

Focus on the Kingdom

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The Promised Land: Would You Like to Live in It and Administer the World with Jesus?

Hebrews 11:1: “Faith is being sure of what you hope for. It is being convinced about the reality of what you do not see.”

The point of this article is to make clear to you the content of **Christian hope** and your part in the future history of the world. The future is often described foggily, vaguely and nebulously as the “consummation”! Or “the afterlife.” Or worse, it is portrayed as having disembodied life “in heaven” when you die. This is not the Christian hope, and conveys almost no Bible information about your future and the future of the world. Thus faith is undermined. Notice that Paul said that faith and love **are based on, rooted in hope** (Col. 1:4-5). Christians are to be certain and clear about “the reward of the inheritance” (Col. 3:24).

I believe that many Bible readers cannot define the content of hope. The energy of the spirit in their lives is correspondingly diminished, since the mind of God and Jesus in regard to the destiny of the believer is thwarted.

Jesus speaks of the reward of the faithful as **receiving “authority to rule the nations”** (Rev. 2:26-28), and receiving “the morning star,” which perhaps refers to the glorified appearance of the resurrected faithful whose “faces will shine like the sun in its strength in their Father’s Kingdom,” as Jesus promised in Matthew 13:43, echoing the promise of resurrection life in Daniel 12:3, where the resurrected faithful will “shine like the stars and the brightness of the firmament.”

Here is a major Bible teaching. These promises are based on the **Abrahamic land promise** (Gen. 12, 13, 15, 17, 28:4, etc.), which Abraham and all the faithful will receive and implement when they are raised from the dead at the return of Jesus (Luke 13:28; Matt. 8:11-12).

The history of the Jewish people, as is well known, begins with Abraham in Genesis 12. God made a new start (after 11 chapters of human disaster and sin) when he selected Abraham and his wife Sarah. Abraham is also of the greatest possible significance to **Christian believers in Jesus as the Messiah**. Paul loved the story of Abraham, and he saw it as the great key to understanding the Gospel-message of faith in Jesus, in the Gospel as Jesus preached it — about the Kingdom of God (Luke 4:43; Mark 1:14-15). So Abraham and his story and his faith-walk with the One God are the basis of

the true Christian faith. Paul in his impassioned appeal to the Galatians declared, “**the Gospel was preached ahead of time to Abraham**” (Gal. 3:8). Christians have Abraham as their spiritual father and they are to “walk in the steps of our father Abraham,” “**the believer**” (Rom. 4:12; Gal. 3:9). But are you hearing that Gospel as defined by what Abraham was invited to believe and do? (the “obedience of faith,” Rom. 1:5; 16:26).

Is the fact that the Gospel was known to Abraham clear to you from the sermons you are exposed to? We should be constantly vigilant to ensure that we are being properly nourished, fed spiritually on the true Gospel. Counterfeits are prevalent, and only an “analytical” approach to what we hear will prevent our being taken in by a partial gospel, deprived of its vital energy (1 Thess. 2:13: “The Gospel-word is at work with energy in you”). A depleted or “washed out” Gospel, emptied of vital nutrients, is doing you harm. False ideas and teachings are poison to our spiritual life.

Paul calls Abraham the spiritual “father of the faithful” (Rom. 4:16), the international true church, the “Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:3). That means that Abraham’s faith is the Christian faith in advance. “We are to be of **“the faith of Abraham”** (Rom. 4:16). Paul puts this significant insight in these words: “The Gospel was preached ahead of time to Abraham” (Gal. 3:8). It follows logically that all who are seeking genuine faith in Jesus and his saving Gospel will be intent on understanding the Gospel as preached to Abraham.

You can remember the substance of the Gospel as preached to Abraham like this (teach your children an easy summary): Abraham was invited to give up his natural and national ties, pull up stakes, obey God unconditionally, and go in simple faith (Gen. 12:1-4). The results of his faith in the One God, his blessings, would be **progeny, prosperity, and property** — three “P’s.” By progeny we mean a child to be born despite indications to the contrary (Sarah was old), and multitudes of spiritual children, descendants, drawn from all nations. The progeny would culminate in the one “promised” seed-descendant, who is Jesus Messiah (Gal. 3:16).

