

# Focus on the Kingdom

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Anthony Buzzard, editor

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## The Fate of the Final King of Babylon

By Bill Lavers and Anthony Buzzard

The fourteenth chapter of Isaiah presents a prophecy of a supremely evil man. He is destined to be the king of Babylon in the closing years of this age. The oracle speaks of a ruthless oppressor who, in a show of appalling arrogance, will seek to exalt his throne above the stars of God. God will respond to his attempt to usurp His supreme authority. He will be ignominiously cast down to the earth.

Isaiah 14 opens with a record of events yet to occur on the world scene. We are projected in vision to a time when God will have compassion on the house of Israel and free them from their severe suffering during the great tribulation. In that period they will have been held captive by foreign powers. Presiding over this awful time of distress will be the well-known “Beast” power of Revelation 13 and 17. The “Beast” of Revelation will emerge as the eighth head of a sequence of rulers (Rev. 17:8-11). In Isaiah 14 this personage is called the king of Babylon.

The ultimate release of the people of Israel is the subject of many Old Testament prophecies, notably those of the prophet Jeremiah (23:1-8 and ch. 31). Jeremiah understood that the exodus of Israel in those future days will completely eclipse its typical forerunner — Israel’s former exodus from Egypt. “Therefore the days are coming, declares the Lord, when they will no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As the Lord lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.”

As was the case in ancient history, many of those former captors of Israel will join with the Israelites in complete submission and allegiance when God frees His people from their bondage and publicly claims them as His own unique nation: “Gentiles will take them along and bring them to their place and the House of Israel will possess them as an inheritance in the land of the Lord, as male servants and female servants; and they will take their captors captive and will rule over their oppressors” (Isa. 14:2).

Israel will experience extraordinary joy when the world dictator will have been removed from office,

and his terrorizing kingdom and its ruling city brought to their long-prophesied ruin. We can look forward to a marvelous time of relief: “The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet. They break forth into shouts of joy” (v. 7). Once Israel has been settled as a free nation within their own borders, they will sing a taunting song against the now deceased king of Babylon: “How the oppressor has ceased!..The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of rulers” (vv. 4-5). Relief follows: “The Lord will give you rest from your pain and turmoil and the harsh service in which you have been enslaved” (v. 3).

The terrible oppression they will have endured during the reign of the Beast power, at the hands of the apparently invincible power of Babylon, will have deprived conquered Israel of all hope. Death alone will have seemed to be the only possible release from their misery. But the mighty world empire of Babylon will fall with the sudden intervention of God. Israel will greet this liberation with unspeakable joy. Psalm 126:1 captures the mood: “When the Lord put an end to the captivity of Zion, we were like those who dream.”

“The staff of the wicked,” the tyrant’s scepter (Isa. 14:5) will be finally broken and the oppressed set free. A large scale tyranny concentrated in the king of Babel is doomed to failure. Apparently Babylon is destined to become a powerful administrative centre controlled by a confederation of ten national leaders (Rev. 17:12, 13; Ps. 83) whose leader is Assyria.<sup>1</sup> Anyone refusing to align himself with the policies to be codified and enforced by the dictatorial system of the Assyro-Babylonian Beast power will suffer dire consequences.

It will be Satan whose power is expressed in the coming antichristian authority. He gives to Babylon “his power, and his seat, and great authority” (Rev. 13:2). This world-dominating government will exercise a tight control over its citizens until Babylon is destroyed: “He who used to strike the peoples in

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<sup>1</sup> See the article at our website: “The Assyrian in

fury with unceasing strokes, who subdued the nations in anger with unrestrained persecution” (Isa. 14:6) will be superseded by the arriving Messiah whose divine right it will be to ascend the throne of Israel in Jerusalem (Luke 1:32; Acts 1:6; 3:21; Luke 22:28-30). In this way the long prayed-for Kingdom of God will come.

