple in Jerusalem.**

Preterist interpreters claim that this prophecy refers to the destruction of Herod’s temple in AD 70. However, this prophecy in Matthew 24:15 takes place *after* the gospel reaches all nations (v. 14) at the end of the age. In fact, Jesus **characterizes this time period as the most intense level of destruction and slaughter in the history of humanity**. Jesus is citing Daniel 12:1, the unparalleled burst of tribulation, close to the time of the resurrection in Daniel 12:2. He says, “There will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. Unless those days had been cut short, **no life would have been saved**” (Matt. 24:21-22). Clearly, this could not describe the destruction of the temple in 70 AD, because Jesus went on to predict his Second Coming “immediately after” that time of great tribulation (Matt. 24:29ff). Nor could Daniel 12:1 (cited by Jesus) refer to AD 70.

Fifth, Jesus implied that the city of Jerusalem would be reoccupied by the Jews at the end of the age. He said, “They [the Jews] will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles **until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled**” (Luke 21:24). Are we to believe that this city is symbolic — even though there is a temple and it is described in Revelation 11 as the place where the “lord was crucified” (v. 8)?

Amillennial commentators argue that the concept of measuring in the OT is often a symbolic act of God designating a certain area for Himself. For instance, Zechariah saw someone measuring Jerusalem in his day, and this was symbolic of God protecting the city (Zech. 2:1-5). Other passages in the OT use measuring to imply

judgment and destruction (2 Kings 21:13; Isa. 34:11; 2 Sam. 8:2; Lam. 2:8). In either case, this implies that the territory belongs to God — whether by destruction or preservation.

This is true. However, we do not believe that this negates a literal city. For instance, when Zechariah sees a man measuring the city of Jerusalem, this was still a *literal* city being measured — even if the act had a symbolic meaning (i.e. God protecting the city).

Moreover, in this passage, John is clearly recreating one of Ezekiel's visions. As in Revelation 10:8-10 where John eats the bitter scroll (cp. Ezek. 3:1-3), John's act of measuring the temple recalls Ezekiel's vision of measuring the temple in Jerusalem (Ezek. 40:3, 5). Those who support the literal interpretation point out that Ezekiel spends *nine* chapters measuring the future temple (Ezek. 40-48). If this temple was just symbolic of the church, why did God need to give so much detail on the *physical* dimensions of the temple?

Revelation 11:1-2 implies that the Jews will eventually regain Jerusalem once the Gentiles are taken out of the way. This would make sense of John's comment that the nations "will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months" (Rev. 11:2). The phrase "holy city" typically refers to Jerusalem in the OT (Neh. 11:1; Isa. 48:2; 52:1; Dan. 9:24) and the NT (Matt. 4:5; 27:53). The later statement about "where their lord was crucified" (Rev. 11:8) confirms a literal city.

The word "temple" (Greek *naos*) in the gospels always refers to the literal temple. Johnson writes, "The word for temple (*naos*) always refers to the Jerusalem temple in the Gospels with the single exception of John's Gospel, where it refers to Jesus' own body (John 2:19-21; cf. Rev 21:22)."¹ However, even here, it is clear that in this *one* case, the Jews still understood Jesus to be referring to the literal temple (John 2:20).

Finally this from the celebrated Greek expert, Dr. Daniel Wallace: "In conclusion, we are on much surer ground if we see the *literal* temple referenced in 2 Thess. 2:4. If so, then it seems that such may well be rebuilt. Thus, when the antichrist sits on the mercy seat, claiming to be God, he will have culminated a long line of multiple and partial fulfillments of Daniel's prophecy, beginning with Antiochus Epiphanes. Let the reader beware."

