

# Focus on the Kingdom

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Anthony Buzzard, editor

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## 25th Theological Conference

April 28-May 1, 2016  
Calvin Center, Hampton, GA

### REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 8, 2016

Please join us for our annual gathering of passionate Kingdom and biblical unitarian believers. We will have a full schedule of speakers, as well as your “faith stories.” We really need you to be there as a blessing for us all. The Abrahamic promise is that the seed of Abraham would not only be blessed but be a blessing.

#### Conference rates per person—inc. 3 nights, 9 meals

	Single	Double (per person)
<b>Hotel-style room</b> (2 beds with private bath, sheets/towels)	\$415	\$260
<b>Bunkbed room</b> (6 per room with bath) <i>We can assign roommates</i>	\$185 per person +\$15 for sheets and towels or bring your own	

Please note that there are **only 24 hotel-style rooms available**, so please register early. First come, first served! There are also hotels 15 minutes away by car (see list at [theologicalconference.org](http://theologicalconference.org)). If not staying at Calvin Center, the conference price including meals (except breakfasts) is **\$85 per person**.

Three ways to register:

1. Online at [theologicalconference.org](http://theologicalconference.org)
2. Mail the form on the back page
3. Call Atlanta Bible College at 800-347-4261

#### Airport Transportation

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

Airport to Calvin Center		
Thurs. April 28	2:00 pm	4:00 pm
Calvin Center to Airport		
Sun. May 1	1:00 pm	

Please arrange your arrival time on Thursday early enough to catch one of the two shuttle runs. On Sunday, May 1 we will provide **only 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 pm.

The conference begins with registration at 4 pm on Thursday and ends with lunch on Sunday. Driving directions to Calvin Center are at [calvincenter.org](http://calvincenter.org). The address is 13550 Woolsey Rd., Hampton, GA 30228.

## Christian Destiny

There is a vitally important dimension and component of the Abrahamic Kingdom Gospel message to which we have not paid, I think, anything like the attention which the Bible gives it. It is the issue of Christian hope and reward. I mention just a handful of texts on this large subject. Truth has been hiding behind obfuscating translation, or failure to preach and teach the fullness of Scripture (many churchgoers are exposed to a tiny fraction of the 31,102 verses in the Bible). We have been so focused on our inadequacy, that we have not allowed God and Jesus to have their say about what the purpose of salvation is, beyond of course the gigantic subject of **gaining immortality** at the future single Parousia (Second Coming) of Jesus (post-tribulation, 1 Cor. 15:23). (There is no PRE-Tribulation rapture but there is certainly a future Great Tribulation, Dan 12:1; Matt. 24:21.)

Jesus is utterly straightforward, real and “non-pious” in his answer to Peter about what the Apostles would get out of following Jesus as Messiah. “We have suffered with you at the hands of the hostile establishment. What is in it for us?” (see Matt. 19:27). First recall Jesus (NET on Matt. 11:11): “The new era is to be so great that the lowest member of it (*the one who is least in the Kingdom of God*) is greater than the greatest one of the previous era.” To be in the Kingdom is to be greater than the greatest human person of the present age! “David became greater and greater because God was with him” (2 Sam. 5:10). Jesus was to be great (Luke 1:32-33) and of his Davidic Kingdom there will no end. Greatness is something to be desired, **on God’s terms of course**. “Humility comes before honor” (Prov. 18:12).

#### Have we taken to heart the Messianic promises for our future?

Jesus certainly did not give a falsely spiritual, phony answer to the Apostles’ question in Matthew 19:27. He could have talked about just serving God out of love, with no expectation, and left it at that. But he does not! Rather he calls upon a massive theme of the whole Bible: “In the new age when the world is reborn, you who have followed me will be promoted to sit on 12 thrones, to administer the 12 tribes of Israel” (Matt. 19:28). This was echoed by Paul with indignation and frustration that his church did not understand a very simple and basic truth: “Do you not know that the saints are to manage the world?” (1 Cor. 6:2, Moffatt). This is exactly in keeping

with Revelation 1:5-6; **2:26-27**; 3:21; 5:10 (fudged and confused in the KJV) and 20:1-6, that world dominion is going to be in the hands of Jesus and also in the hands of the saints. Do you want to be *like Jesus*? Then listen to this: “To him who overcomes and keeps my works to the end, I will give him power over the nations to rule them with a rod of iron and shatter them like clay vessels, **just as** my Father gave me that same authority” (Rev. 2:26-27).