An important element of the Gospel of the Kingdom (Mark 1:14, 15) is to know that the whole of the creation will one day rejoice, when the ravages imposed upon it by that evil worldly system come to an end. Isaiah 14:8: “Even the cypress trees rejoice over you [the king of Babylon] and the cedars of Lebanon, saying ‘Since you were laid low, no tree cutter comes up against us.’” A brilliant newly created world order will emerge from the darkness of former times. “The wilderness and the desert will be glad for them [Israel]; and the Arabah will rejoice, and blossom as the rose” (Isa. 35:1).

The next three verses of Israel’s song of derision contain vivid picture language. *Sheol*, the world of the dead, prepares to receive its humiliated new inhabitant. It arouses former great leaders of the earth, who through death have been likewise deprived of their fame and material greatness. Isa. 14:9-11: “Hell [*Sheol*] from beneath is excited over you to meet you when you come. It arouses for you the spirits of the dead, all the leaders of the earth. It raises all the kings of the nations from their thrones. They will all respond and say to you, ‘Even you have been made weak as we have. You have become like us. Your pomp and the music of your harps have been brought down to *Sheol*. Maggots have been spread out as your bed beneath you, and worms are your covering.’” The despot will be justly reduced to nothing.

Next comes the description of this unfortunate individual. He had been hailed by an unsuspecting world as “shining one, son of the dawn.” His grandiose aspirations had led him to exalt his throne above the stars of God, and to imagine he could become “like the Most High Himself.” We are reminded of Satan’s alluring offer to Adam.

The king of Babylon even boasts of sitting enthroned on the mount of assembly in the heavenly realm. Yet Isaiah 14:15 assures us that he will be brought down to *Sheol*, to the depths of the pit. This supernaturally endowed figure is a true Antichrist. He is the human tool of the Devil himself: “Is this *the man* that made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a wilderness, who

overthrew its cities and did not allow his prisoners to go home?” (vv. 16, 17).

The Hebrew of verse 12 says: “How you have fallen from heaven, O shining one, son of dawn!” Modern translators have corrected the KJV error which equated this human person with the Devil, calling him “Lucifer,” and we now read the text like this: “How are you fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of the Dawn!” Apparently he will have been welcomed as an international political savior and instigator of a bright new era for mankind. World history will return to its roots in Babylon, home of Nimrod (Gen. 10:10; see also Zech. 5:5ff, where the land of Nimrod will be the scene of a powerful commercial system) and his infamous wife Semiramis, who provided the prototype of all subsequent female deities and the Queen of Heaven, a title later appropriated to Mary herself by Roman Catholics (for details of the “baptism of paganism” calling itself “Christianity,” see Alexander Hislop’s *The Two Babylons*).

Note also the statements of modern scholars. The ancient Babylonian goddess worship is very much alive in our day. “Stephen Benko and Geoffrey Ashe have contended with some acuity that Mariology has its roots more in ancient mythology than in the Gospel. According to Benko, ‘Mary is the direct continuation of the pagan goddesses and unites in herself the basic principles that in Mediterranean piety underlay and determined the worship of mother goddesses.’ ‘Mariology does not simply resemble pagan customs and ideas, but it is paganism baptized, pure and simple’” (cited in Bloesch, *Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord*, p. 108, 1997).

Do not these facts suggest that intelligent human beings can be deceived on a grand scale? There are one billion Roman Catholics on earth. But Protestants should give careful consideration to the extent to which their own system retains doctrines in common with the Catholic Church.

The Beast or the man of sin (2 Thess. 2) represents the culmination of a false “Christian” system which was already at work in the days of the Apostles (1 John 2:18). When this Antichrist is revealed to the world, Satan will give him “his power, and his seat, and great authority” (Rev. 13:2). As a result, “he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven” (v. 6).

We may compare his words in that passage with the prophecy of Daniel (11:36): “And the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself

above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods.” This is an echo of Isaiah 14:13: “For you said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.”

Satan’s own aspirations will be reproduced in this mortal human who throughout a three and a half year domination of the world, will marshal the powers of the nations in preparation for the Devil’s own forthcoming battle with the returning Messiah.