Another Expert on the Measuring of the Temple

Gary Cohen, Th.D, Professor of NT, gives the straightforward meaning of the text:

"In Revelation 11:2 it is declared that the Gentiles are to tread down the holy city for 42 months or 3 1/2 years. This obviously points to a period of Gentile domination over the earthly city of Jerusalem. The question is, when

will this occur? The answer is not hard to find. This is true because it is clear that:

"(1) During the first half of the week some sort of protective covenant will be in force between Antichrist and Israel (Dan. 9:27; Isa. 28:15-18: 'Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death and with Sheol we are in agreement; we have made lies our refuge and we have hidden ourselves under falsehood"...The hail will sweep away the refuge of lies...your covenant with death will be annulled and your agreement with Sheol will not stand'), and

"(2) From the Abomination of Desolation (Jesus' words in Matt. 24:15) which occurs at the middle of the week until the end, Antichrist will be in complete control, and he will be persecuting Israel and the saints everywhere, especially those in Judea (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15; Dan. 12:11; Isa. 28:18: 'trampled down').

"Now it stands to reason that if Israel, i.e. the Jews, is being persecuted by Antichrist and his worldwide, hence Gentile, force of Revelation 13:7-8 in Judea, then at this time Gentiles must be 'treading underfoot' Jerusalem and its environs [cp. Zech. 12:3, LXX; Luke 21:24].

"Thus the statement of Revelation 11:2 connected with the measuring of the temple can only be interpreted so as to signify that final Gentile mastery of Israel which will occur in the last three and half years of the Great Tribulation, immediately before Christ comes to rescue his own."²✧

If Necessary Rethink Your View of the Future

Many attempts to announce the future before Jesus comes have failed because attention has not been paid to the words of Jesus (all false theology is a failure to listen to Jesus and his words — see for example Heb. 5:9).

In Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 we have a full lecture by Jesus on the issue of what happens before his one single Parousia, second coming (Jesus knew nothing of Hal Lindsey's and Tim Lahaye's double second coming).

In Matthew 24:2 Jesus was asked this very good question by his inner circle of students: "What will be the sign of your coming [Parousia] and the end of the age?" (mistranslated as "the end of the world" in KJV). No one in the NT looked forward to the "the end of the world," or "the end of history" or "the end of time" (a dismal prospect and a meaningless one). They unanimously expected the return of Jesus at the end of "the present evil age" to inaugurate his revolutionary Kingdom of God, a government which would solve all our world problems.

¹ *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 12.

² *Understanding Revelation*, 1968, p. 131.

This is the heart and core of the Christian Gospel of the Kingdom as announced by Jesus and Paul. Jesus promised that the faithful who believed in him and his Gospel of the Kingdom would then “inherit the earth/land” or Kingdom (Matt. 5:5) and supervise that new political system with Jesus. “Well done, good and faithful servant,” he will then say to his successful followers. “Govern ten cities” (Luke 19:17). How far all this is from the widely popular ideas about the “after-life” (a masterly vague term) as strumming a harp in heaven at death as a disembodied soul!

Supposing then, that as believers in Jesus we pay careful attention to his words, what do we find? Ray Stedman, in his *What on Earth Is Happening? What Jesus Said About the End of the Age* (2003), calls the Olivet Prophecy the most detailed prediction in the Bible. According to Stedman: “There are many predictive passages in both the Old and New Testaments, but none is clearer or more detailed than the message Jesus delivered from the Mount of Olives. This message was given during the turbulent events of the Lord’s last week before the cross.”

The account of Jesus is not complex and was meant to be understood! Jesus was asked about his “second coming [Parousia] and **the end** of the age” (Matt. 24:3). He answered that question knowing very well from Daniel and other prophets that a terrible time of trouble would occur in Israel **just before the resurrection** at his return to the earth. Jesus’ answer is logical and clear. He said, “**The end** is not yet...This Gospel of the Kingdom must first be preached in the whole world, and **then the end** will come: When you therefore see the Abomination of Desolation predicted by Daniel in the holy place, flee...for there will then be a tribulation such has never occurred [referring to Dan. 12:1]...**Immediately after the tribulation of those days**, the sun will be darkened...and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory...and he will send out his angels to gather his elect” (Matt. 24:6-31).