By **prosperity** we mean blessing not necessarily in terms of finance (it may include this), but a successful, obedient walk guided by God (“the obedience of faith,” Rom. 1:5; 16:26). By **property** we mean the all-important promise of **Land/Earth**. The **land promise** refers to this planet earth, which will, at the return of

Jesus, be renewed and restored under the perfect government of the Messiah Jesus (see Acts 1:6; 3:21; Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:28-30, Rev. 5:10; Rev. 20, etc). All the prophets spoke of this amazing future for the world when Jesus and the saints are in charge (Dan. 7:14, 18, 22, 27).

It is the **land promise** which has, amazingly, disappeared from contemporary presentations of the Gospel! The **land promise** is a fundamental element in the *content* of Christian hope. It was a basic proposition in the promises offered to Abraham — the Gospel (Gal. 3:8). Abraham's willingness to believe the content of God's promises to him won him the highly desirable approval of God. He was reckoned by God as being in right standing with God. This is sometimes called being "justified by faith" (Rom. 4:3). What that means is that Abraham *gained the approval of God*, was reckoned by God to be right rather than wrong, pleasing to God, no longer an enemy of God, no longer under the wrath of God (see John 3:36). Believing in the biblical hope based on the land promise is crucial to your spiritual outlook. Jesus said this: "Blessed are the meek; they are going to have the earth (or land) as their inheritance" (Matt. 5:5). This is the property promise made to Abraham. Jesus was also the recipient of that promise (Gal. 3:16). Paul declared, "the promise to Abraham was that he would be heir of the world" (Rom. 4:13). Heir of the world? Do you understand what this means for you as a follower of Jesus and of the faith of Abraham?

By a longstanding miracle of misunderstanding, the word "earth" or "land" (Matt. 5:5) has been stolen from believers and replaced by a vague "heaven" when you die. The biblical goal is not "heaven when you die," but the inheritance of the earth/land when you are resurrected from death at the future arrival of Jesus (the Parousia). If you survive until that time of Jesus' arrival, then you will receive the gift of the land in that future (the "age to come") which will begin when Jesus comes back. We repeat: Paul defined the promise to Abraham as: "The promise to Abraham that he would be heir of the world" (Rom. 4:13).

Jesus (following Dan. 12:2) referred to this future time as **the age to come**. It is the new age of world history which will begin at the future return of Jesus (the Parousia). This will definitely not be "the end of time" or "the end of history." It will be the new age of Jesus' personal government with the saints on a renewed earth (Isa. 65:17ff; 66:22; Dan. 7:18, 22, 27). It will be the era of world affairs in which the present chaos of war and international conflict and the mass of troubles which now afflict society will come to an end. The life to be gained at that time will be immortality, living forever, becoming indestructible. It is called in Scripture "the life of the age to come." It is so defined in Daniel 12:2, a passage in

which all believers should take delight: "Many of those who are currently sleeping in dust-land [that tells you what all the dead are currently doing, and where they are doing it] will awake to **the life of the age to come**." Some forty times this precious information comes into the NT as "eternal life," properly translated as "**the life of the age to come**." "Eternal life" is too vague and imprecise. "The life of the age to come," i.e., life in the future Kingdom of God on earth, is the proper meaning of the original.

If you want to sound like Jesus and Paul and the Bible, then drop the "heaven" language and speak with Jesus of "the life of the age to come," or "the coming Kingdom of God." True believers in Scripture "inherit the Kingdom" or, in equivalent words, "inherit the land/earth" (Matt. 5:5, Jesus quoting Ps. 37, where inheriting the land is repeated 6 times!). This takes us directly back to the promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12, 13, 15 and 17; 22:15-18; 28:4, and many other passages. Paul phrased it like this: "the promise to Abraham that he would inherit the world" (Rom. 4:13).

