

Focus on the Kingdom

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Anthony Buzzard, editor

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2008 Theological Conference Registration Deadline March 31

Please see details on page 7. You may register by phone at 800-347-4261 or 404-362-0052 or mail the form on the back page.

The Great Tribulation and the Future Coming of Jesus

Prophesy Conference, Ohio, Feb. 2008

I believe that discussions of future events prior to the arrival of Jesus to set up his Kingdom on the earth get bogged down for lack of simple definitions. So I propose the following: The *Great Tribulation*, cited by Jesus in Matthew 24:21, from Daniel 12:1, will be a *short* burst of final agony before the Kingdom comes. It is the same as the “time of Jacob’s trouble”: “Alas, that day is so great; there is none like it” (Jer. 30:7), where the Hebrew word is *tsasrah*, “distress,” “tribulation.”

When the disciples asked about the “end of the age” (Matt. 24:3), they meant not AD 70 but the *future* end of this present evil age, and when Jesus goes on to speak of “the end” he means the same future event. Mark reports Jesus as follows:

“When you see the Abomination of Desolation standing where **he [the Greek participle is masculine pointing to a person as the Abomination]** ought not to (let the reader understand), then let those in Judea flee to the mountains...Woe to those who are pregnant or nursing babies **in those days!** Pray that your flight not be in winter. For **those days** will be a **tribulation** such as has not been since the beginning of creation which God created and never will be again, and if the Lord did not cut short **those days** no one would be saved alive. But for the sake of the elect whom He has chosen He cuts short **those days**...But **in those days** after **that tribulation** the sun will be darkened...and then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory” (Mark 13:14-26).

It is obvious from this account that the Abomination of Desolation will be the trigger for flight and the onset of the unparalleled and unique *Great Tribulation*. The chronology of this period is emphatically held together by Mark’s five-times repeated “those days.” Particularly important and obvious is the fact that the Second Coming follows immediately on the heels of those awful days of Great Tribulation. The Great Tribulation is certainly not a time of business as usual, and its

description as days of peril for pregnant women absolutely excludes the idea that the Great Tribulation is a period of nearly two millennia. It is a major misunderstanding to confuse tribulation in general with this quite specific time of future “*great tribulation*.”

Mark is dramatically clear: “In **those** days after **that** tribulation” (13:24) Christ will return in glory. This time is spoken of in Revelation 7:14 as “the tribulation, the great one.”

Thus the *New International Dictionary of the Bible* under its entry “The Great Tribulation”: “The Great Tribulation is a definite period of suffering sent from God on the earth to accomplish several purposes. According to premillennial eschatology [the belief that Christ will come to initiate the thousand-year reign] it precedes the millennial reign. The period of suffering will be unlike any other period in the past or future (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21).”

Holman’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary: “The expression Great Tribulation refers to the time of trouble which will usher in the second coming of Christ (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 2:22; 7:14). Jesus warned that the great tribulation would be so intense that its calamities will nearly decimate all of life¹...The allusion to Daniel 12:1 suggests an eschatological [future] view of the great tribulation...Although this event should rightly be regarded as future, attempts to connect the time of tribulation with specific events or persons [in history] have proven futile.”

Concise Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: “The precise expression ‘great tribulation,’ *thlipsis megale*, serves to identify the eschatological form of tribulation. These words are Jesus’ description of a worldwide, unprecedented time of trouble that will usher in the Parousia [Second Coming] — Mark 13:19, ‘days of distress’ and Luke 21:23 ‘great distress,’ Rev. 3:10 ‘hour of trial.’ This period of time will be initiated by the ‘abomination of desolation’ (Matt. 24:15)...Although some modern interpreters, along with many ancient commentators, are inclined to regard Jesus’ predictions as totally fulfilled during the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, the words of Matthew 24:29, ‘immediately after the distress of those days’ seem to connect them with the Parousia.”

¹If the time of great tribulation is not curtailed, “no flesh will be saved alive” (Matt. 24:22). “Saved” means here of course saved from danger and death, “from natural dangers and afflictions” (Bauer).