Only when the event of AD 70 (now nearly 2,000 years ago) is forced into the narrative do complexities arise. But Jesus was following the story from Daniel, and Daniel said nothing about AD 70, when no Kingdom of God arrived. Jesus tells us that he was following the prophet Daniel and warned us to note that fact (Matt. 24:15)! Daniel had predicted the Abomination of Desolation 1290 days prior to the end of his final vision, which concludes with the future resurrection (Dan. 12:11). None of this is so difficult if the words of Jesus are read in the light of Daniel. ✧

The Land Promise to Abraham and His Descendants — the Key to the Whole Bible Plot

Underlying the entire Bible story, running like a golden thread through Scripture, is the promise made to Abraham that he would receive, as a reward for his obedience to God’s call to leave Ur of the Chaldees, **prosperity, progeny, and property**. This amazing, divinely promised guarantee of success, which Christians are invited to share as spiritual children of Abraham, is summed up in the compact phrase “the blessing of Abraham.” This beautiful and memorable phrase is found only twice in Scripture, in Galatians 3:14 and Genesis 28:4. This provides the essential link between the two Testaments. That blessing of **prosperity, progeny and property** (land forever) is defined by Paul in Romans 4:13 as “the promise to Abraham and to his descendants that he would be heir of the world” (earth, BBE, Basic Bible in English).

This is exactly the promise of Jesus to his followers in Matthew 5:5. “The meek are to inherit the earth/land,” citing the amazing Psalm 37 which no less than five times defines the goal and destiny of the faithful. This has not a word to say about “going to heaven as a disembodied soul at death.” To confirm this point, note the fearless words of Dr. J.A.T. Robinson at Cambridge: “‘Heaven’ is in fact never used in the Bible for the destination of the dying” (*In the End God*, p. 104). You get a very different impression at funerals and in commonly heard sermons! The only recognizable goal of the believer is “heaven.” But not according to Scripture.

The biblical drama hangs on this remarkable tension: Abraham and his seed have **never yet** inherited the land/earth. In fact Stephen in the sermon which cost him his life (Acts 7, the longest chapter in that book) explicitly says that “**Abraham did not inherit as much as a square foot of the promised land**”! But “**God promised it to him and his seed**” (Acts 7:5). That marvelous promise is rooted of course in Genesis 12, 13, 15 and constantly throughout the Hebrew Bible. How is that staggering promise to find fulfillment, since Abraham is long dead? God will indeed as always be vindicated.

The obvious and only solution is that Abraham will have to be resurrected when Jesus comes back in order to take up his allotted place in the Kingdom/land of the new order to be introduced by Jesus. Hebrews 11:8 clearly recalls that Abraham once lived in the promised land, as did his children, but in verses 13 and 39, “these [heroes of the OT] all died, **not having received the promises.**” There it is! Everything hinges on the faithful attaining to the inheritance of the earth/land as promised to the meek

by Jesus in Matthew 5:5 and unpacked in more detail in Revelation 5:10 (cp. Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 20:1-6; Jer. 27:5). Not only do they gain the earth, they rule and reign with Jesus in it.

Add to this the astonishing promise of Jesus to Peter, who inquired as to what reward the apostles might expect (Matt. 19:27), after all the exhausting trouble and maltreatment they had received from the established “church.” Jesus’ answer was transparent. In that new-born world when the Son of Man returns to the earth and takes up his position on his throne of glory, the apostles will also occupy 12 thrones and set about the task of governing the tribes regathered at that time in the land (see Matt. 19:28, and put this verse up on your refrigerator!). The reference of course is to the new order of society foreseen in all the prophets and especially in Isaiah 65:17ff and 66:22.

There is coming a new world order on earth, to be inaugurated at the return of Jesus, and we are urged by the Gospel to prepare with all urgency for that coming event. This is the substance of Christian hope, and hope is the basis, Paul said, for the companion virtues of love and faith (Col. 1:4-5). Without a proper grasp of hope, faith and love are diminished and thwarted. It matters very much what you believe. And believing and having a passion for truth is of paramount importance (2 Thess. 2:10).