You might ask: How do we move from the promise of the *land* in Genesis to the promise of the *world*? The answer is easy. Psalm 2 and other passages had given assurance to the faithful that **the Messiah would inherit not only the land but nothing less than a worldwide possession**: "I will give you the nations to the uttermost parts of the earth" (Ps. 2:8). Psalm 2 is a brilliant summary of the whole Messianic plan for the world to come into submission to Jesus, the Messiah, and God, the Father, who is the One God of Israel and of Jesus. He is the One God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (certainly not a triune God!).

Christians are co-heirs of the future Kingdom with the Messiah (Rom. 8:17), and they will inherit the same promises as does Jesus, based on the oath-bound covenants made with Abraham (Gen. 12, 13, 15, 17; 22:15-18; 28:4, etc) and David (2 Samuel 7; Ps. 72; 89). Christian faith is also the faith of Abraham and response to the same promises as God made to him.

This is simply to say that if one claims, as Jesus did, to be the promised Messiah (Matt. 16:16-18), you are claiming to be God's unique human agent to succeed where Adam failed, and as the second Adam to rule the world from the throne of David in Israel. The whole plan of salvation for us and the world is based on the bedrock promises to Abraham, as well as the later promises made to David (2 Sam. 7; 1 Chron. 17). If we do not understand this, we fail to grasp the biblical plot and plan from start to finish. In popular thinking the false prospect of "heaven at death" has dramatically diverted Bible readers from the heart of the biblical story. Faith has been weakened and obscured. God's and Jesus' vision for the

world and the earth is for international peace and disarmament and the cessation of all war (Isa. 2:2-4).

The Bible is an essentially simple document, to be read in the light of the fact that language is meant to be understood and not explained away! The Hebraic concepts (Jesus was a Jew!) are “concrete” and “real,” not vague and philosophical. But churches began soon after NT times to “vaporize” that clear language, dissolving easy concepts like “Kingdom” and “throne.” Instead of a territorial meaning for “earth” and “land,” a so-called “spiritual” meaning (it sounded appealing!) was attached to them. The word “spiritual” can be most misleading if it results in losing the plain meaning of words. When Jesus promised (as had been promised to Abraham) that the earth/land was to be the reward of the faithful (Matt. 5:5, quoting Ps. 37), he really meant it! It is for us to believe Jesus as Gospel!

Much Bible study and preaching constantly leaves out those sayings of Jesus which add a realistic, clear meaning to the future. Matthew 19:28 would be a classic example. Have a look at the text index of many books on the Bible, and you will be surprised to see no comment on Matthew 19:28. In that passage, a fascinating question was put by Peter to Jesus. Peter’s question was very genuine, reasonable and clear: “What are we going to get as a result of our wholehearted following of you and your Messianic mission?” “What can we expect as our reward?”

The answer was as direct and clear as the question: “Let me tell you, on the highest authority,” Jesus said, “in the future rebirth of the world, you who have followed me will be sitting on twelve thrones to govern the twelve tribes of Israel.” Matthew 25:31 clarifies the easy fact that the future age would be inaugurated by the **future arrival of Jesus in glory and power**. This is exactly the meaning of our request in the Lord’s prayer that “Your Kingdom may come; Your will be done **on earth**.”

Another much underpublicized passage is Acts 1:6-7. We learn first that Jesus had spent nearly 6 weeks instructing and lecturing his students (disciples) on the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:3). This information prompted the most reasonable and informed question: “Lord,” they asked, “is it now time for you to restore the Kingdom to Israel?”

Some commentary, not understanding the Christian Gospel, nor the teaching of Jesus, has disparaged the disciples’ question as ill-informed and too “political”! This however disparages the teacher, Jesus, as well as his students. Jesus did not rebuke them for any misunderstanding! He did not doubt that the future will see the restoration of national Israel and their return, *in faith* (not now, when Israel has *not* accepted their Messiah). Jesus merely said that the time periods which had to elapse before that grand event were not known.

