

Focus on the Kingdom

Vol. 13 No. 4

Anthony Buzzard, editor

January, 2011

John 17:5: A Verse to Be Trapped By

Please consider these language facts about things which are held in reserve by God, stored up “with Him.”

“The Hebrew Bible speaks of things which are laid up with God with a view to the future: ‘lay up something with Thee,’ reserve it.” “With the dative, *para* (with), indicates that something is or is done either in the immediate vicinity of someone, or (metaphorically) in his mind, *nearby, beside, in the power of, in the presence of, with.*”

“To have a reward laid up with God in heaven, Matt. 6:1 (there where God is, i.e. God’s favor). Luke 1:30: a person is also said to have grace with a person with whom he is acceptable, Luke 2:52; **this is acceptable with God, pleasing to him, 1 Pet. 2:20; para, with oneself, i.e. in one’s own mind.**”

From the NAB notes on John 17:24: “*Where I am:* Jesus prays for the believers ultimately to join him in heaven [i.e. in fact not in heaven but in the future Kingdom!]. Then they will not **see his glory** as in a mirror but clearly (2 Cor. 3:18; 1 John 3:2).”

How does all this bear on John 17:5, a verse constantly said by Trinitarians to show that Jesus was alive in heaven literally before coming into existence at birth — a serious contradiction?

Language can be tricky. When did you last “have something *with* someone else”? Is that clear to you? Not in our contemporary English. But in John 17:5 Jesus, as literally translated from the Greek, “**had glory with** the Father before the world existed.” Did you know that a *literal* translation may be fatal to understanding? If I tell you “It is raining cats and dogs,” are you going to call the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals? Translating John 17:5 literally word by word into English is a mistake and misleads. It gives the false impression that Jesus was *returning* to a state of glory which he actually and literally possessed before he was born. Such a Jesus would then not be human. He would have enjoyed another life before he came into existence! He would have existed before he existed.

To “have something *with* God” in biblical idiom is to have a reward promised and stored up in the presence of God to be bestowed later. Matthew 6:1 is a good example. Of this verse the lexicon reports that “to have a reward is to have it laid up with God.” So also John 17:5:

Jesus asks for the reward which had been laid up for him by God from the beginning. He was asking God to give it to him now that his work was finished. How beautifully this echoes the Messianic passage in Isaiah 49:3-4. God says to his servant the Messiah, “You are my servant Israel, in whom I will be glorified. But [the Servant] said, ‘I have toiled in vain. I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely the justice due to me is **with** [*para* as in John 17:5] the LORD, and my reward is *with* my God.” In the Hebrew the word “with” is *et*, which can mean “present to the mind.”

Translating from one language to another means conveying the meaning of words in one language into words meaning the same in the “target” language. Translating “I’ve got a frog in my throat” literally into another language will produce nonsense. Or “I am pulling your leg” — rendering it word for word will produce a laughable misunderstanding. John 17:5 is a similar example. Jesus prayed to receive as the reward for his ministry completed the glory he “had **with** God” from the beginning. This was glory promised in God’s great plan. If translated literally into English it will sound as if Jesus was alive before he was born and enjoyed glory in a “preexistence.” This will contradict the rest of the New Testament and especially the clear accounts of Jesus’ origin as Son of God in Matthew and Luke. ✧

The Muddle Over Who Jesus Is and What His Gospel Was and Is

John’s gospel is repeatedly used to promote the post-biblical doctrine of the Trinity. At the same time Matthew and Luke are contradicted!

Jesus¹ in our New Testament is a human being supernaturally begotten in Mary (Luke 1:35). He is certainly not God, which would contradict his own creed in Mark 12:29 (John 17:3). He is Son of God and Messiah. His own job description is preaching the Gospel about the future Messianic Kingdom on earth at his return (Luke 4:43).