A spiritually blind world will consider the king of Babylon worthy of veneration as the Christ returned from heaven. Revelation 13:8 says that “all the inhabitants of the earth will be found to be worshipping him, everyone whose name is not recorded in the Book of Life.” The apostle Paul paints a picture of a dazzling pseudo Messianic appearance on the part of the Man of Sin, whose Parousia (i.e. fake “Second Coming”) will fool the world (2 Thess. 2:9). He will “oppose and exalt himself above every so-called god or object of worship, and will take his seat in the temple of God, making the claim that he himself is God” (2 Thess. 2:4, quoting Dan. 11:36).

Jesus proclaims himself as the genuine solution to all the world’s problems: Rev. 22:16: “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” The king of Babylon responds by adopting that title for himself. He professes himself to be the bright and morning star, or “the shining one, son of the dawn.” Thankfully the Lord Messiah will triumph over every false claimant to rulership in the genuine New Age of the coming Kingdom of God, the heart of Jesus’ saving Gospel message (Mark 1:14, 15; Acts 28:23, 31; Luke 4:43). ✧

## Why All the Dispute Over Who God and Jesus Are?

Over the past nearly two thousand years of church history, there has been a bitter controversy over the identity of Jesus and his Father, the One God. Burning at the stake, burning of books, suppression of opponents by any means available including violence, has been characteristic of this dispute. It is a frightful history.

Most churchgoers have little idea of the appalling confusion and conflict which marks the history of dogma. Ecclesiastical councils eventually produced the decision, on pain of anathema and excommunication, that to be a *bona fide* Christian you must say, “I believe Jesus *is* God.” Required also of church members was belief that God is three Persons

in one Essence (at Nicea, 325 AD, and Chalcedon, 451 AD).

That criterion of genuineness, the gold standard for who is right and who is dangerously wrong, is vigorously maintained to this day. What strikes us as problematic in this sad story of conflict and (sometimes) theological thuggery is that Christians are often almost entirely unaware of it. They remain largely uninformed about church history and the development of creeds.

In any other field of endeavor this would be considered a disaster. Imagine if the history of America or of the world were banned from school classrooms. What if students were taught *not* to read critically and thoughtfully, not to subject to careful analysis the various pieces of political propaganda with which they are bombarded. We would be justly perturbed. But when it comes to a knowledge of how we came to believe what we believe about God and Jesus there is a strange conspiracy (?) of silence.

Do those who attend church dutifully ever imagine that they may have unwittingly become the victims of theological propaganda foreign to the revealed will of God? Much today is made of the irrational doctrine of evolution, accepted uncritically even by many who read and claim to believe the Bible. It is clear that majorities (even believers) are not immune from holding views in complete opposition to the clear word of Scripture.

The popular, traditional doctrine of God as Triune exercises a similar and unjustified stranglehold over church members. It is a dogma very seldom preached on and yet said to be the identifying mark of a true believer. It deserves every bit as much critical scrutiny as the all-pervasive teaching of evolution. The origin of the Son of God, the *new creation*, is surely a topic no less worthy of our concentrated investigation than the question of the origin of physical life in Genesis. One can accept God as the Genesis creator, but how many have paid attention to the creation and *genesis* of the Son of God mentioned by Matthew in 1:18, 20?<sup>2</sup> A revolution is needed for such a Berean-style re-examination to take place.

It would be hard to dispute the fact that many faithful churchgoers lack an intelligent appreciation of the amazing history of the doctrines the majority now

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<sup>2</sup> Note the unfortunate attempts of some translations to avoid the fact that Matthew spoke of the *genesis*, i.e. origin or creation of the Son of God (1:18), who was *begotten* (the activity of the *Father* — *gennethen*) in v. 20.

accept as “Gospel truth.” How many have examined the biblical data relative to the central question of the identity of Jesus? It was the master rabbi Jesus himself who insisted on complete clarity from his students about who he was and is. “Who do *you* say that I am? [whatever opinions others may have]” (Matt. 16:15). The confident and correct reply was (and is) that Jesus is “the Messiah, the *Son of the Living God*” (Matt. 16:16). On that stupendous truth Jesus planned to found his own Church. John in his Gospel and even more urgently in his epistles makes belief in Jesus *as the human Christ and Son of God* the non-negotiable basis of true faith. On that question it was crucially important to know the facts (1 John 4:2; 2 John 7). “John makes the recognition of the perfect humanity of Jesus the distinguishing point of Christianity and anti-Christianity.” So wrote a German professor of theology.