Indeed, we still do not know the chronological periods involved. In Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 (based on Daniel) Jesus did however lay out a clear sequence of events: Abomination of Desolation, Great Tribulation, cosmic signs, which will precede his single future arrival (Parousia). There is no **pre**-tribulation coming of Jesus. Jesus will come back once, after the time of the future Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21-29; Dan. 12:1).

John Calvin was so upset by Jesus’ disciples’ question in Acts 1:6 that he protested that there are **more errors than words in that verse!** The error was of course Calvin’s who did not understand the nature of the land/earth promises made to Abraham and to Jesus! To expect a renewed earth and a renewed political arrangement with Jesus and the resurrected apostles in charge was precisely what the Christian Gospel had foreseen, following the prophets of the OT and Jesus’ confirmation of the promises made to the patriarchs. Romans 15:8 declares explicitly that Jesus came to confirm the promises made to Abraham! Land, prosperity and many spiritual descendants, culminating in the Messiah.

“Heaven” at death was never promised to believers, but to listen to popular Christian language or a funeral sermon, one is impressed with the constantly repeated reference to “heaven” as the Christian reward. Matthew 19:28 and Luke 22:28-30, which promise a new government on earth with Jesus as President and King — the covenanted outcome of the Christian hope — get no mention!

Luther in his commentary on Romans simply leaves out the words in Romans 4:13 which state that Abraham “would be heir of the world”! This meant losing the central and precious truth that the land, earth and world are the inheritance promised as the destiny of believers! It meant leaving out the land/Kingdom promise which is the basis of the Gospel. Yes, the sacrificial death of Jesus was maintained, but that is not the *whole* Gospel!

What was lost was the momentous statement of Jeremiah 27:5: “With my great power and outstretched arm I made the earth and its people and the animals that are on it, and I give it to anyone I please.” Indeed as Psalm 115:16 states, “God has given the earth to man.” This is the basis of Christian destiny and hope. So much for the confusing and diverting language about “heaven,” and as Billy Graham wrote, “polishing rainbows and preparing heavenly dishes.”

From one of the giants of OT commentary, Delitzsch: “The land throughout Psalm 37 is the promised possession, the land of Yahweh’s presence, which has not merely a glorious past, but also **a future rich in promises; and will finally more perfectly than under Joshua become the inheritance of the true Israel**... This promise also runs in the mouth of the Preacher on the

Mount (Matt. 5:5), following exactly Ps. 37:11. Meekness, which is content with God and renounces all earthly stays, will at length become the inheritor of **the land**, yes, of the earth.”¹

Paul makes a staggeringly significant statement in Romans 4:13. He speaks of “the promise to Abraham that he would be heir of the world.” This is the Gospel hope on which the NT is based. Jews at the time of Jesus knew well that the promise to Abraham and his seed involved inheriting the whole world! The book of Wisdom (44:21), reflecting the Bible, has this to say: “God assured Abraham by an oath that He would cause them to inherit from sea to sea.” Jewish commentary on Exodus 14:31 notes that “you find that our father Abraham became heir of this and **the coming world** simply by merit of the faith by which he believed the LORD, as it is written: ‘He believed the LORD and He counted it to him for righteousness’” (*Mekilta*, 40b).

Paul agreed, and as a Christian preacher of the Gospel makes the land/world promise to Abraham (Rom. 4:13) the center of Christian hope, just as Jesus had with his celebrated citation of Psalm 37:11: “Blessed are the meek; they will have the land/earth as their inheritance.” Psalm 2:8-9 records the promise of God to the Messiah: “Ask of me. I will make the nations your inheritance and the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter.” The same promise is applied by Jesus in Revelation 2:26-27 to the saints — a very far cry from harp-strumming activity in heaven!

The Abrahamic, Messianic promise of the land of Canaan was thus extended to the whole world. Micah 5:2 announced the coming of the Messiah as “ruler over Israel,” and “his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth” (Micah 5:4). This information is repeated in the Gospel of the Kingdom, so that the land promise to Abraham becomes the Kingdom of God promise in Christianity and the Christian Gospel. Jesus promises this reward to the saints at Thyatira, provided that they hold fast “until I come”: “I will give you authority over the nations, and you will shepherd them with a rod of iron, as vessels of clay are broken in pieces, the same authority which I received from God” (Rev. 2:25-27). Here Jesus and the saints are co-heirs of the land/Kingdom/world as promised also to Abraham (Rom. 4:13).