All this is based on the massively important 2<sup>nd</sup> Psalm, really the head and chief psalm (along with Ps. 110), where **power over the nations** to discipline them strongly will be given to the Messiah whose Kingdom authority will stretch to the ends of the earth (cp. Mic. 5:4-6). Psalm 2 offers us a brilliant scene from the future, when Jesus is installed in Jerusalem and people will be strongly advised to submit to him, and the saints. There are surviving people here (“few people left,” Isa. 24:6, alas, forged, eliminated by Ellen White)<sup>1</sup> still with a chance to repent and populate the new world of the Kingdom as mortals. Psalm 2:9 about the rulership over the nations is alluded to no less than 3 times in Revelation (2:26-27; 12:5 and 19:15). It is a key verse for Jesus and thus for us.

This sounds like a typical day in the coming Kingdom:

“But the just Lord is in the midst of Jerusalem, and he will never do an unjust thing: morning by morning he will bring out his judgment to the light, and it is not hidden, and he knows no injustice by extortion, nor injustice in strife” (Zeph. 3:5 LXA).

Now to 1 Peter 1:7, Daniel 7:27, and Deuteronomy 26:19 which have been hiding.

But first this. Have we heard it right?

**Romans 2:7 (NAS):** “**To those who by perseverance in doing good, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life [= the Life of the age to come].**”

**1 Peter 1:7**, New Living Translation: “These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold — though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.”

Translators Translation: “Gold perishes even though it has been through the refiner’s fire. When your faith has

been proved it is of much greater value than that, for it will bring you praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

Contemporary English Version: “This is necessary so that your faith may be found genuine. (Your faith is more valuable than gold, which will be destroyed even though it is itself tested by fire.) Your genuine faith will result in **praise, glory, and honor for you** when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

Where did Peter and Paul get this?

**Deuteronomy 26:18-19**, English Standard Version: “And the LORD has declared today that you [Israel] are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, and that he will set you in **praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made**, and that you shall be a people holy to the LORD your God, as He promised.”

All this is based on the “supremacy of Israel” verses which are all over the Hebrew Bible, notably in Deuteronomy 26 and Isaiah 40-66, especially Isaiah 60:12: “the nation which will not serve you [Israel] will perish.” Peter calls on these **Israel** texts and **applies them to the church**. In Exodus 19:6 Israel are priests and kings. It is the Church who are to be priests and kings (1 Pet. 2:9-10; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:1-6) and God’s “special treasure” (also Titus 2:14; cp. Deut. 4:20-26; 7:6-11; 14:2; **26:18-19**; Isa. 62:12; 41:11-13; 42:6-7; 43:6-7; 45:4, **14**; 46:13; 49:6, cp. Acts 13:47; Isa. 49:22, 23, 25, 26; 54:3, 13-17; **55:2-5, 12**; 58:12; 60:10-22; 61:6, 7, **9**; 62:2-5, 12; 65:9, 10; 65:17ff, in this case mortals in the future Kingdom, who die young at 100 years; 66:18, 19, 24; Jer. 23:1-8; Isa. 1:26; 4:3; 11:14; 13:20; 14:2; 16:5; 19:21-25; 24:23; 25:8, immortality; 26:2, 9, 14, 15, 19, immortality; 27:6; 28:5-6; 29:5, 17; 30:19, 25; 32:1, 15, spirit).

All this gives you the energizing vision of the future, and the “testimony of [coming from] Jesus [his inspired, prophetic word] is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10). To take away the words of Jesus in Revelation is to lose out on life (Rev. 22:18-20). Luther wrote that the book of Revelation is **not a Christian book** and no one knows what it means. But Isaiah 53:11: “By his knowledge my righteous servant will make many right.”