The Messiah’s task was foreseen in Isaiah 49:8: “I [the LORD God] will keep you and give you as a covenant of the people to restore the land and to make them inherit the desolate heritages,” the Kingdom of God

¹ Note: the NT does not insist on Hebrew names and is content to write Jesus in Greek. Jesus is the English form of the Greek Iesous, Hebrew Yeshua (not Yahshuah!)

restored. Jesus invites all who would believe him and his Gospel of the Kingdom to prepare for rulership positions in that Kingdom. He said nothing about “going to heaven,” and he believed the dead were dead, asleep, until the resurrection.

These fundamental truths of the Bible are often unclear to churchgoers. With the miracle of technology now so readily available, I am able to post daily at my 10-minute video at YouTube: “Jesus Is Still a Jew.” Here are some samples from several hundred:

Jesus is not as hidden from us as some scholars tell us. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, Son of God. His mother and he knew why and how he was Son of God. Gabriel had told Mary in a lucidly clear defining statement in Luke 1:35. Jesus had no human father. He is thus uniquely worthy of our attention, also because he was later resurrected after being dead for three days. Via his Kingdom Gospel Jesus invited believers to prepare for rulership with him in the future Kingdom on earth. (Show your friends Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 18, 22, 27).

Then this warning: Those who have detected pagan elements in post-biblical Christianity all too easily rush back under Moses! Acts 15 tells of believers who wanted others to be circumcised and follow the law of Moses. Peter faced this false argument head on, speaking of that law as a “yoke which neither our fathers nor we could stand” (Acts 15:10). Paul echoes this. He describes insistence on the codified law at Sinai as mistaken. Those who want to “keep the whole law” are “severed from Christ, fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:3-4). The New Covenant is both a renewed covenant and one that is also brand new.

“Salvation is for those who obey Jesus,” says Hebrews 5:9. But what is obedience to Jesus? Is it observing the Saturday sabbath or Hebrew holy days? Is it banning musical instruments from church? Pronouncing God’s name in Hebrew? Leviticus 11 food laws? Paul is the one who speaks for Jesus in the crucial matter of obedience. He calls the Hebrew calendar a shadow, replaced by Christ (Col. 2:16-17).

Paul makes physical circumcision a matter of no account. Physical circumcision was required of Jews and Gentiles in the Torah (Gen. 17). Paul says Old Testament Torah is a schoolmaster leading to Christ. Read Galatians 4:21ff for Paul’s impassioned appeal for us not to confuse two different covenants.

There is complete agreement that “God is one” in the Bible. Supporting passages are obvious: “The Lord our God is one.” Fortunately we are not left in the dark about the meaning of “one.” “There is no God besides HIM.” “No God besides ME.” “No God besides YOU.” “I am the LORD.” God is here defined as one Person. The words I, Me, You and Him are singular personal pronouns and we all know that singular personal

pronouns define a single person! “God is three” contradicts these singular pronouns.

The point of view expressed here has the backing of the leading Christologist of our time, Dr James Dunn. He writes: “In the book of Acts there is no sign of any Christology of preexistence. In Matthew and Luke Jesus’ divine sonship is traced back specifically to his birth and conception...He was Son of God because his conception was an act of creative power by the Holy Spirit.” Note that the Bible’s Son of God is a created person, a real human being, not the “God the Son” of traditional faith. ✧

The Historic Translation of John 1:3-4

by John Cordaro

Our English Bible gradually developed over the last six hundred years. John Wycliffe is credited with the first English translation of the New Testament which was completed about 1380 C.E. Until that time the Word of Yahweh was locked up in the Latin tongue which was unknown to the common people. The Latin Vulgate translated by Jerome about 400 C.E. was the standard Bible used in the Catholic Church.

Wycliffe’s translation is based upon the Latin Vulgate, not the Greek. It is therefore a “translation of a translation.” In Wycliffe’s translation, John 1:3-4 uses the word “him” in reference to the “Word” of verse 1 and is a translation of the Latin “ipsum” and “ipso” (he, she, or it).

The next great English translator was William Tyndale. He was an excellent Greek scholar who had access to the Greek text of Erasmus which Wycliffe did not have. The hand of the Almighty was upon Tyndale as He used him to give us our first English translation based upon the Hebrew and Greek. His New Testament was published in 1526 and revised to its final state in 1534.