Abraham is listed among all the other heroes of faith in Hebrews 11. That chapter lists the property promise of inheritance of “the land of the promise” and then the promise of a seed, Christ, and the promise of the resurrection of Jesus as typified in the “resurrection” (figuratively) of Isaac from death (Heb. 11:17-19). Hebrews 11:8-10 informs us that Abraham lived in the land of the promise (the promised land) as an alien and

along with all the other faithful **never received the promises** but died, “not having received them” (Heb. 11:13, 39). This means of course that only by future resurrection will the heroes of the faith inherit the amazing promises which God had made to them.

As one commentator notes: “Abraham’s trust in the promise of Gen. 15 called down the divine blessing on Abraham, that he would have a son and descendants as innumerable as the stars. The words have for Paul in Rom. 4:13 Messianic overtones; the promise was that through one of these descendants, the whole earth would be blessed, and through him Abraham’s true seed [note that true Christians are now the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29)] would inherit worldwide dominion [this is the inheritance of the Kingdom promised in the NT].”²

The key to our subject is that “if you are a Christian, you are Abraham’s seed and heir to **the promise** made to Abraham that he would inherit the world” (combining Gal. 3:29 and Rom. 4:13). But how much of this is put to potential converts today? Hasn’t the Gospel been shrunk to a message only about personal forgiveness?

The story of Abraham began when the God of Israel told him to leave his homeland, promising Abraham and his descendants a new home in the land of Canaan (Gen. 12). This is the land now known as Israel, named after Abraham’s grandson, whose natural descendants are the Jewish people. The land is often referred to as the promised land because of God’s repeated promise (Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8) to give the land to the descendants (“seed”) of Abraham and to Abraham himself. Acts 7:5: “God **did not give Abraham a square foot of the land**, but He promised to give it to Abraham and to his seed after him.”

The essence of the Christian faith is encapsulated in this verse: “Abram believed the LORD, and the LORD counted him as righteous because of his faith” (Gen. 15:6, NLT). Do you have that faith? What if the promises made to Abraham are not put before the potential convert? Would he/she then not be invited into the faith with inadequate information? Would this not amount to a form of deception, if belief in one of the promises to Abraham — progeny, property and prosperity — was omitted from invitations to salvation by faith?

Dr. Rice, a learned American writer who had been trained in a postmillennial view but gave it up for premillennialism, was aware of the veil which much preaching draws over the central truth of the coming Kingdom of God on earth: “Preachers and Bible teachers have fallen into an evil way of spiritualizing the Word of God, explaining away the promises and making the Bible mean what it does not say. In many editions of the Bible, men have defiled the Gospel message with their opinions

¹*Commentary on Psalms*, pp. 11, 13.

²Matthew Black, *New Century Bible on Romans*, p. 78.

which explain away the literal meaning of the inspired Book...When God prophesies good to Jerusalem or to Mount Zion, or predicts the future of Mount Zion, many 'learned' teachers say that God did not mean what He said, but referred to 'heaven.' They are wrong [and here he comes on strong!], utterly, foolishly presumptuously wrong! The Bible says what it means and means what it says. God has an eternal plan connected with the city of Jerusalem in Palestine, which is so plainly foretold that honest Bible students must accept it. Mount Zion is the south-west hill of Jerusalem, the older and higher part of the city; it is often called the city of David. The term Mount Zion is often used also for the whole city of Jerusalem."³