This is certainly true. The Great Tribulation according to Jesus is a time of major calamity just before his return.

Matthew's report of Jesus' prophecy is parallel exactly to Mark's. Matthew begins by reporting the question posed to Jesus: "When will these things be and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?" (Matt. 24:3). The **end of the age** is Matthew's term for the end of the present era of history prior to the second coming. He has used it 5 times. Three times in Matthew 13, it is the time of harvest when the resurrected faithful will shine like the sun in its strength in their Father's Kingdom (13:39-40) and when the wicked will be separated from the righteous (13:49). In the Great Commission "the end of the age" is the time of the return of Jesus in the future, up to which time he will be with us "until the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). "End of the age" is a fixed term referring to the future arrival of Jesus to establish the Kingdom on earth.

In Matthew 24:3 the disciples ask about "the sign of the Parousia [Second Coming] and end of the age" (the items are closely linked under one article). The word for **end** here is derived from LXX (Greek version of the OT) Daniel 12:6, 7, 8, 12 as is the other word for the same end, *telos*. Replying to the question Jesus says, "the end is not yet" (Matt. 24:6) and later "then comes the end" (24:14). **There is a single end in view**. It is basic to all communication that meanings cannot be switched in mid-stream! The account is about "**the end of the age**" (the Second Coming) and how that "**end** is not yet" (Matt. 24:6) and finally how the same **end** of the age will be announced (24:14). The key factor in understanding when **the end** will come is the successful worldwide preaching of "this [well-known] Gospel about the Kingdom": "This Gospel of the Kingdom will be heralded in the whole world as a witness to all the nations and then the **end** will come: when you *therefore* see the Abomination of Desolation standing in a holy place, flee..." (Matt. 24:14-16). The **end** is connected logically with the Abomination, by the word "therefore." The sequence is exactly the same as reported in Mark:

"Woe to those who are pregnant...**in those days**...For there will **then** [*tote*= at that time] be a *great* tribulation which has never been since the beginning of the world until now and never will be, and unless those days are cut short, no one will survive. But **those days** will be cut short for the sake of the elect...*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 heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:19-30).

It is obvious that the Great Tribulation is a period of limited time² just before the Second Coming and it is

²The same expression "great tribulation" appears also in I

initiated by the appearance of the Abomination of Desolation. Daniel is the source of that Abomination and Daniel provides a vitally important chronological marker. He says in 12:11 that **1290 days** will be the length of time from the placing of the Abomination to the end of the final vision, which climaxed in the death of the final King of the North, the Great Tribulation and the *resurrection of the dead* (Dan. 11:45-12:2).

On this evidence, I propose that the Great Tribulation is not just tribulation in general but a unique and unrepeatable time of suffering just prior to the Second Coming and the Kingdom. Thus in recent correspondence with Ralph Woodrow, who wrote a book on prophecy,³ I received this: "I certainly agree that the idea of stretching the [great] tribulation out to be 2,000 years long makes no sense!" I have inquired in many different circles and the public's consensus is that the Great Tribulation is still in the future. Many other passages of Scripture, the "time of Jacob's trouble" and the oppression of Israel by foreign nations in Zechariah 12:1-14:3, tell the same story, as well as masses of material in Isaiah.

From the article on eschatology in the *Anchor Bible*: "The phrase in Mark 1:15 should be translated 'the Kingdom of God has come near or is at hand.' It is not present but imminent...Mark's emphasis on 'entering the Kingdom' (10:23, 24, 25) and on Joseph of Arimathea's expectation of the Kingdom of God (15:43) also suggests that it is a future entity...Jesus predicts a series of eschatological events including the appearance of false messiahs, wars, earthquakes and famines, a period of great tribulation...When the desolating sacrilege is set up, an enigmatic reference to the desecration of the temple based on Daniel 11:31, 12:11 and 9:27, citizens of Judea are advised to flee, for a terrible time of tribulation will ensue...There is no clear allusion to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD."