Tyndale’s translation of John 1:3-4 reads, “All things were made by **it**, and without **it** was made nothing that was made. In **it** was life, and the life was the light of men.” As you can see, Tyndale used “**it**” instead of “him.” “**It**” is a translation of the Greek “autou,” meaning him or it. What this tells us is that Tyndale did not read Messiah into the “logos” or “word” of verse 1, and he was not influenced by the Latin Vulgate or Wycliffe.

Miles Coverdale, a friend of Tyndale, gave us the first complete Bible printed in English in 1535. It was not a firsthand translation from the Hebrew and Greek, but was based on the Latin Vulgate and Tyndale’s translation. Coverdale used “him” in John 1:3-4.

In 1537, John Rogers, using the pseudonym “Thomas Matthew,” published a translation based largely on

Tyndale and Coverdale which became known as Matthew's Bible. He uses "it" in John 1:3-4.

The Great Bible followed in 1539 and was a revision of Matthew's Bible. The first edition was prepared by Miles Coverdale. For some reason Coverdale decided "it" was more correct than "him" which appeared in his 1535 version based on the Latin Vulgate and left John 1:3-4 as it was in Matthew's translation, "it" instead of "him." The Great Bible was the first authorized English version and was ordered to be placed in every church.

Under Queen Mary the printing of the English Bible ended and its use in the churches was forbidden. This gave rise to a version completed in Geneva. The Geneva Bible of 1560 was the first Bible to have numbered verses, each set off as a separate paragraph. This Bible became the "household Bible of the English-speaking nations." It held that position for about 75 years. It was Shakespeare's Bible and that of the Puritans who settled New England. Once again, the translation of John 1:3-4 follows Tyndale's example, "it" instead of "him."

Queen Elizabeth eventually reinstated the order that a copy of the Bible be placed in every church and she encouraged its reading. Since there were not enough copies of the Great Bible, the bishops themselves made a new revision known as the Bishop's Bible. It was published in 1568. It was used mostly by the clergy, not being very popular with the common people. It, too, renders John 1:3-4 using "it," not "him."

In 1582, the Roman Catholic version of the New Testament was completed and known as the Rheims New Testament. It was the result of a battle between Papists and Protestants, the former believing the Latin Vulgate to be the standard upon which all translations should be made. It was the work of Roman Catholic scholars based on the Latin. They chose to render John 1:3-4 using "him" as did the previous versions based on the Vulgate.

From that point on, many future English versions, **beginning with the King James Version of 1611**, used "him" instead of "it" in their translation of John 1:3-4.

As you can see, the following translation of John 1:3-4 is not without historic and linguistic foundation: "All things were made by it, and without it was made nothing that was made. In it was life, and the life was the light of men."

The "logos" (word) of John 1:1 means "the spoken word" or "something said (including the thought)." In that sense "word" is an "it," not a person but a thing. In other words, Yahweh spoke creation into existence. This understanding agrees perfectly with passages such as Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20 and 24, all of which begin, "And Elohim said." Yahweh spoke and it was done. Psalm 33:6, 9 says, "By the word of Yahweh were the heavens made; and all the host by the breath of his mouth...For He spoke and it was; He commanded, and it

stood fast." Not only did Yahweh speak creation into existence, but He also spoke His Son Jesus into existence: "And the word [Yahweh's spoken word] was made flesh" (John 1:14). Jesus did not become the "Word of Yahweh" until his birth as a flesh and blood male child.