The fundamental truth about Christian hope and destiny is well described by James Dunn's comments on Romans 4:13: "Paul understands all who believe to be the seed of Abraham...The idea of inheritance was a fundamental part of Jewish [now Christian!] understanding of their covenant relationship with God, above all, indeed almost exclusively, in connection with **the land — the land of Canaan**, theirs by right of inheritance as promised to Abraham...Already before Paul the concept of land had been broadened out from Canaan to embrace the whole earth (Sir. 44:21; Jubilees 17:3; 22:14; 32:19; I Enoch 5:7; Ezra 6:59: 'the world to come'; II Apoc. Baruch 14:13; 51:3). Rom. 4:13 is a good example of the extent to which Paul's own thinking reflects ideas which were widespread in other strands of Jewish theology [which are also Christian theology, or ought to be!], cp. Matt. 5:5; Heb. 1:2. Paul takes up the enlarged form of the promise...The blessing promised to Abraham and his seed (including the nations) is the restoration of God's created order, of Man to his Adamic status as steward of the rest of God's creation...Not least of importance in the concept of sonship is that it links into the theme of inheritance...The importance of the inheritance theme is twofold. As will quickly become clear, it carries a clear implication of the 'not yet.' Believers are now heirs who have not yet entered into their full inheritance...Central to Jewish self-understanding was the conviction that Israel was the Lord's inheritance, the people chosen out of all the nations of the earth to be His own (Deut. 32:9).

"Integral to that national faith was the conviction that God had given Israel the inheritance of Palestine, the promised land. It is this axiom which Paul evokes and applies to the new Christian movement as a whole, Gentiles as well as Jews. *They* are the heirs of God; Israel's special relationship with God has been extended to all who are in Christ. And the promise of the land has been transformed into the promise of the Kingdom; the

thought of Christian inheritance as inheritance of the Kingdom was evidently well enough established in the churches known to Paul [it was the Gospel!], so that he had no need to be more explicit...That inheritance of the Kingdom...is something still awaited by believers...Paul cuts to the heart of his people's covenant faith. Paul had no doubt the Gospel he proclaimed was a continuation and fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham."⁴ "Abraham's faith was the same as the justifying faith of Christians."⁵ Christians therefore are heirs to **the land, the earth or the world!** Inheritance of "heaven" is nowhere promised to believers!

World history culminates in a world government to be in the hands of Jesus and the saints on a renewed earth! Daniel 7:14, 18, 22, 27 and a mass of verses describe this happy future offered by the Christian Gospel. A gigantic diversion and obscuring of hope occurred when churches began to speak of "heaven" and harp-playing in a location far from the earth. This foggy concept took over the thinking of church members. They became unsympathetic through mis-education to the passionate and engaging hope offered by the Bible.

Do reread and ponder Paul's amazing description of salvation through "the faith of Abraham" in Romans 4 and Galatians 3. You will find there the key to intelligent Bible study. Abraham is not some distant Jewish figure unrelated to Christian faith. For 100 years (Abraham was called at 75 and died at 175) God worked with Abraham and his family. He models for us a lifetime of faithful obedience to God's promises, and Jesus is the one to whom and of whom the promises were given. Without this basis in "Abrahamic faith" the NT is detached from its roots in the Hebrew Bible. The promise given to Abraham "that he would be heir of the world" (Rom. 4:13) was repeated by Jesus when he offered the meek the land (Matt. 5:5). The time is coming when the saints "take over the Kingdom" (Dan. 7:22) and with Jesus bring about the peaceful conditions for which we all long!

In Scripture the promise of Jesus (Matt. 5:5) that the faithful will inherit the earth was plain and clear! Today the word "earth/land" has ceased to have its real meaning in the minds of many. Today no one misunderstands that the winner of the race at the Olympics gets the gold medal; he does not get a free trip to Disneyland!✧

An interesting article on the thousand-year reign of Christ can be found at:
www.aramnaharaim.org/English/thousand_years.htm

³*The Coming Kingdom of Christ*, p. 95.

⁴*Commentary on Romans* 1-8, pp. 212, 213, 462, 234.

⁵*Pulpit Commentary on Romans*, p. 110.

The Greatest Career Opportunity of All Time — for You!