The point here is that the Great Tribulation triggered by the Abomination of Desolation, days in which it will hard for pregnant and nursing mothers (Mark 13:17-19: "those days will be a tribulation...") — those agonizing and unprecedented days will be followed "immediately" by the return of Jesus. Jesus did not return immediately after the awful times in AD 70, and so it follows that Jesus did not predict *that* event (AD 70) as the sign of his arrival. Certainly the events of AD 70 can be read as a type of end-time events, but the AD 70 catastrophe was *not the time of trouble* followed "immediately" (Matt. 24:29) by the Second Coming. An abomination in AD 70 was in no sense a sign of the impending Second Coming. The Abomination of Desolation and his

Macc. 9:27 referring to a special time of agony in Israel, not to tribulation in general.

³*Great Prophecies of the Bible*, 1989.

appearance in some kind of holy place remains therefore the key sign given by Jesus. Jesus will not return until those predicted events have occurred. These matters have important implications for our understanding of the future, prior to the Second Coming.

The “Problem” for Commentators

From a mass of commentary I select two examples as recognized for their detailed examination of the text. Meyer’s commentary (actually his editor) has this to say:

“It is admitted as beyond dispute that Matthew 24 contains a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, and also a prediction of Christ’s coming to judge the world. Everything turns on the word ‘**immediately**’ in 24:29. Dr. Meyer properly insists that the attempts to twist this word from its proper meaning of ‘immediately’ are inconsistent with objective exegesis.⁴ The question then is, how are we to explain the promise of the Second Advent of the Son of God *to follow at once* upon the fall of Jerusalem? Some meet the difficulty by saying that Christ *did* come in the lifetime of his generation and did [in AD 70] gather the elect from the graves. This exposition is at once met by the objection that the gathering of the elect [and the resurrection of the dead] must in that case have been invisible [!]”

The view that Jesus came back to raise the dead in AD 70 is held by a large number of people these days. It is called “preterism” (“past-ism”). It effectively wipes out the New Testament and the Gospel of the Kingdom! It all happened invisibly in AD 70! This is just a

⁴Matthew Henry is typical of the vagueness and muddle with which some try to deal with the “immediately after” of 24:29. He says, “The only objection against this [applying v. 29ff to the future Second Coming] is that it is said to be immediately after the tribulation of those days; but as to that, (1.) It is usual in the prophetic style to speak of things great and certain as near and just at hand, only to express the greatness and certainty of them. Enoch spoke of Christ’s second coming as within ken. Behold, the Lord cometh, Jude 14 [but ‘immediately after’ cannot be explained away as an indefinite time marker. It is explicit!] (2.) A thousand years are in God’s sight but as one day, 2 Pet. 3:8. It is there urged, with reference to this very thing, and so it might be said to be immediately after [the word ‘immediately’ has been emptied of its meaning]. The tribulation of those days includes not only the destruction of Jerusalem, but all the other tribulations which the church must pass through; not only its share in the calamities of the nations, but the tribulations peculiar to itself; while the nations are torn with wars, and the church with schisms, delusions, and persecutions, we cannot say that the tribulation of those days is over; the whole state of the church on earth is militant, we must count upon that; but when the church’s tribulation is over, her warfare accomplished, and what is behind of the sufferings of Christ filled up, then look for the end.” **Note how he avoids Jesus’ single Great Tribulation by adding lots of other tribulations to it!**

conjuring trick making the future Kingdom disappear and undermining the Gospel of the Kingdom.

That view I reject as a savage attack on the whole teaching of Jesus about his visible return to establish a visible Kingdom, the whole point of the Gospel, along with his death and resurrection. But what is the alternative? Commentators, too many to give you in detail, have struggled and striven to find a place in Matthew 24 (and parallels) where we can safely and surely say “this part refers to AD 70 and this part refers to the Second Coming still future to us.” The massive disagreement about where to find that sudden change of topic from an event in the *past* to an event still *future* must be pronounced a failure. There is no such switch of topic. Jesus is asked about **the end of the age**, and he then says “then **the end** will come” (24:14) and proceeds to describe the end as initiated by the Abomination of Desolation: “then the end will come: When you *therefore* see the Abomination...” This is the great key to the future.