To say the "logos" of John 1:1 is a reference to Messiah is to read "him" into the text. Roman Catholic scholars did this in order to support their unscriptural Trinity doctrine. If Messiah did not pre-exist as God the Son, the Trinity doctrine would collapse, since it is based upon the belief that all three members of the "Godhead" were co-eternal. However, since Messiah only pre-existed in Yahweh's plan of salvation and did not pre-exist literally, it becomes clear that the Trinity doctrine is of pagan origin, not supported by the Scriptures. ✧

The Great Christian Hope: The Resurrection

by Stan Paher

In his constant preaching, as demonstrated in 1 Corinthians 15 and in the Thessalonian correspondence, Paul clearly identified the resurrection from the grave as the ultimate and only source of hope and comfort for every saint throughout the ages. In a one-time future Resurrection Day for the faithful, the Lord Jesus Christ will descend from heaven. The dead in Christ shall rise and "be revealed with him in glory" (Col. 3:4). At the same time all living Christians will be caught up with them in the air (1 Thess. 4:13-18). "In the twinkling of an eye" the body of each covenant person will change to be an imperishable one. They will put on immortality, by being raised as spiritual, powerful, glorious, heavenly persons (1 Cor. 15:42-44, 51-54).

These marvelous events will occur "at his coming" (1 Thess. 5:23; 1 Cor. 15:23), "at his appearing at the proper time" (1 Tim. 6:14-15), at the "last day" (John 6:40) when there is a "resurrection of life" (John 5:29). So "we eagerly wait for him" (Phil. 3:20) at the "revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:5, 7, 13; Rom. 8:18-19; 1 Cor. 1:7), his "appearing" (1 Tim. 6:14; Tit. 2:13; 1 John 3:2-3), his coming (parousia) in glory to establish his Kingdom on earth.

The righteous "will be like him when he appears...at his coming" and shall see Christ "as he is" (1 John 2:28; 3:2). John would be speaking out of order by looking forward to seeing Christ "as he is" when *he returns* yet future, if the righteous dead will have known him in heaven long before his future coming. The saints will be like Christ only when they acquire glorious bodies "at the last trump" on Resurrection Day (Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Cor. 15:50-55). All who have not thus become "like Christ" will not attain to the Kingdom (see v. 50). Therefore, nobody could possibly have entered "heaven" at the time

of death but must await entrance into the Kingdom yet future when Christ appears on that glorious Day. Then for the first time all of the saved of all the ages will set eyes on Jesus, not before.

The popular scheme rehearsed and repeated at funeral services is thus most misleading. It discourages a biblical understanding of the divine program which the Bible urges us to believe!

Awkward indeed is tradition's Resurrection Day scenario, where the "souls" of the righteous allegedly descend with Jesus from heaven and simultaneously earthly bodies arise from their graves. In the popular scheme "souls" must actually go ahead of him, so they can re-enter their graves before being raised out of them! Tradition is obligated to tell us precisely how this will be done. It then reinforces this by every possible means, in spoken word, popular and formal, and in writing.

Instead and in stark contrast, Paul set the Thessalonian believers at ease about their dear departed by writing that on the yet future Resurrection Day the Lord Jesus Christ solo "will descend from heaven with a shout and the righteous dead will rise from graves to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. 4:16-17). Paul wanted us to "comfort one another with these words" (v.18).

When Jesus spoke of conditions in the Kingdom (Luke 20:34-36), he described what would prevail "at the resurrection" (Matt. 22:30) among the sons (products) of the resurrection. If death takes the saints to "heaven" at death as alleged, why does the Lord call them "sons of the resurrection"? This is altogether meaningless if the resurrection and judgment amount to nothing more than a brief interlude after a previous disembodied "heavenly" existence.

The popular view of death, judgment, reward and resurrection appears to be hopelessly confused when compared with the lucid texts of Scripture.

Repayment for good deeds is awarded "at the resurrection of the righteous" (Luke 14:14), at Christ's future coming. What favor can be bestowed if the saints had been enjoying "heaven" for centuries upon centuries before Resurrection Day? Paul hoped to attain the *resurrection* (Acts 23:6; 24:15; Phil. 3:11). This statement is false if, at death, the apostle would be awarded "heaven" and would reside there with Christ before Resurrection Day.

After Jesus ascended from earth (Acts 1:11), two angels directed the apostles' attention to the fact that he would come back again just as he had departed. (The Jehovah's Witnesses' claim that the second coming was in 1914 is evidently false.) Our Lord's awakening the saints from the grave at his future return is the hope and consoling pole star of all saints throughout the ages. But this scenario is thwarted and derailed by tradition's insistence on the faithful lodging with Jesus in heaven

during the interval between death and Resurrection Day. The popular scheme is incoherent. Many have not thought this through.