Is the central doctrine that Jesus is “the *man* Messiah” as distinguished from the One God (1 Tim. 2:5) the firm base on which contemporary churches are erected?

Churchgoers have certainly been warned against the views of the Jehovah’s Witnesses. These are widely said to be dangerous. Jehovah’s Witnesses have been labeled as “a cult,” with their conviction that Jesus is the human form of the archangel Michael. Certainly that view of the Son of God is remarkably alien to the Bible. Whole passages of Scripture (e.g. Heb. ch. 1) explain that the Son of God is superior to all angels and was and never will be an angel.

Yet the Witnesses make a good point when they appeal to the many, many verses which teach us that Jesus is *not* in every sense *equal* to his Father, and that he certainly never claimed to *be* God — meaning the eternal, uncreated Creator. If he did, he would have presented himself as a *second*, uncreated Person, violating the most central tenet of his own Jewish heritage! Such a claim to absolute Deity he never made. It would seem to be simply impossible to imagine Jesus setting aside the creed of Israel. Indeed, he himself quoted and publicly affirmed it as the most important command from God (Mark 12:28ff citing Deut. 6:4). That creed stated clearly that the true God is *one Lord* only. Not two. Not three. Jesus addressed his Father as “the only one who is truly God” (John 17:3). Can language be plainer?

Here, we suggest to our readers, is a method for critical and intelligent analysis of the “problem” of what the scholars call “Christology,” which is not the science of crystals, but the science which defines

properly the vital biblical revelation of who Jesus is and was — and his relationship to his Father. On this topic reams and reams of disputatious matter have appeared over the course of church history. What emerges does not demonstrate the unanimity which we would expect if the literature produced had been guided by the unifying spirit of God. Did not Jesus declare a single foundation for his community? Was it not that he was to be believed in as the Christ, the *Son of God*? But what does *Son of God* mean?

Start by considering the broad, all-encompassing fact that the Christianity of Jesus emerged within the cradle of Judaism. The Jews, relying on their sacred Scriptures, which Jesus clearly accepted as divinely given and authoritative, believed that God was a *single, undivided Person*. The Jews were unitarians, not Trinitarians. They believed that God was one single Lord. He was *echad* (Deut. 6:4) (the Hebrew for the numeral “one,” or “one single...”). The history of Judaism and a close look at the Hebrew Scriptures (the OT) prove this point beyond any reasonable doubt. To challenge this fact is to charge the Jewish people, the custodians of Hebrew Scripture, with having misunderstood the central question of who God is throughout their long history!

To dispute the unitarianism of Judaism would be a serious mistake. Would it not display an unwanted Gentile arrogance? Gentiles should humbly accept the Pauline teaching that it is we who are graciously grafted into the olive tree which is Israel (Rom. 11:17-22). We suggest that Israel’s doctrine of God was never challenged or modified within the pages of the New Testament. What happened when Christianity later mixed itself with pagan philosophies is another story.

Our acceptance before God and our inclusion in the spiritual “Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16), the “true circumcision” (Phil. 3:3) should teach us to bow before the creed of Israel and the creed of Jesus, that God is one and not three. To do less would seem to bring us into collision with the Savior himself. He not only recited the *Shema* (“Hear O Israel”) of Deuteronomy 6:4 (Mark 12:28ff) but agreed with the Jews that salvation is from the Jews (John 4:22). This would surely include a clear idea of who God is.

Secondly consider this: There is no biblical verse which utilizes the word “God” to mean *God as Triune*. Not one. In nearly 5,000 appearances of the word God — *Elohim* in Hebrew and *Theos* in Greek — not one of them can be translated “God in three Persons,” or “the Triune God.” We invite our readers to pause and ponder this astonishing fact. Is it credible

that the Bible teaches the notion that God is “Three Persons in One” and yet provides not a single instance of the word “God” with that meaning? The evidence of those 5,000 occurrences of “God” would surely imply that the writers of the Bible had never thought of God as three. Yet today some are threatened with expulsion if they raise these important issues about the identity of Jesus in relation to God.