Commenting on verse 29, “immediately after,” A.H. McNeile, former professor of theology at Cambridge, says: “This verse is the true sequel to verse 15. The tribulation (v. 21) is the climax of the birth pangs (v. 8) being followed *immediately* by the end. In Mark, too, the tribulation and the second coming are *in those days*, i.e., **they are successive events in the same period**...The tribulation will be terrible, but the Parousia [Second Coming] will follow it at once.” There is no gap between the tribulation, the heavenly signs, and the second coming. **It follows, then, that the concentrated time of trouble Jesus described did not happen in AD 70. No cosmic signs followed that event immediately.** Nor did Jesus come back. Nor indeed could the heavenly signs be falling stars in the 1800s which were also not followed immediately by the Second Coming.

The *Word Biblical Commentary* on Matthew 24, the state of the art in evangelical scholarship, struggles hard to make the Abomination and Great Tribulation refer to past events. But the author faces an insuperable barrier when he reads Jesus’ words: “*immediately after* the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened” (24:29). Finally his only “solution” (actually a failure of nerve to face the text!) is that Matthew wrongly edited in the word “immediately”! This really gives the game away. There is no avoiding the fact that the Great Tribulation has not yet started, since the Abomination which triggers it has not appeared in the terms demanded by Jesus and Daniel.

Some have tried to say that the “great tribulation” of Matthew 24:21 is not the same as the tribulation which is to immediately precede the second coming (v. 29). This is only one example of the strained efforts to make this discourse impossibly confusing. Jesus was very clear: “Then there will be a great

tribulation...Immediately after the tribulation of **those days**" (Matt. 24:21, 29). "In **those** days after **that** tribulation" (Mark 13:24). Language has no more emphatic way of saying that there is one single Great Tribulation and that it is to be followed immediately by the appearance of Jesus in glory.

One other — what seems to me also as an evasion of plain language — is the idea that the Great Tribulation started with the abomination in AD 70 and has been going on now *continuously* for nearly two millennia. On this theory the Great Tribulation in which, as Mark says, it is hard for the pregnant, is nearly twice the length of the millennium. I simply find this incredible. Which of you really believes that the world has been living in the Great Tribulation for nearly 2000 years? Has the world really been experiencing for nearly 2000 years days which are impossibly difficult for the pregnant? And which if not cut short would result in the decimation of all flesh? Is that "shortening" language appropriate for a tribulation of 2000 years?

Furthermore, Jesus is merely citing the Great Tribulation from Daniel 12:1 and that Great Tribulation is also and equally a forecast of a *brief time* of trouble in connection with the death of the final wicked King of the North and the resurrection of the dead. It would be a serious failure to connect Scripture with Scripture to avoid Jesus' plain reference to Daniel. He had just finished telling us he was quoting from Daniel and urged us to understand (Matt. 24:15).

So the issue to be resolved is not a hard one. Either you say that all the trouble was over in AD 70 and Jesus returned immediately after AD 70 (Preterism), or you recognize that Jesus answered the question about his coming in terms modeled on Daniel's timeline of events. It will not do to try to work some kind of compromise and say that the Great Tribulation has been in process all this time since AD 70.

Otherwise put, if the Abomination = A and the Parousia = B you have got to find some way of explaining the relationship between them. There is nothing in Jesus' final sermon which allows one part to refer to A in AD 70 and another to a chronologically far off B. So either A and B, riveted together as they are, are one single complex of end-time events, or A is to be connected to B by stretching the Great Tribulation into an event of nearly 2000 years.

Thus 1) A and B together would be descriptive only of AD 70 and the Parousia is now over (preterism). Or 2) A is to be connected to B by stretching the Great Tribulation over a period of nearly 2000 years (historicism). Or 3) A and B are chronologically close and can be looked for in the future (futurism). This is the view of the earliest premillenarian "church fathers."