At the end of his ministry, Jesus said that he was going to prepare a future place for the disciples (John 14:2; cp. Ps. 115:16). Earlier, he had told them, "Where I am going, you cannot come" (John 13:33). He softened this statement by assuring them that he would come again and "receive them to himself" (John 14:3) so that they might be where he is. Clearly, the disciples could not come to Jesus. Rather he would come to them on Resurrection Day. What is the point of his coming again to earth if the saints possess a heavenly habitation instantly at the time of death? It is impossible for Jesus to "receive them to himself" in a place where they already would be with him! How pleased is Jesus with a scheme which makes the New Testament so confusing and inconsistent?

There would be no reason for Christ as holder of the keys of death and Hades (Rev. 1:18) to reassure John and the readers of the book of Revelation of that fact, *if* the righteous dead did not have to concern themselves with resurrection from Hades — to happen at Christ's return, and only then. There is only one way out of death and that is via resurrection of the whole man. No wonder then that David and Jesus spoke of the "sleep of death" (Ps. 13:3; John 11:11, 14). This is the real interim between death and resurrection. Sleep is a condition of unconsciousness. How crippling has been the awful effects of Platonic philosophy on the faith of the Bible. Plato and Jesus should never have been mixed. (See Joel Hemphill's excellent new book on the paralyzing effects of alien philosophy, *Glory to God in the Highest* available from Atlanta Bible College at 800-347-4261).

The quest for immortality, deathlessness forever, indestructible life, ought to be the first priority for us all as frail and mortal! Paul wrote of the Christian faith in these beautiful words. The whole point of belief in the Gospel is that God will give eternal life to "those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality" (Rom. 2:7, ESV).

We must seek that immortality which is revealed in the Gospel (2 Tim. 1:10) and which will be conferred on those who persist to the end (Matt. 24:13; Rom. 13:11). We await the gift of immortality to be bestowed only at the return of Jesus, although it may be tasted by anticipation through the spirit of God, now in this life. ✧

20th Annual Theological Conference

Thurs.-Sun., May 12-15th, 2011
Simpsonwood Conference Center
Norcross, GA

Wise Words About the Kingdom

“Believers are not building the Kingdom of God on earth today. They are snatching brands from the coming fire before the day of salvation is finished (1 Cor. 9:19; 10:33; 2 Cor. 5:11, 18-21; 6:2; Jude 23). Today the “whole world lies in wickedness” (1 John 5:19), and the Devil is its god (2 Cor. 4:4). The apostles and prophets in the early churches (as described in the book of Acts and the Epistles) did not band together to accomplish grandiose social-justice projects; they did not pursue artsy activities; they did not try to save the earth; they preached the gospel and shined as lights in this dark world by their holy lives. Christ’s Great Commission emphasizes gospel preaching [of the Kingdom] (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15; Lk. 24:46-48; Acts 1:8; 8:12).”

“The Kingdom of God: The Emerging Church vs. The Bible,” November 11, 2010, David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service

Summarizing Our Message for Our Readers and Their Friends

The idea that the Son of God, Jesus, was alive before he was born is alien to the New Testament. Such a Jesus would not really be a human being originating in the womb of his mother. The *real* Jesus is just that: a human being supernaturally (in his case) originating in his mother’s womb. This can be confirmed with certainty if you will simply read the accounts of his beginning in Matthew and Luke. Ground your understanding of who Jesus really is in these matchless accounts. You will find in Matthew and Luke no hint at all of a being who arrived from another life, who entered his mother’s womb from outside! This would not be a real “begetting” (coming into existence, Matt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35). It would be a *transformation* from one state of existence to another. This is more akin to the idea of reincarnation.

You should note that reincarnation is an odd form of “after-life” as well as an attempt to explain a previous life. A person who believes in reincarnation, coming back as someone else, really believes in someone else’s next life — not your afterlife but someone else’s after your death!