1 Peter 1:7 (above) is remarkable, and hiding in many translations (truth often hides in translation, or a corrupted manuscript as in the KJV of 1 John 5:7; 1 Tim. 6:3; 1 John 5:18). It is thought scandalous that the believers, the international church (Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:3), would receive **praise and honor and fame!** Commentary is often smarter: “The context and the parallelisms (Rom. 2:7, ‘to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for **glory and honor and immortality**, gain the life of the age to come’) make it certain that the praise and glory

<sup>1</sup>See her *Great Controversy*, p. 739. Her millennium has no human beings on earth, but only the Devil on earth! It would be hard to imagine a greater interference with the Gospel of the Kingdom, but 23 million believe it on the basis of their “prophets.” The throne of David and of Jesus was removed!

and honor in 1 Peter 1:7 refer to the praise and glory which men and women will receive, when sufferings rightly borne have done their work (cp. 1 Cor. 4:5, ‘then each man’s praise will come to him from God.’)<sup>2</sup>

Note that this will happen at the future revelation (*apokalypsis*) of Jesus (1 Pet. 1:7, 13). Thus “going to heaven when we die,” promoted tirelessly by that massive organization we call “Church,” turns out to be false and deceiving. “Heaven is never in fact used in the Bible for the destination of the dying” (J.A.T. Robinson at Cambridge).<sup>3</sup> The false idea is based on the erroneous teaching about the immortal soul, which must live on in heaven or an unimaginable, eternal torturing hellfire. Those caught in these deceptions are unable to say “there is a lie in my right hand” (Isa. 44:20). They are then prone to “defraud the one in the right with meaningless arguments” (Isa. 29:21).

The glory and honor and fame, or renown, honor and beauty, which is the destiny of the faithful, is simply a repeat of Deuteronomy 26:19: “God will set you high above the nations which He has made, for praise, fame and honor, and that you shall be a consecrated people.”

Daniel 7 is the indispensable starting point for defining the heart of the Gospel of the Kingdom. In verse 18, “The saints receive the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom forever, for all ages to come.” In verse 22, “Judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Most Holy One, and the time came [not a timeless eternity!] when the saints possessed the Kingdom.” And in verse 27: “Then the sovereignty and the dominion and greatness of all the kingdoms **under the whole heaven** will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One... **Their** Kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom and all dominions will serve and obey **them**.”

Compare Revelation 3:9: enemies of the church will be forced to bow down in acknowledgment of the saints.

Why would you want to go to heaven when Jesus will not be there?!

“Blessed are the meek, for they will possess the land/earth and dwell in it forever” (Jesus referring in Matt. 5:5 to Ps. 37:9-11, 18, 22, **29**, 34).

Are you ready for this destiny? Note the correct translation, “obey **them**” (the saints, Dan. 7:27) preserved in ICC on Daniel and RSV, CEB, CJB, GWN, NRSV TNK, Moffatt. The Aramaic pronoun refers to the people of the saints: “**their** kingdom.”

Do we really understand this “101” of Christian faith “that the saints are going to manage the world?” (1 Cor. 6:2). This is also Wisdom 3:8: “They [God’s people] will

govern nations and **rule over** peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever.”

Our hope is the vision of the future theocracy foreshadowed or actually predicted in the entire OT. God appears to be so delighted with the prospect of future peace on earth, when “the whole world will be at peace and they break forth into singing” (Isa. 14:7), that He dedicates most of Scripture to this topic. No wonder the whole hope of Messianic peace, and the cessation of all war (Isa. 2:1-4), the end to Isis, has been so totally derailed by the grand mistake that “heaven” is the object of the faith!

“Don’t be afraid, little flock, because your Father is delighted to *give* you the Kingdom” (Luke 12:32). “*Theirs* is the Kingdom of Heaven” (Matt. 5:3, 10).

The scene at the beginning of the millennium, the first stage of the future Kingdom of God on earth, is exactly described by that famous Psalm 2, cited 3 times in Revelation. Nations unwilling to submit to Jesus and the saints will be eliminated. They are strongly advised to submit to the new theocratic government (cp. “Bring my enemies before me and execute them,” Luke 19:27). The whole OT is either a shadow or type (Judges, 4 books of Kings in the LXX) or a clear prophecy and vision of the great theocracy to come. 16 prophets transport you into the decisive time between the great tribulation and the arrival of Jesus with his glorified immortalized saints, and into the great Kingdom to come on earth. This is true greatness, promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets and saints (see Matt. 8:11). It is the greatness of man lost by Adam and regained in Messiah Jesus.