The plain fact is that Jesus *did* answer the question about a sign for his Parousia, as asked: "When you see

the abomination of desolation standing where **he** ought not to, then flee" (Mark 13:14). That is the sign that the end is almost upon us. Those Great Tribulation events are also the subject of Daniel's final vision. "Time, times and half a time," or 1290 days, will mark the final awful days of this age. From the time the Abomination is placed to the end will be 1290 days (Dan. 12:7, 11). That will not work at all if you start in AD 70.

When the disciples asked about trouble in the temple and the destruction of the buildings, most commentary sees that "the disciples conceived of the destruction of Jerusalem as *immediately* preceding the Parousia." "In Mark as well as Matthew the Parousia is predicted as setting in *immediately after* the destruction of the temple, since it is still to follow 'in those days.'" "The disciples asked about the destruction of Jerusalem and the second coming, joining them both in time" (Meyer). Actually it was the destruction of the temple, not of Jerusalem, about which they asked.

There is nothing in the reply of Jesus which separates the events by centuries. Jesus does not challenge their assumption because both he and they are basing their understanding on the sequence provided by Daniel.

Meyer says rightly: "A whole host of strange and fanciful interpretations have been given, in consequence of its having been assumed that Jesus could not possibly have intended to say that his Second Advent was to follow immediately upon the destruction of Jerusalem."

But Jesus clearly expected that the predicted program given by Daniel would come to pass in every detail. It was Daniel who had foreseen trouble in the holy place and a Great Tribulation followed by the resurrection of the dead (Dan 12:1-2). Matthew 24 and Daniel are in complete agreement, but Daniel's background to Jesus' discourse has often been neglected. Neglected also is the book of Revelation which reads the last half of Daniel's 70th "seven" (Dan. 9:24-27) as still future, close to the time of the coming Kingdom.

The logic of futurism goes like this:
*Jesus puts the Abomination in the future yet.
 In Daniel's 70th "seven" the Abomination will be set.
 That the seventieth "seven" of Daniel is future,
 therefore, let us not forget.*

Jesus was able to speak to 11 Apostles and say, "I will be with *you* till the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). As it turns out the Apostles are long dead. The "you" refers to disciples who were not even alive when Jesus gave that promise. Jesus also said that the Apostles would not have covered Israel with their evangelism before he came back (Matt. 10:23). This also as it turns out refers to the "successors" to the Apostles, the disciples living at the very end of the age. Jesus predicted destruction of a temple, great tribulation and

his *immediate* return. He did not know the length of time before his return (Mark 13:32; Acts 1:7), but he knew of end-time trouble in the temple from Daniel's prophecies which he quotes.

All attempts to stretch the specific end-times data (the Abomination and what follows) over 2000 years, from AD 70 onwards, will not work. Jesus in fact did not know the time-frame, but he knew what Daniel had predicted for the very end of the age.

Today we need to be equipped with this marvelous prophecy and encourage the important work of evangelism, knowing that the Abomination is the important sign that the end is about to come. As Jesus said, when you see *all* these things happening (Matt. 24:33; Luke 21:31: "these things"), know that the Kingdom of God is about to come. "All these things" refers to the Abomination and trouble in Jerusalem, and AD 70, as it turns out, did not produce the events which signal the Second Coming. But in the future they will happen as predicted.

While we wait and watch, the Church is to be active by all possible means in spreading the truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matt. 24:14) and the identity of God and Jesus. Modern technology gives us exactly those tools needed to complete the job. When the Abomination finally appears, marking the final time of trial, we will know that the end is almost here. Until then we should watch and work for the Lord Messiah, in fulfillment of the charge by Jesus that our various talents are to be used in the service of his Kingdom Gospel.