Much more beautiful and simple is the biblical view. When you die, you are dead. You are unconscious until the resurrection which wakes you up from the sleep of death. For a succinct and concise statement please read Daniel 12:2 which announces God’s amazing plan for the future. “Many of those who are currently sleeping in dust land will awake, some to the life of the age to come.” That age to come is the age of the future Kingdom of God on earth. It will begin only when Jesus returns. To

inaugurate that thousand-year Kingdom, Jesus will awaken the faithful dead of all the ages and bestow immortality, deathlessness, on them. They will then be appointed to rulership positions in the new Kingdom of God on earth. Since Satan, the fallen spirit being who now “deceives the whole world” (Rev. 12:9) will be bound at the second coming, “so that he can no longer deceive the world” (Rev. 20:3), the task of reeducating society will be much eased.

Readers of this magazine are encouraged to sound like Jesus (is this asking too much?) when talking of death. Jesus never spoke of disembodied souls “going to heaven.” He did not speak of the dying as “passing away,” i.e. moving house to heaven. He spoke very often of the resurrection which he would bring about at his future return to the earth. Only that amazing event will bring human persons out of the death state — that death which comes to us all. I have noticed that the death rate is still 100%. Jesus abolished death (have you fully taken that in?) and “brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel” of the Kingdom of God (2 Tim. 1:10). Put that one up on your fridge and meditate on it often.

Someone has vividly spoken of a “lethal absence of hope,” planning your funeral and not your future. We are to visualize our future in the Kingdom of God on earth, based on scores of hopeful Bible passages. This leads in its turn to purposeful living. ✧

New Fellowships for Inquirers after Truth

Thanks to the strenuous efforts of Robin Todd, whose aim is to put Bible searchers in touch with each other, small fellowships are now emerging in various parts of the States. They are gathering under the locally selected name of “Restoration Church of God.” You may contact Robin at robinsings4u@comcast.net

www.restorationchurchesofgod.com

The framework of their belief is that God is the one God of biblical monotheism, not the triune God of later conciliar Christianity enforced by the Emperor in 381 AD. Jesus is believed to be the virginally begotten (Matt. 1:18, 20) Son of God. The creedal basis for believing in this supernaturally begotten Son is Luke 1:35. John must not be read in a way which contradicts Matthew and Luke.

Conditional Immortality is the notion that the dead are dead until the future resurrection. The belief in a conscious existence, bodiless, before the resurrection, is rejected as a pagan addition to the faith, when it was adversely affected by Platonic philosophy and belief in the natural immortality of the soul. This happened gradually after Bible times. The belief in the “sleep of the

dead” will seem radical to some, since prayer to saints as well as the idea that the dead are really alive looking down from heaven or (presumably) writhing in agony in a never-ending hell underground, ceases to make the slightest sense. Many find comfort and relief when they see in Scripture that man is not a bipartite creature of body and immortal soul. When we die we are dead till the resurrection.

These fellowships celebrate the Lord’s supper in memory of the death of Jesus and his inauguration of the New Covenant. This is seen as a new celebration, i.e. of the *New Covenant*, and not just a repeat of the Old Testament annual Passover. The Lord’s Supper was held in Paul’s churches when the believers assembled in church, certainly not just once a year (1 Cor. 11:20). The indefinite “as often as you do it” allows for some variation in practice.

Baptism *in water*, which is necessary obedience to the clear words of Jesus (Matt. 28:19-20), is a public declaration of a Christian’s determination to believe the Gospel of the Kingdom and the things concerning Jesus (Acts 8:12). It is not an optional extra!

Once grasped, the faith must be continued, through trial, until the end (Acts 14:22). “Salvation is now nearer to us than when we first believed” (Rom. 13:11).