Thirdly, God has a personal name. It appears in our translations of the OT as LORD (all capitals). It was revealed to Moses when the Deity announced Himself as “I will be what I will be,” or in the Greek version “I am the self-existing one” (Exod. 3:14). God’s personal name (no longer pronounced by Jews and not written in the Greek manuscripts of the NT) appears as the four Hebrew consonants YHWH. Possibly this is to be spoken as “Yahweh” (though no one can be sure of the pronunciation).

Our point is that this personal name of God is registered nearly 7,000 times in the Hebrew Bible, always with singular pronouns and verbs. In addition there are thousands of singular personal pronouns (I, Me, He, Him, Thee, Thou) designating the One God.

It seems that one would have to suspend all critical faculties to bring oneself to the belief that God is *not* a single Person. The laws of grammar and logic would have to be set aside. Singular pronouns would no longer signify what in normal communication they always denote. Is it nothing less than a miracle of misunderstanding that highly intelligent churchgoers, hearing the Bible read in church and devoting themselves to it in private devotion, do not grasp this surface fact of divine revelation? Again, there is a striking parallel between this and the irrational doctrine of evolution which is so glaringly in conflict with the Bible and flirts with a kind of atheism.

Some are so perplexed by the difference between the God presented in Scripture and the mysterious Trinitarian God claimed by churches that they resort to the tactic of dismissing the grammatical-historical method. They say, in other words, that God does *not* use words as we do. This evasion, however, is to renounce the doctrine of revelation altogether. The Bible is useful to us as a disclosure of the divine mind only if we can be sure that God speaks to His children in language that conforms to the laws of communication. In Hebrew as well as in other languages, a single personal pronoun denotes one Person and not three. And one (Deut. 6:4) means one!

There is no verse which combines the word “three” with “God” in Scripture. Jesus never said, “I am God,” but consistently described his uniquely

dependent relationship to God as one of *Son* to Father. A son is always a different person from his father. And sons are brought into existence by their fathers. For both Father and Son to be fully God would of course mean belief in two Gods.

Jesus’ claims for himself direct us to belief in him as the *Son of God*, certainly not God as part of a Triune Deity. The paradox to beat all paradoxes appears to be the fact that churchgoers commonly speak of Jesus as the “only begotten” Son of God (John 3:16, etc.) while in the same breath asserting that he is God! But can God be *begotten* without ceasing to *be* God?

We recommend some earnest discussion of the word “beget,” admittedly a word which now communicates unclearly. The word may be old, but its meaning is unambiguous. It means “to bring into existence,” “to give existence to,” “to cause to exist,” “to procreate, generate.” Check it in any dictionary or lexicon. Gabriel used it in a statement of doctrine which we think is of paramount importance to our search for truth.

In the enormously significant visitation of Gabriel to Mary the ground rules of all sound biblical theology are laid out. Mary is to become the first woman in history to bear a child without the benefit of a human husband. God Himself, in the execution of His amazing immortality plan for mankind, intervenes in the human biological chain to *create* in Mary the promised “seed of the woman” (Gen. 3:15) and the son of David promised in 2 Samuel 7:14. This distinguished person will at the same time be the Son of God and the Son of David — “I [God] will be a Father to him [David’s descendant] and he will be a Son to me” (2 Sam. 7:14; Heb. 1:5). In other prophetic passages God had decreed “You are my Son. Today I have begotten you,” or “Today I have *given you being*,” as the Basic Bible in English helpfully renders the Hebrew of Psalm 2:7.

Such language precludes any possibility that the Son can be *without a beginning*. He cannot always have existed if God brings him into existence at a given historical moment. That momentous event was announced to Mary. In response to her very reasonable question about having no husband, Gabriel stated: “The one to be *begotten* will be called the Son of God.” And how was this to be possible? “Holy spirit will come upon you...And for that reason precisely (*dio kai*), the one begotten will be called holy, Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

The uniqueness of Jesus is precisely expressed in the supernatural circumstances of his conception.