Further articles on Daniel and Matthew 24 are at www.restorationfellowship.org ✧

Christians Wrong About "Heaven," Says Bishop

N.T. "Tom" Wright is one of the most formidable figures in the world of Christian thought. As Bishop of Durham, he is the fourth most senior cleric in the Church of England. A much-read theologian and Biblical scholar, he has taught at Cambridge...

TIME: Has anyone you've talked to expressed disappointment at the loss of the old view [i.e. going to heaven when you die]?

Wright: Yes, you might get disappointment in the case where somebody has recently gone through the death of somebody they love and they are wanting simply to be with them. And I'd say that's understandable. But the end of Revelation describes a marvelous human participation in God's plan. And in almost all cases, when I've explained this to people, there's a sense of excitement and a sense of, "Why haven't we been told this before?"

The Single Shadow of Colossians 2:16, 17

When shadows are fulfilled by the events they foreshadow, then the shadows cease to be important. They are replaced by the reality which has now come. "When Christ came as high priest of the good things that **have come to be**, passing through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made by hands, that is, not belonging to this creation..." (Heb. 9:11, NAB).

The Law is said to *have* (present tense) a shadow of the good things to come. It is clear that the Law is replaced by Christ who has come: "Since the law **has** only a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of them, it can never make perfect those who come to worship by the same sacrifices that they offer continually each year" (Heb. 10:1). There is now no need for those shadow sacrifices. "They worship in a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary, as Moses was warned when he was about to erect the tabernacle. For he says, 'See that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain'" (Heb. 8:5). The Mosaic sanctuary has been superseded by Christ who has ascended to the Father to intercede for us.

The calendar of Israel is also said to *be* (present tense: "they *are*") a single shadow of the things to come. But Christ has now come and he has provided the reality of what was foreshadowed in the calendar: **feasts, new moons and Sabbath day**. "These **are** a shadow of things to come, but the reality belongs to Christ" (Col. 2:17).

The shadow has lost its importance now that Christ has come. He is the substance of what was foreshadowed in the calendar observances of Israel.

No one has any difficulty with the parallel statement about Adam and Christ. "Adam **is** (present tense) the type of the one who was to come." Adam has lost his importance and been replaced by the reality who is Christ. "But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin after the pattern of the trespass of Adam, **who is** the type of the one *who was to come*" (Rom. 5:14).

In Colossians 2:16-17 the same language exactly applies to Christ who has come. Paul says that the calendar **is** a shadow of the one *who was to come*, just as Adam is a type of the one who was to come. Sabbaths, holy days and new moons lose their importance in the presence of the Christ who has come.

Paradoxically many spend a lot of energy on trying to observe the shadow instead of concentrating on the fulfillment of the shadow — "Christ who was to come" and has come! ✧

Comments

“Cordial greetings from Poland, from the historical 1000-years-old city Sandomierz (it’s located 80 km to east from the old capital city of Polish unitarians, Raków)! Since a long time I tried to write these several words to you. I have managed at the end. My wife and I are former Jehovah’s Witnesses. We have left this religion over 1 1/2 year ago. The book of Raymond Franz *Crisis of Conscience* has helped us in this. I thought about departure from this religion many years ago, but on the barriers were psychomanipulation of the Watchtower Society and lack of access to fact and objective estimates of religions. I would not like to write about it, as I think you know the problems with Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Watchtower.

“We observed after our departure from this religion on internet websites of different churches and teaching of them. I have noticed the unitarians. The teaching of the Watchtower was similar, because by many years — when I could not leave JW religion — I did not see an alternative. I had serious doubts and problems caused by their doctrine but I have seen that the Bible doesn’t speak about the Trinity, immortal soul etc. and promises the future life on the Earth.

“Now I see that borrowing of already existing beliefs of unitarians (like one God JHWH in one person, mortality of soul, millennial Kingdom of God, understanding of meaning of Messiah, etc.) was real basis of revolt of movement of Charles Russell and Bible Students in 19th century. Now the Watchtower introduced these beliefs as their own and unique, but they add to them new non-biblical ideas.