“What is man that you care about him, and the Son of Man that you take thought for him? You have made him a bit lower than the angels and **crowned him with honor and glory**” (Ps. 8:4-5). “You have put everything under his feet...but not yet!” (Heb. 2:8). This is the story-line, narrative and plot of the whole Bible and the Kingdom Gospel. And the destiny of man in Christ. It is “the economy of the future about which we speak” (Heb. 2:5; Isa. 51:16; Ps. 102, LXX). God’s plan for the planet.

In that Kingdom the saints will be like **holy** angels as to immortality, and they will not be “married or given in marriage” (Luke 20:34-38). They will have spiritually-driven bodies (1 Cor. 15:44-45).

The two brothers who sought prime positions in the coming Kingdom were not told that there is no such hierarchy! (Mark 10:37-40). They were told that the positions could be achieved by a degree of suffering and that God makes the appointments. The one who does well with his/her talent is praised by Jesus: “Well done, good and faithful servant! Take charge of and be in permanent authority over 10 cities” (Luke 19:17, 19; Matt. 25:21, 23). Are you ready and prepared for this? Has the energy

<sup>2</sup> *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, E. H. Plumptre, Dean of Wells.

<sup>3</sup> J.A.T. Robinson, *In the End God*, p. 104.

of this hope invaded your life? In Colossians 1:4-5 faith and love are rooted in and caused by hope!

What happened to the least talented who produced nothing is a threat indeed. The worthless servant was hurled into outer darkness. Talents *must* be used in support of the Great Commission.

As John said, we are all to strive for “a full reward”: “Watch yourselves that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a *full* reward” (2 John 8). The same trenchant warning was given to the Church at Laodicea. Jesus did not observe the advice from the movie *Bambi* that “if you can’t say somethin’ nice, don’t say nothin’ at all.” Jesus threatened the lukewarm and unproductive with exclusion from salvation (Rev. 3:15ff).

The style of the Philadelphia church (Rev. 3:7) is the one to follow:

“I know your deeds. Look, I have placed an open door before you [the website and the internet, today’s tools for communicating?], which no one can shut, because you have a little power and have kept my word [Kingdom of God Gospel] and have not denied my name [cp Acts 8:12]. I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who claim to be Jews and are not, to come and bow down [*proskuneo*, “worship,” cp. Isa. 45:14, where the true Israel is actually supplicated (prayed to, *proseuchontai* and bowed down to)] at your feet and make them know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of my perseverance [Gospel of the Kingdom, Luke 8:15], I will also preserve you from the hour of testing which is about to come on the entire world, to test those who dwell on the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast to what you have [cp. Luke 8:11-12] so that no one will take away your crown”<sup>4</sup> (Rev. 3:8-10).

The Kingdom destiny of the faithful is a massive Bible theme. And love and faith are *based on and derived from* hope (Col. 1:4-5). ✧

**To our international readers:** If you are able and willing to receive *Focus on the Kingdom* by **email** each month (and save us postage), please send an email to **anthonybuzzard@mindspring.com** or sign up at [www.restorationfellowship.org](http://www.restorationfellowship.org) with your name and email address.

<sup>4</sup>Rom. 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:12, Rev. 5:10; 2:26-27; 3:21; 20:1-6, and 2 Tim. 4:1-2 where the Greek reads most easily: “I solemnly declare to you, in the presence of God and of Messiah Jesus, who is going to judge the living and dead, both his appearing and his Kingdom. **Preach that message.**”