Luke 1:35 deliberately explains the *basis* for Jesus' divine Sonship. He is creatively begotten by his Father at a moment in the not too distant past. According to the theology of Gabriel, the divine Sonship was *first* established when God brought His ancient promises about the coming seed of the woman and of David to fulfillment. To say, however, that the Son of God did not really come into existence then, but merely exchanged an eternal existence for a human one, is to ruin the story. It removes the Son of God from the category of real human being. He becomes essentially not like the ones he set out to redeem. Not only is it impossible to preexist one's own mother, to preexist oneself at all is an equally confusing concept. It has mystery and falsehood written all over it. By the extraordinary developments worked out by the church fathers, leading to full-fledged Roman Catholicism, a strangely non-human Son of God replaced the divinely procreated Son announced by Gabriel to Mary and, thanks to reliable Scripture, to every subsequent generation.

In a recent discussion with an email correspondent I asked for a plain definition of the word "beget." I received this summary reply: "Beget does not mean to bring into existence." But it does! We invite our readers to search out the origin of the Son of God (Matt. 1:18, *genesis*, "origin") and to place their trust not in human creeds but in the sane and sound theology of the Bible. No one better laid this out, in eighteen brilliant words, than Gabriel in conversation with Mary (Luke 1:35). Because of God's procreative miracle, and for no other reason, the Son of God, the Savior, came into existence.

To be called Son of God is the equivalent exactly of "to *be* the Son of God." The biblical Son is not an "eternally generated" (whatever that means!) God the Son of the ancient creeds. "'Calling' brings to expression what one is, so that 'he will be called' means no less than 'he will be.'" The interchangeability of the two phrases is seen by comparing Matt. 5:9, 'they will be called sons of God,' and Luke 6:35, 'you will *be* sons of the Most High'" (Raymond Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, p. 289).

The apostles consistently urged belief in Jesus as that uniquely generated Son of God, while celibate, philosophically-minded church fathers lost themselves in a labyrinth of "church-speak." They eventually decided that the Son was "unoriginatedly begotten." With that unfortunate departure from the Christ as the divinely created Son of God, the public was asked to approach the Son via the murky eons of eternity. He was presented by church councils as having a personal

pre-historic and pre-human existence for uncounted billions of years. He was then supposed to have made a conscious decision to reduce himself to a fetus and be born as a man. The biblical origin of the Son no longer allowed for his *coming into existence as Son* (Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:18, 20; 1 John 5:18, not KJV). The Bible offers us instead an uncluttered straightforward approach to Jesus as the Son of God, the second Adam, the product of a gracious miraculous act of creation by God. ✧

## Comments

"I have been listening to your Focus on the Kingdom programs on the 'net. I just had to email you and say how much I'm enjoying them. Like you say we must study what Jesus taught. Jesus did not go to the kings, theologians, and so-called very smart people. He taught the everyday people, as did his disciples, and they understood what they said. So why is it so hard for people today to understand? More should read and take heed of Rev. 22:19. It scares me." — *Michigan*

"My friend let me borrow *The Doctrine of the Trinity: Christianity's Self-Inflicted Wound*. I am amazed at what I have learned. My questions of 24 years in the Worldwide Church of God have been answered. I never read 'outside' material and I know why I was told not to." — *Canada*

"Charles, thank you for your article in the latest *Focus* on Christians and the law. It was so elegantly and simply written. I knew you still had great potential to clarify the legalistic approach of the Worldwide Church of God, and restore us back to biblical faith." — *Canada*

## Dear friends of the Theological Conference,

With this letter we want to extend an invitation to our thirteenth annual Theological Conference to be held at Cornerstone Bible Church, close to Atlanta Bible College. We plan to meet from Friday, April 23, 2004, starting at 9:00 am, until Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, ending with lunch together. We would love to see you here in Georgia and we have chosen the most beautiful time of the year for the conference.