“So, we found your website, and yours and Charles Hunting’s book *The Doctrine of the Trinity: Christianity’s Self-Inflicted Wound* in the Polish language. Really, it is a wise elaboration, and it defends strongly in discussions with Trinitarians! I dream about the day when all your and other unitarian authors’ books will be available in Polish. The idea that Jesus came into existence as a man and didn’t exist before — this was a super discovery for us! I find yet second important thing in your quiz no. 12 — no life in heaven for Christians!

“Now, we are in a hard time of our life, like many former JW’s. I can say sincerely: we almost had lost faith. Basic questions have returned: is it possible to learn about God? Who is He? Can I trust the Bible? Is the truth beyond our mind’s capabilities? etc. May I take your opinion on several problems? If you would find a moment of time and willingness in order to answer — I will be very happy.” — *Poland*

“Although I have only read one third of your book *The Doctrine of the Trinity: Christianity’s Self-Inflicted Wound* in German so far, I’m able to say that I have never read such a good book — apart from the holy

Scriptures of course. I want to thank you very much for this because since I know that the doctrine of the Trinity is not true I wonder who Jesus was or was not before he was procreated by God’s spirit in the virgin Mary. In the name of Jesus I prayed to God many weeks because of this question and now I think that your book is the answer.” — *Germany*

“When *Focus on the Kingdom* comes I sit right down and read it. I am hungry for the information.” — *Indiana*

“I have known for a long time that the day would come when I must ask that you remove me from your mailing list. The article in the December 2007 issue by Ray Faircloth is what finally brought this to an end.” — *California*

“I write in response to Greg Deuble’s comment to Koorong Books (Australia) in *Focus on the Kingdom* of December 2007. Having read Greg Deuble’s book, after several years of my own non-pentecostal private research, and having come to similar conclusions I rated *They Never Told Me This in Church* as the book of the YEAR for 2006! I purchased ten copies from Koorong and shared them with friends as a witnessing tool. Last week I went to check Koorong (West Ryde store) in Sydney, and was told by the manager and a staff member that they had **too many complaints** and management had decided to not reorder further copies. My opinion, as apparently opinions rule, is that 90% of the paper on Koorong’s bookshelves is only suitable as food for white ants (termites) or for toilet paper. Greg, Good-onya-mate! (Good on you, mate). Greg is one of the few genuine and humble professors of the Faith, who do NOT preach a ‘Jesus’ from *second-hand Mills and Boon paperback romance novels*. May the Lord rebuke those who are attempting to lock up the truth from kingdom seekers!” — *Australia*

2008 Restoration Fellowship National Conference Australia

18th-20th July

Virginia Palms Conference Centre
Sandgate Rd., Virginia
Brisbane, Queensland

Theme: The Creed of Jesus

Keynote Speakers: Anthony Buzzard, Frank Selch,
Greg Deuble (the Christian author whose book was
banned by Koorong!)

Also Peter Barfoot, Steve Cook, Paul Herring
RSVP 9th July

Ph: 0422 099 549 • Email: admin@restorationfellowship.info
www.restorationfellowship.info

Old Syriac (Aramaic) translation of Luke 23:43:

“Truly I tell you today, that you will be with me in the
Garden of Eden.”

2008 Theological Conference

Sunday-Wednesday, April 27-30, 2008

Simpsonwood Conference Center, Norcross, Georgia

Registration Deadline: March 31

April 27, 2008 marks the beginning of the 17th “Theological Conference.” It is important for us to point out right away that this is not some abstruse meeting for professional scholars only! On the contrary it provides a rare opportunity for believers in the God of Israel and in Jesus as Messiah and in the saving Gospel of the Kingdom to come together for mutual support, comfort and exhortation. Our speakers will once again be drawn from various parts of the world. They are in many cases full-time workers for the faith and they will bring us the best of their own research and meditation in matters directly related to the faith of Jesus. Most importantly they will help us to improve our own individual service of the Message of the Kingdom. The Church, Paul said, is to be equipped for ministry. Ministry is not the sole responsibility of a single “pastor”; it is the task assigned to each one of us as members of the body of Messiah.