Stop and listen! We have some spectacularly good news for you and your family. Some time in the future, Jesus of Nazareth is going to become the world's first successful super-ruler. He will totally reorganize human society, and produce the peace on earth which we all long for. Under Jesus' government, the Kingdom of God, who is the Father of Jesus (Luke 1:35), there will be no more wars, no more famine; no more murder, rape or theft; no more alcoholism and depression; no more divorce, no more poverty, no more child abuse. Does this sound too good to be true? God, the Creator of all things, has personally promised that a Golden Age for all mankind *will* come. He has been promising it since He first placed man on our earth. The arrival of that era of glorious peace and prosperity is guaranteed.

What you have just been told is the heart of the Christian Gospel. Very probably you have not heard it before. You have heard a "reduced" Gospel about "going to heaven when you die." Nearly 2,000 years ago, Jesus came to announce the dramatically important good news concerning the future divine government on earth. He is coming back to take up his office as world super-ruler — and he is now recruiting men and women to assist him in the administration of his coming Kingdom. He wants you to be a ruler in that Kingdom. He wants us to train now under his supervision for royal office in that coming Kingdom (Matt. 19:28; 1 Cor. 6:2; Dan. 7:18, 22, 27; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 5:10; Ps. 37:11, 29: "inherit the earth and live in it forever," and many passages).

What a tragedy if you were to allow this greatest of all career opportunities to pass you by. You can so easily neglect the information you have just been given. But don't do it. Do yourself and your family a favor. Check up on the facts. We might just have given you a major piece of Truth you have never heard!

Act now! Find out more about the Christian Gospel/Good News. Peace is coming. And you can help to bring it about. ✧

Assaulting the Scripture

Commentary sometimes violently inserts its own theology into the pages of the Bible. A good example is below. Having admitted that Gabriel in Luke 1:35 spelled out the precise reason for calling Jesus "the Son of God," the commentator then accuses Gabriel of giving only partial information! John 1:1 is unfairly used to *contradict* Luke and Gabriel. John spoke of the "word," not "Word" or "Son" as existing from the beginning. Luke and Gabriel had already given an explicit definition of the Son: he was procreated by miracle in

time, in history, some 2000 years ago. Gabriel and Luke contradict the much later church tradition that the Son of God had no beginning in time! The KJV actually inserted the word "also" into the text to provide *another reason* for Jesus being Son of God! Luke gave the sole reason for Jesus being Son of God.

Here is the incriminating comment on Luke 1:35: "The words appear to rest the title, 'Son of God,' rather on the supernatural birth than on the eternal pre-existence of the Son as the Word that was 'in the beginning with God and was God' (John 1:1), and we may accept the fact that the message of the angel was so far **a partial, not a complete, revelation** of the mystery of the Incarnation. It gave a sufficient reason for the name which should be given to the son of Mary, and more was not then required."⁶

Luke did not believe in the Incarnation of a previously existing eternal Son of God. ✧

An Example of Typology

The Bible shows that God works in repeated patterns. This is known as typology. The idea is not difficult. For example the experience of Israel in the wilderness was a "type" or pattern of our experience as believers in the present "wilderness" of the present evil world system, prior to our later entering the future Kingdom of God on earth when Jesus returns. Paul spoke of the "rock" which followed the Israelites and called it "Christ." The rock was a "type" of Christ. He spoke in the same passage of the Israelites being "baptized in a cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. 10:1-13). Joshua, whose name is the same as Jesus, led the people into the land, as will Jesus when the Kingdom is fully revealed at his return.

Another example: Abigail (1 Sam. 25), who later married David, King of Israel, is a type of the Church who will "marry" the Messiah at his return. The Messiah will descend and the saints will go out to meet him as he descends to the earth (1 Thess. 4:13-18), and accompany the royal bridegroom to the earth. Abigail, as a "type" of the Church, went out to meet David as he descended (1 Sam. 25:20, 32). David is of course a "type" of the Messiah Jesus. The Church as bride will go out to meet him as he descends to the earth.

SAVE THE DATE!