The Christian faith is called “the faith of Abraham” (Rom. 4:16), and Abraham is the spiritual father of the faithful (Rom. 4:11). No wonder then that **the Gospel was preached in advance to Abraham** (Gal. 3:8). This in short is the Gospel of the Land/Kingdom, the Gospel as preached by Jesus and Paul (Mark 1:14-15; Luke 4:43; Acts 19:8; 20:24-25; 28:23, 31), which is conspicuous by its absence in churches and preaching! For further detail please read my *The Coming Kingdom of the Messiah: A Solution to the Riddle of the New Testament* (free at our site). Also my *Our Fathers Who Aren't in Heaven*. For a short summary see our ten-minute youtube video “Jesus Is Still a Jew.”

Here then is the easy story of the whole Bible, to be taught to the old and the young alike. God is working to restore peace to our tortured earth, using His agent the Messiah and Son of God. Luke 1:35 explains with lucid simplicity **the basis** for Jesus being the Son of God (do not read KJV on this verse. It misleads you into thinking there is more than one reason for Jesus’ Sonship!).

Jesus, the lord Messiah (Luke 2:11) was fathered in the womb of Mary by miracle. He certainly did not arrive from a pre-human life elsewhere! He announced the Kingdom of God, which is to bring about the reversal of the calamity which came to the human race in Adam and Eve. Mark 1:14-15 commands us to stop *not* believing in

the destiny of man, which is to rule in the Kingdom, the very task at which Adam failed.

Jesus, the perfect and sinless human person, the second Adam, modeled the perfect Christian life, devoted to the will of his Father, who is the one and only God of true monotheism (John 17:3). Jesus affirmed belief in the unitary monotheistic God of his biblical heritage (Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29).

Jesus also confirmed the promises made to the fathers of the Hebrew Bible (Rom. 15:8). Thus the Christian Gospel was preached in advance to Abraham (Gal. 3:8). The promise was that the faithful believers should receive the whole world as their inheritance (Jer. 27:5). The promise to Abraham was specified as the guarantee that he would be “heir of the world” (Rom. 4:13). Thus the land promise to Abraham is exactly the Kingdom of God promise of the New Covenant, and Jesus stated this by promising possession of the earth/land to the meek (Matt. 5:5).

The fascinating fact is that Abraham has until this day not received a square foot of his inheritance. Acts 7:5 is a marvelous “John 3:16” verse! The point to be gained is that Abraham and all the faithful who are now dead, sleeping the sleep of death (Ps. 13:3), must at the return of Jesus rise from death (1 Cor. 15:23) to receive their promised inheritance. (So also Daniel in Dan. 12:13.)

The ideal conditions on earth will then be introduced, and such scenes as Isa. 65:17ff and 66:22, where mortals (not the saints who will by then have gained immortality) will be considered exceptional and unfortunate, or even under judgment, if they die at the age of 100!

Jesus and his disciples loved and looked forward to the great “restoration of all things.” There is to be a rebirth (*palingenesis*) of the world, when the Messiah will be sitting on the throne of his glory. At that time the apostles will be co-rulers with Jesus, and they will be administering the 12 tribes regathered in the land (see Matt. 19:28 and Luke 22:28-30).

This coming new world order on earth is also called the *apokatastasis* — “putting everything back in order.” Heaven, where Jesus is currently, must retain him there “until the *apokatastasis* of all things, about which the prophets spoke” (Acts 3:21, cp. Acts 1:6).

None of this is remotely connected to the misleading popular idea about “going to heaven” when we die! Mary, even, is currently dead, sleeping the sleep of death, certainly not functioning as an intercessor. She will awake when Jesus comes back and be part of the great Kingdom of God to be set up on a renewed earth (Dan. 2:44; 7:18, 22, 27, etc).

Please read the following and be suitably shocked: “We must guard against a one-sided spiritualizing. Certainly the prophets do not think of heaven. Plows and

pruning hooks have as little to do with heaven as swords and spears” (Lange’s *Commentary*).