## Differences Between God and Jesus

by Nelvan Evans, California

**GOD is immortal — Jesus, the Son of God, died**

**1 Timothy 1:17** To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

**1 Corinthians 15:3** Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures

**Romans 5:10** We were reconciled to God through the death of His Son.

**God is self-sufficient — Jesus is GOD-dependent**

**Acts 2:36** Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.

**Acts 5:31** God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

**Acts 2:33** Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear.

**John 17:2** since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

**John 5:27** and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

**Romans 2:16** on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

**2 Corinthians 13:4** For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.

**John 5:22** The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son.

**God is eternal — Jesus is begotten (=brought into existence)**

**Galatians 4:4** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law.

**Matthew 1:1** An account of the genealogy [origin] of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

**Luke 1:31** And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.

**Luke 1:32** He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.

**Acts 17:31** because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man

whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

**1 John 5:1** Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child begotten of Him.

#### **GOD is invisible — Jesus is visible**

**John 1:18** No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

**1 Timothy 1:17** To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

**John 17:3** And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

#### **GOD is holy — Jesus became sin for us**

**1 Peter 1:15-16** As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, for it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

**Leviticus 11:44** For I am the LORD your God; sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

#### **God is all-knowing — Jesus is not**

**Job 21:22** Will any teach God knowledge, seeing that he judges those that are on high?

**Psalms 147:4** He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name.

**Acts 1:7** Jesus replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority."

**Mark 13:32** "But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone."

**Mark 5:31** And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" (Jesus did not know who had touched him, Luke 8:45)

**Luke 2:40** The child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

**Luke 2:52** And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

#### **Jesus is a man — GOD is not**

**Numbers 23:19** God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

**James 1:17** Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

**Luke 4:4** But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

**Acts 2:22** "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst, just as you yourselves know."

**Luke 4:18** "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed."

**Acts 10:38** How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

**Matthew 12:18** "Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles."

**1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

#### **Jesus prays to his GOD and Father**

**Matthew 27:46** And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

**Matthew 6:9** "Pray then in this way: **Our Father** in heaven, hallowed be your name.

**Mark 12:29** Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord **our God** is one Lord.'"

#### **GOD cannot be tempted — Jesus was tempted**

**James 1:13** No one, when tempted, should say, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one.

**Luke 4:1-2** Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished.

**GOD is the Almighty — Jesus is the Son of GOD**, servant, sent, appointed, anointed, approved, prophet, priest, and king of David's throne

**John 20:21** Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

**1 Corinthians 15:20-28** But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being;

for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.

But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power.

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is plain that this does not include the one who put all things in subjection under him.

When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all.

### **GOD has no God — Jesus has a God**

**2 Corinthians 11:31** The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.

**Ephesians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

**Ephesians 4:6** One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

**1 Peter 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

**John 20:17** Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

## **Is Jesus Michael the Archangel?**

by T.R. Guerreiro, Portugal

Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that Jesus is Michael the Archangel. I approach this topic with care and respect for those who hold to this doctrine; nevertheless, the aim of this study is to call their attention to the problems that one faces when trying to defend this doctrine.

There are two main passages in the Bible used to support this doctrine.

1 Thessalonians 4:16: “because the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, with an archangel’s voice and with God’s trumpet, and those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first” (New World Translation, 2013 revision).

Most of the English translations convey the same meaning as the N.W.T. rendering:

“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first” (1Thess. 4:16, NIV).

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (1Thess 4:16, NAS).

Here they argue that since the Lord (Jesus) is coming down with the voice of an archangel, and the word archangel appears in singular form, and is attributed to Michael (Jude 1:9), then we should assume that Jesus and Michael are the same person. The problem is that not all translations render this passage the same way, for example:

“At the signal given by the voice of the Archangel and the trumpet of God, the Lord himself will come down from heaven; those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise” (1Thess. 4:16, NJB).

“For the lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the cry of the accompanying archangel, and with the blast of God’s trumpet, and those who died in Messiah will rise from dead first” (1 Thess. 4:16, One God the Father Translation)

Even if the N.W.T gave us the best rendering, they still have a hard time explaining passages in the book of Hebrews that upset the idea of Jesus being an angel:

“And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3, NAS).

“For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You’? And again, ‘I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me’? And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, ‘And let all the angels of God worship Him’” (Heb. 1:5-6, NAU)

“For example, to which one of the angels did God ever say: ‘You are my son; today I have become your father’? And again: ‘I will become his father, and he will become my son’? But when he again brings his Firstborn into the inhabited earth, he says: ‘And let all of God’s angels do obeisance to him’” (N.W.T., 2013 revision).