The premillennial view of the Kingdom of God has been basic to Abrahamic fellowships (Gal. 3:29) of this kind. The Church is of course to be international as the “true circumcision” (Phil. 3:3), the true Israel striving to walk by the canon of love (Gal. 6:16). It is fully recognized, of course, that in prophecy Paul and Jesus both spoke of a *future* national conversion (Mic. 2:12) of at least a remnant of natural Israel (the present “Israel of the flesh,” 1 Cor. 10:18). Just as Americans speak of “Paris, Kentucky” for clarity, “Paris” alone being ambiguous, so Paul spoke of the “Israel of the flesh” or “Israelites” to distinguish them from the spiritual Israel of the international Church (Gal. 6:16, Phil. 3:3; Eph. 2:11-22).

The groups now forming celebrate the Sunday resurrection (Luke 24:21), not as a transferred Sabbath, but as the suitable day (Acts 20:7) to recognize the new beginnings of the New Covenant and new creation, which is based not on the “Hagar” of the Sinai arrangement, but on the Sarah of the new constitution in Christ (2 Cor. 3; Gal. 4).

I noticed recently a final verse in Job, in the Septuagint Greek version. The resurrection promise is very old:

^{LXE} **Job 42:17** “And Job died, an old man and full of days: and it is written that he will rise again with those whom the Lord raises up. This man is described in the Syriac book as living in the land of Ausis, on the borders of Idumea and Arabia: and his name before was Jobab;

and having taken an Arabian wife, he begot a son whose name was Ennon. And he himself was the son of his father Zare, one of the sons of Esau, and of his mother Bosorrha, so that he was the fifth from Abraham. And these were the kings who reigned in Edom, which country he also ruled over: first, Balac, the son of Beor, and the name of his city was Dennaba: but after Balac, Jobab, who is called Job, and after him Asom, who was governor out of the country of Thaeman: and after him Adad, the son of Barad, who destroyed Madiam in the plain of Moab; and the name of his city was Gethaim. And his friends who came to him were Eliphaz, of the children of Esau, king of the Thaemanites, Baldad son of the Sauchaeans, Sophar king of the Minaeans.” ✧

For Your Further Reading

Reviews of *The Doctrine of the Trinity: Christianity’s Self-Inflicted Wound* at Amazon.com

***** **Simple Enough to Ring True, Scholarly Enough to Stand**, March 15, 2001

This book will probably never be read or debated in circles that would re-open a widespread doctrinal dispute. But that does not diminish its possible effect upon people.

This book should come with a warning: **WARNING: CAREFUL THOUGHT AND CONSIDERATION OF THIS MATERIAL CAN LEAD TO REJECTION.**

If individual Christians ever freed themselves from the Councils and Creeds (as well as the fear of being labeled a “heretic” by friends and relatives) they would find that this book gives them the chance to confirm what they *always* suspected: That God and His Only Begotten Son, Jesus are who the Bible clearly says they are, and that they are not the conglomeration of hundreds of years of speculation about a few difficult verses of scripture. This book gives average folks a chance to replace nonsense with sense.

This book does clearly show that plain logic and scholarly work still produce the best reading. If you want to ensure that *your* faith does not stand in man’s cunning ability to conjure up imaginative explanations, you should read this book.

***** **An exhaustive and fine toothed review all Christians need**, May 9, 2000

This book is one of the best books on the Trinity I have ever read. Finally, a book that does not seek to bash the other side, but rather show them the truth. The authors are very careful in their analysis of Scripture and put to rest the blasphemous doctrine of the Trinity. If you are a Trinitarian, this book will not offend you, it will merely show you where others have misled you, and if you do not believe in the Trinity, it will affirm what you already know. Many other works are cited, and most of all the Holy Word of Yahweh! Buy this book, you won’t regret it. ✧

Unlocking the Mind Try This on Your Friends

(from “Jesus is Still a Jew” at YouTube)