Some of you had mentioned the difficulty of travel during the winter months. Georgia is warm and beautiful in April. We think you will like the accommodation at the Hampton Inn, McDonough, and we plan to provide transportation there from Hartsfield Airport on Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the day before the conference begins, and also back to the airport on Sunday.

We sincerely hope you can be with us for these special days. The conference has been a success in years past because of the fascinating mix of truth-seeking persons from many parts of the world.

Thanks to the Internet, local advertising and the massive interest in the Bible around the world, Atlanta Bible College and the *Journal from the Radical Reformation's* circle of friends of the Truth of the Abrahamic faith has been extended. A large amount of literature promoting the Messianic faith of Jesus and first-century understanding of God and the Gospel is circulating. Advertising locally has brought many new students to the college. Our Trinity book — *Christianity's Self-Inflicted Wound* — is about to be in its sixth language.

If you can make the journey to be with us, we think you will enjoy rich fellowship and be strengthened to continue the battle for truth in which we are involved. The conference is a place to make brand new acquaintances as well as to renew old ones.

We will be blessed by having as guest lecturer Dr. Colin Brown of Fuller Seminary. He is a distinguished specialist in the field of Christology and has expressed a great sympathy for our “unusual” views of Jesus as the human Messiah. We know you will be enriched by his penetrating remarks on John’s prologue and Philippians 2. Dr. Brown is of English descent but has been professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller since 1978. He is the general editor of the prestigious *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, the “state of the art” authority on biblical words.

The tragic state of the world compels us all to tighten our grip on faith and above all to become better informed about what we believe. This will lead to a greater confidence and influence for good in the world in which we are all responsible to be lights.

We plan to devote two sessions to issues of Christology and will have presentations from Alex Hall, pastor of the Abrahamic group in London. An exciting new speaker from Australia, formerly a Church of Christ pastor, will tell of his journey into our biblical unitarian faith and offer his thoughts on Babylon in prophecy. David Maas will address concerns relating to the Christian and the state.

There will be an impressive unity amongst our speakers and ample opportunity for many of you to present your “faith story” from any angle you choose. These mini-presentations (10 minutes at the most, if possible!) provide some of the most delightful parts of our conference. Please do plan to give us a report on your journey of faith so far.

A half-hour question and answer session follows each of the formal presentations.

As usual the proceedings will be filmed and we have noticed that much of the conference’s value lies in its extended influence by way of video.

If you have any questions at all, please phone Atlanta Bible College at 800-347-4261 or email me, Anthony Buzzard, at [anthonybuzzard@mindspring.com](mailto:anthonybuzzard@mindspring.com).

Please let your friends from all over know about this gathering. Do encourage them to come. For some this is the only opportunity of meeting with others of like-minded faith. We all benefit so much from the insights and talents of other members of the body of Christ.

Below are the details of accommodation and costs. Please note that transportation from Atlanta’s Hartsfield Airport is included in the registration fee. *Please book your flight according to the shuttle schedule below.* We plan to cater three of the meals at the conference site and suggest that you go out for the other two meals.

Accommodation is available at the Hampton Inn, McDonough. The block rate of \$69 per night may be reserved by calling 770-914-0077 **by April 7** and mentioning Atlanta Bible College and confirmation number **86416808**. The rate includes continental breakfast. A free shuttle will run from the airport to the Hampton Inn on Thursday, April 22nd at **2, 4, 6, and 8 pm**. Please go to the ground transportation area and look for the Atlanta Bible College van. Shuttle between Hampton Inn and Cornerstone will be provided. Registration is \$69 **before April 7**, \$79 after. This includes three meals. Register online or by mail. Questions, please call 800-347-4261.

**Theological Conference 2004 Online Registration  
(add \$5 processing fee)**

- 1.) Go to <http://www.abc-coggc.org/ABC/TC04Registration.htm>
- 2.) Choose an airport shuttle option
- 3.) Click “Register” to enter payment information (you will be directed to PayPal, a third-party secure website)
- 4.) Follow the instructions to complete your registration

**Theological Conference 2004 Mail-In Registration**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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**Return with check made out to: Atlanta Bible College,  
PO Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260  
\$69 before April 7, \$79 after**