“The records of our Lord’s life and teaching do not speak of going to heaven, as a modern believer so naturally does...Especially there is no suggestion that Jesus is offering his disciples heaven after this life” (Strawson, *Jesus and the Future Life*, p. 38). ✧

The word “name” in the Bible is primarily about who a person is, all he is and does. “It is good to praise YHVH and make music to your name” (Ps. 92:1). Singing to God’s name is celebrating all that YHVH does and is.

Comments

“I have watched your debate on ‘Is Jesus God?’ I wish to inform you that you do not seem to really understand the Bible. The answers you provided are mostly assumption and childish which contradicts your noble status as Sir. Please refrain from mocking God and moreover, stop confusing people on your personal assumptions or views. I hope that your soul will be safe. Let’s hope that you do not regret when your time comes.”
— *email*

“I am reading more of your articles which are so interesting and easy to understand. If you’re right about all this, and I’m sure you are, then this is amazing. The idea of Jesus now, as you explain him, makes me see him in quite a different light — I have come to know Jesus Christ but now I feel that I know him even more so. I am an ex-Jehovah’s Witness. I left the Organization several months ago after 33 years — the teachings just got too unbelievable and there were many other serious problems which I think people are aware of now. It was hard leaving, but I think I’m more or less over it now. Since leaving I have come to know Jesus Christ and gradually come to the realization that God really is my Heavenly Father and not just a ‘friend.’ I do my ministry as best I can — I speak to people about the Bible, but being a Christian on your own can be lonely and I would love to be able to associate with other Christians.” — *Scotland*

“I am receiving regularly your wonderful *Focus on the Kingdom* articles and wanted you to know that I am so blessed with the Word of God and your insight. Thank you very, very much for making these pearls available to me.” — *Argentina*

“I am certainly thankful to God Almighty for your life, and your faithfulness to the accuracy and integrity of His Word. It is guardians like you who help disciples like me stay on the straight and narrow. Since the garden of Eden, our adversary the Devil has been instrumental in defeating the promises of God by calling into question His Word. With the change/addition of just ONE word Adam and Eve found themselves defeated. With the

second Adam the Word was once again called in question when the devil tempted Jesus by saying ‘If you are the Son of God...’ Hadn’t God already clearly stated, ‘You are My beloved Son’?

“I’ve noted that in each of your debates you make every effort to ‘hold the line’ by not budging on what the Word says, whereas the other side seems to shoehorn their doctrine with manipulative words and phrases. I could only hope that if ever you are challenged to another debate you set the basic ground rules to *exclude* words, terms and phrases that are NOT included in the text, such as: trinity, triune, triunity, triune God, Jesus is God, God the Son, God-man, God in the flesh.

“Perhaps you are familiar with our sport of baseball. If the Atlanta Braves scored 40 runs and the Boston Red Sox scored 0, who do you think won the game? Well, I count 40 uses of the phrase ‘Son of God’ and NONE of the phrase ‘God the Son.’ *Who wins THAT ballgame?!*”
— *Virginia*

“I was raised by two Jehovah’s Witnesses and have heard the word ‘truth’ used often to describe the Organization. I admire the zeal that the majority of members have for the ministry, but there are things like the date setting, the day for a year formula that produces the ‘end of the Gentile times’ date, and prophetic interpretations of Revelation being applied to the Watchtower organization that just baffle me. How can this be absolute truth? Then I read *The Amazing Aims and Claims* and *Jesus Was Not a Trinitarian* and watched your youtube videos and the simplicity of the Bible’s message became clearer to me. I watched your video on escaping emotional bondage and it hit me hard. Thank you for making some of the more complex prophetic statements in the Bible approachable and understandable. I look forward to doing just as you say with regard to exhaustively studying the Bible as a Berean.” — *email*

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You can even interact with us during our services.

To our international readers: If you would prefer to receive *Focus on the Kingdom* by **email** each month (and save us postage), please sign up at www.restorationfellowship.org with your name and email address.

SAVE THE DATE!
2015 Theological Conference
April 30-May 3, 2015
Calvin Center, Hampton, GA