We were very thrilled to hear of two of our lady participants of last year who, when they arrived home after the conference and the following three-day intensive class on the Kingdom of God, began to introduce the ladies of their Bible study to what they had been learning and confirming at the 16th annual conference. The ladies were thrilled with the refreshing new clarity brought to them and a united group of truth seekers and finders emerged. Above all the Bible students were taught to read the Bible in its proper first-century Jewish environment, uncluttered by the deadening and confusing traditions which have been added to it by mainstream theology.

Please do seriously consider making the trip to Atlanta and the excellent Simpsonwood Retreat Center. I feel you will be richly rewarded for your participation. We hope this year to allow extra time for fellowship and enjoyment of the beautiful setting in which the conference is held. But there will also be intense learning, as well as every opportunity for questions. A special feature of the conference is of course the celebrated “faith stories” of any who choose to give them. Many who come are finding fellowship for the first time, since it is difficult to meet with others of similar beliefs in many parts of the US and the world. The conference is only as good as its participants. Plan on being a blessing to others and on gaining a corresponding inspiration. Jesus did say that we are all expected to share the gifts of truth we have received and at no time in history, I suppose, is the world more desperately in need of a sound, simple presentation of

the Gospel of the Kingdom and the identity of the human Messiah and his One God.

Registration

To register please call Atlanta Bible College at 800-347-4261 or 404-362-0052 or mail the form on the back page. The minimum deposit is \$50 per room. **The registration deadline is March 31, 2008.**

Cost

	Single	Double (per person)	Quad (per person)
3 nights w/meals	\$223	\$175	\$159
Conf. fee	\$20	\$20	\$20
Total	\$243	\$195	\$179

Transportation

We will provide transportation between Atlanta airport and Simpsonwood for \$25 round-trip or \$15 one-way, at the following times:

Airport to Simpsonwood		
Sunday, April 27	1:00 pm	3:30 pm
Simpsonwood to Airport		
Wed., April 30	1:00 pm	

Please arrange your arrival time on Sunday early enough to catch one of the two shuttle runs. On Wednesday, April 30, we will provide one (1) shuttle run. In order to allow you enough time to catch your return flight, we suggest you not book your return flight prior to 3:30 p.m.

The conference begins with registration at 4 pm on Sunday and ends with lunch on Wednesday. Driving directions to Simpsonwood Conference Center are at www.simpsonwood.org

Post-conference Class

Anthony Buzzard will teach “The Crisis over God: Helping Others Understand Who God and Jesus Are” from Wednesday afternoon, April 30 to Friday, May 2. The cost for the class is \$298 for credit and \$149 for continuing education. It will be held at Simpsonwood, with the same room/meal rates for Wed. and Thurs. nights — \$74 per night for single, \$58 per person per night for double. Please call Atlanta Bible College at 800-347-4261 or 404-362-0052 **before March 31** to register.

Registration form on next page →

Atlanta Bible College
PO Box 100,000
Morrow, GA 30260
USA

Focus on the Kingdom
March, 2008

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Theological Conference • April 27-30, 2008 • Simpsonwood Conference Center, Norcross, Georgia

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone-Home _____ Cell _____

E-mail _____

Conference rates per person (includes room, meals, breaks, fee, tax):
Single: \$243 Double: \$195 Triple: \$190 Quad: \$179

Room type: Single___ Double___ Triple___ Quad___

Roommate's name(s) _____

Would you like us to assign a roommate? _____

Do you need transportation to/from Atlanta airport? ___\$25 round-trip, \$15 one-way

If so, Date & Time of Arrival _____ Departure _____

Airline & Flight Number _____

Shuttle on Sun. to Simpsonwood (Circle one) 1:00 pm 3:30 pm

Are you taking the after-conference class? _____

Send with minimum deposit of \$50 per room by **March 31** to:
Atlanta Bible College, PO Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260