- Are you resonating with the Apostle Paul in the matter of defining God and Jesus? In a fine summary statement Paul said that there is “no God except the one God, the Father.” Then he spoke of the “one Lord Jesus” (1 Cor. 8:4-6). Have you been tricked into believing that Jesus is also the One God? If Jesus is not Lord, then neither is the Father — so the argument runs. But Paul spoke of two DIFFERENT lords: One Lord GOD and “one lord Jesus MESSIAH.” Exactly as Psalm 110:1: “The LORD speaks to my lord” — not “my Lord.” Only the first Lord is the Lord God. The second is the Lord Messiah who is not God, but *adoni*, my lord. *Adoni* (my lord) never refers to God.
- Does it matter to you as a Christian that your church may well have adopted a creed other than the one declared by Jesus to be the most important of all truths? In Mark 12:29 Jesus affirmed in conversation with a scribe the ancient proposition of Jesus’ own heritage — the unitarian creed which declares God to be “one Lord.” The famous Shema (Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29) was not a Trinitarian creed and Jesus knew nothing of a Triune God. If we are to be judged by the words of Jesus (Jn. 12:48), why do we not recite his creed?
- Has the story of Jesus been retold truthfully or has it been distorted to give us a Jesus different from the original? If we look at the original story of Jesus in Luke 1:35, we find a simple account of the reason for Jesus being Son of God. God was his Father by miracle. That matchless account was by 150 AD twisted. The Son of God became God the Son, responsible for his own conception! This distorted Jesus was built into the official creeds, as an alien GOD the SON, and so it is to this day.

Comments

“I have seen your YouTube video ‘Jesus Is Still a Jew.’ I first watched it this past summer. It was an unexpected curve ball thrown at my faith that I was unable to handle. At first I was like ‘How in the world can someone say Jesus isn’t God?’ But that was quickly replaced with ‘Wow! The Bible makes so much more sense now!’ So, thank you. You also introduced me to the Kingdom of God. I say ‘introduced,’ because it has never been so clear to me as it is now. So, thank you for that

too. I was a youth pastor for six years during my twenties. My wife and I were missionaries in Tibet for one year and Mexico for one year. And, now, I look around and don’t see a local body to call home. ‘Small fellowship in the home,’ you say? That might be our future. I have been researching the Trinity for the last four months. The other day my six-year-old son jumped up on my bed in the morning and said, ‘Dad, if Jesus is God’s Son, how can he be God too?’ I had not told my sons about my new understanding at the time. So, with both of my sons on the bed, I gave them the best answer I knew from Scripture. And, I didn’t have to wave the Trinity ‘wand of mystery’ over my answer. My sons easily understood: God is one — Jesus is God’s Son. I see a joy in you when you speak. Keep shining, brother!” — *Email*

“I was so thrilled to receive *Focus on the Kingdom* through mail for the first time. Thanks for sending me this wonderful magazine. I was born and grew up in the largest Muslim country in the world — Indonesia. My father was converted to the Seventh-Day Adventist faith and so all of his family. I was baptized by an Adventist pastor but later on I was involved in the Church of Christ. But I was never able to explain to my Muslim friends about the Trinity. I did some deep study about the Trinity but had never been satisfied with the doctrine. So I began to search through internet to find out about unitarian Christians. I discovered the Restoration Fellowship website. I read all of the articles there, and I am so happy to find the truth about Jesus as Messiah, God as the Father, and the Gospel of the kingdom.” — *Indonesia*

“We discuss your articles in our Sunday School class at Eden Valley Church of God. May God bless you as you present these truths to all of us.” — *Minnesota*

“We know how important financial support is for those who are doing the work of the gospel round the clock. We have benefitted so much from your books, newsletters, and teaching. We are glad for the good journey you had to the first One-God conference in Germany. I have begun to watch the videos posted at www.21stcr.org also. Thanks to all involved!” — *Alaska*

“I took the effort to listen to the Great Debate of Buzzard/Good and the colorful characters White/Brown. Interesting listening to the Trinitarians attempting to justify their 3 in 1 position. To use a boxing analogy, the colour corner threw a lot of punches but not many landed. A golf analogy would be they made a lot of air swings and their putting let them down, as there were three holes and they couldn’t decide which one to try and get their god in. A chess analogy would be they sacrificed their King for a bishop! Seriously, all four and the moderator did extremely well to maintain some level of ‘love’ in a very passionate debate.” — *Email*