We see from Hebrews 1:5 that God never said to any angel, “You are My Son, today I have begotten you,” but God said it to Jesus.

The JW’s also assert in their publication *Reasoning from the Scriptures*, under the topic “Jesus Christ,” that Jesus was known by the name Michael before coming to earth, and is also known by the name Michael since he

returned to heaven, but they never quote a verse to support their claim:

“So the evidence indicates that the Son of God was known as Michael before he came to earth and is known also by that name since his return to heaven where he resides as the glorified spirit Son of God” (*Reasoning from the Scriptures*, p. 218-219).

In terms of names being exalted, the name Michael is never mentioned; rather the name Jesus is clearly exalted:

“Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:9-11, NAS).

“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued” (Dan. 12:1, NAS).

In this passage Michael is called “the great prince.” Elsewhere he is called “one of the chief princes” (Dan. 10:13), suggesting that there’s more like him. This immediately refutes the singularity that the J.W.’s imply in Michael.

There’s another important factor to mention, which is the origin of Jesus. In the gospels of Mathew (1:16) and Luke (3:23-38), the Evangelists give us an entire genealogy to show us Jesus’ beginning. This then upsets the idea of Jesus being a pre-existing angel in heaven.

“And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God’” (Luke 1:35, NAS).

Finally we should point out the huge mistake that the JW’s make associating Jesus and Michael in their N.W.T. (2013 revision), refuting their entire doctrine. They link Luke 10:18 to Revelation 12:7-9. In Luke Jesus says that he sees Satan already fallen like lightning from heaven:

“At that he said to them: ‘I see Satan already fallen like lightning from heaven’” (Luke 10:18, N.W.T. 2013 revision).

The word “fallen” has a cross reference to Revelation 12:7-9, where Michael is fighting the Devil and casts him down to earth:

“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels battled with the dragon, and the dragon and his angels battled but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them any longer in heaven. So down the great dragon was hurled, the original serpent, the one called

Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth; he was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him” (Rev. 12:7-9, N.W.T 2013 revision).

We can then assert from their connection that since Jesus is on earth seeing the Devil being cast out by Michael in heaven, they cannot be the same person at two different events and places at the same time. ✧

## Comments

- “I could not agree with you more on the Gospel as the Kingdom of God! This message is so rare but true! The only thing I would add to what you have said, is that Jesus explained His own cross numerous times in the gospels in the same framework you are thinking in, when He said, ‘Take up your cross and follow Me.’ The cross is thus in no sense an addendum to the gospel of the kingdom, but rather it is at the core of it. These statements, as well as many others related, clearly posit that the cross saves us from sin and death, as we ourselves take our stand for the Kingdom through to the point of being willing to go to our own martyrdom, as He actually did. We too will be resurrected as He was. This is what you are teaching, and the cross dovetails right into it directly. Jesus died so he could be lord of both the dead and the living (Rom. 14:9). Conquering death means facing it, and all of us have done so through Him, dying to sins and being raised to newness of life as servants of the Kingdom of God and of its Lord Jesus the Christ. Now we face it in the stories of our own lives as well, every day.” — *Youtube comment*

- “I have recently been convicted to reexamine my beliefs on the Trinity and what it means to our whole foundation as Christians. I just wanted to reach out and let you know that I appreciate your YouTube videos and the work you have done to get the truth out there. I have been blinded for so long about what everyone else has been saying about this ‘trinity,’ when in truth, the foundation of the Trinity is not biblically sound at all.” — *Georgia*

- “To cut a long story short, when I was a teenager I was going to go to Oxford to study classics, but my parents split up. I became a hippie, then a Jesus freak (lol). Then a friend of mine became a Jehovah’s Witness. I followed suit, married a JW (now dead), raised 2 kids in that cult — mea culpa. My son is still a JW; my daughter became a Trinitarian. I no longer see them. I was a JW for 40 years. In 2012 I woke up. Hebrews chapters 1 and 2 especially hit me. I believed for 40 years Michael the archangel was incarnated, became a man (absolute nonsense in hindsight). But most ex-JWs are now Trinitarians or atheists. Anthony Buzzard and his associates have been a lifeline to me. Be blessed.” — *England*

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