2015 Theological Conference

April 30-May 3, 2015

Calvin Center, Hampton, GA

Details to come in January *Focus*.

⁶ *Ellicott's Commentary*, Vol. 5-6, p. 247.

An Idea for Evangelism from Robin Todd

Hello, everyone. Here is a different idea for evangelism you might not have considered previously.

Many of you may not know that I have several music CDs of my own original music available. One of the songs on one of the CDs is called "His Kingdom is Coming." There are songs on the other CDs which also contain Biblical truth worth sharing. What I am suggesting is that this song, and perhaps other songs, might be worth gifting to your friends, acquaintances, and families, in order to share the Good News of God's coming Kingdom to this earth. Music can be a unique, non-invasive, and easy way of sharing the Gospel with those in your circle of influence.

You might consider these songs as valuable tools for evangelism when other forms of evangelism have been outside your personal comfort zone, or have been somewhat ineffective. You can order my CDs by clicking on the "Music" link at www.kingdomheart.org. There are two or three samples for you to listen to and an easy order/payment method using a credit card and the PayPal feature.

Working While We Wait,
Robin Todd
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Comments

"I want to thank you so much for each month's edition of *Focus on the Kingdom*. The clarity which provides a deeper and more thorough understanding of the Bible is most helpful and much appreciated. Thanks to you and the other contributors."

"I wanted to thank you up there in Atlanta for the Abrahamic videos you have been posting recently. I am doing better now; my wife has come to acknowledge the true gospel finally, after sharing with her patiently. My Christian friends are listening to me now and comparing the things I share with the tremendously confusing stuff they get in church. I have recently watched your last video on the Abrahamic covenant, very educational and inspiring. You don't know how I have wished to go to an annual conference...I know some day I might." — *Colombia*

"Thank you for another inspiring message on 'Governing in the Kingdom' on YouTube. This message has a quickening, energetic, 'Yes' effect on my heart. A spiritually exciting feeling. Makes me feel like I can't wait for that time and Kingdom to come." — *South Africa*

"We receive your monthly *Focus on the Kingdom* regularly and sincerely offer our heartfelt thanks for the

nice and powerful message. I deeply appreciate your wonderful ministries." — *India*

"Loving Calvary greetings to you and to your blessed *Focus on the Kingdom* team/family in the precious name of our loving Redeemer and coming king the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to use this medium to express my continual debt of appreciation to you once again for all your caring concern, love and encouragement and support and investment in my Christian walk and sound understanding of God's truth and plan of salvation through your regular newsletters and your sent valuable books. I am most grateful to receive today the November 2014 issue of the *Focus on the Kingdom* newsletter. May the Lord continue to bless you and all contributors to the newsletters and the Theological Conference. Last Thursday was Thanksgiving Day in the United States. I still feel the need to let you know once again that I am most grateful to you for all you are doing for me. Thank you most sincerely for all your real, tangible love and care for me. You are indeed a big blessing to me ever since I got to know you through the *Focus on the Kingdom* newsletter. Honestly, you are truly a big supporter and pillar of strength in my walk with God through all that you graciously send me at great personal expense. Your significant input and contribution are ever on my mind. And I pray that the Lord will surely remember all your labour of love and expense for my care. You are more than a brother in the Lord to me — you have demonstrated and proved to me beyond every doubt that you are indeed a lovely father figure in the faith to me. For this I am greatly honored and privileged." — *Nigeria*

"Some days back I was given this booklet called *The Amazing Aims and Claims of Jesus* on the street here in Nairobi, Kenya. Thank you for coming into my life with this booklet at this moment." — *Kenya*

"I want to express my appreciation for the very insightful articles at focusonthekingdom.org. The nature of the Kingdom and it being the focal point of the Gospel is immensely edifying. I forwarded the PDF to several born-again friends of mine who were humbled to read 'Are They Telling You the Truth about the Gospel?' They all agreed that they were guilty of mindlessly regurgitating clauses 1 and 2: 'Jesus died for our sins. Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to the Father.' Thanks for taking the time to elucidate the Kingdom." — *email*

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