

# Focus on the Kingdom

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Anthony Buzzard, editor

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## 27th Theological Conference

May 3-6, 2018

Calvin Center, Hampton, GA

Do please consider joining a unique group of One God, Messiah and Kingdom believers for those 4 days! You and your story, if you choose, will be an encouraging blessing to others who are emerging from various backgrounds. Our belief is that teaching the truths of the Bible is life-energizing!

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|  | Single  | Double<br>(per person) |
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| <b>Hotel-style room</b><br>(2 beds with private bath, sheets/towels)         | \$415   | \$260                  |
| <b>Bunkbed room</b> (6 per room with bath)<br><i>We can assign roommates</i> | \$185 per person<br>+\$15 for sheets and towels or bring your own |                        |
| <b>Commuter (all meals)</b>  | \$111 per person  |                        |
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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)).

Three ways to register:

1. Online at [theologicalconference.org](http://theologicalconference.org)
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**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: April 12, 2018**

### 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. May 3             | 2:00 pm | 4:00 pm |
| Calvin Center to Airport |         |         |
| Sun. May 6               | 1:00 pm |         |

Please arrange your arrival time on Thursday early enough to catch one of the two shuttle runs. On Sunday, May 6 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.

## An Easy Way to Know about the Future and the Future Antichrist

Many see in 1 John 2:18 the final, future Antichrist: “As you heard that **Antichrist** is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared.” Many Greek manuscripts have the definite article here: “**the** Antichrist.” The *spirit* of antichrist has of course been around since John wrote, but John does not deny that a future, final Antichrist would appear. “The spirit of Antichrist was already at work” in John’s day (1 John 4:3).

A mass of information is given us by Daniel, Jesus, and even Isaiah, and certainly Paul, about the **single future Man of Sin**, the little horn of Daniel 7 and 8; Rev. 13:5ff. It is a very large subject. Reams have been written on it. But here is a simple, accessible point:

In Daniel 11:45 the last of a series of kings of the North “**comes to his end.**” You know, I am sure, that Paul draws from the language of Daniel 11:36ff-45 to describe the Man of Sin (2 Thess. 2) who *must*, he said, come before the Parousia, and be killed by Jesus at the Parousia of Jesus (2 Thess. 2:8).

It is an easy fact that the Parousia and the resurrection of the faithful are the same event. They will occur in the future to us. In Daniel 12:1 one has only to acknowledge the words “**at that time**” (twice in that verse!). That expression is not hard at all.

So Scripture offers us this: “**At that time,**” the time of the death of the last king in 11:45, “Michael arises **at the time** of the one unique Great Tribulation.”

All one has to do is to admit that Antiochus Epiphanes **cannot possibly be meant in 11:45**. It was patently *not* at the time of the death of Antiochus that the great final Tribulation happened!

And then this: at **the same time** as the Great Tribulation and death of the last king, the **resurrection** of the dead will happen (Dan. 12:2). That is a very simple sequence:

1. Death of the final king (11:45)
2. Great Tribulation (12:1)
3. Resurrection/Parousia (12:2)
4. The faces of the saints shining in the future Kingdom (12:3; Matt. 13:43).

Jesus refers to this easy sequence, and this passage will rescue any researcher from **the very false idea that the last king who dies at the time of the one Great Tribulation was Antiochus Epiphanes**. That last king is also the final wicked king who will die **at the end of**

the 70th “week” of Daniel 9:27. The last “week” ends with “the desolator Abomination being desolated” (Dan. 9:27; cp. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 13:5).

Daniel 12:1 is unique as containing four occurrences of the word “time” and two of the phrase “at that time”! ✧

## The 195 Occurrences of *adoni* in 163 Verses

### Anonymous

Psalm 110:1 is the most quoted Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) verse in the New Testament! It is quoted or alluded to 23 times in the NT.<sup>1</sup> I knew many years ago that the second word ‘Lord’ in this verse, i.e. “The LORD said to **my Lord**” was **not** the Hebrew word *Adonai*, i.e. God’s title as Supreme Lord. However I did not know at the time the significance of this!

So back in the day when I read the amazing assertion that the Hebrew word translated in this verse as “Lord” was actually the Hebrew word *adoni*; and that this **Hebrew word is never ever used in reference to Almighty God**; that is, **it is never ever used in reference to Deity, but solely used to refer to lords/masters who are not God, i.e. humans and angels, I was truly flabbergasted!** I knew that this had amazing implications for defining *who the Lord Jesus actually is!* Jesus, the Apostles and the early church used this verse to define what they meant when they called Jesus of Nazareth “**Lord**”!

Since the Messiah is called *adoni* (my lord) and it is obvious that the Messiah was not and is not an angelic being (Heb. 1:5, 13; 2:5), it left only one possibility: Jesus is a bonafide human being. He was and is truly *a man*. And this **man** was called *adoni* because this **man** indeed was prophesied to be David’s lord as well as David’s son/descendant. This **man** therefore was foreordained to be the Messiah, David’s lord and our lord, by the One God, Yahweh God Almighty, who **alone** is *Adonai*.

Therefore, no Jewish reader of the OT/NT era in light of their Scriptures and their language would have ever imagined for one second that the Messiah was to be *Deity, i.e. God Almighty*. (Besides the obvious fact that to the Jews there is solely one Being/Person who is God

<sup>1</sup> Jesus: (recorded in the gospels): Matt. 22:44; Matt. 26:64; Mark 12:36; Mark 14:62; Mark 16:19; Luke 20:42-43; Luke 22:69  
Peter: (recorded by Luke): Acts 2:33; Acts 2:34-35; Acts 5:31; Acts 7:55-56;  
Paul: Rom 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:25; Eph 1:20; Eph 2:6; Col 3:1;  
Heb. 1:3; Heb 1:13; Heb 8:1; Heb. 10:12-13; Heb. 12:2  
Peter: 1 Pet. 3:22  
Jesus: (recorded by John): Rev. 3:21

Almighty, **Yahweh**; and therefore whoever Yahweh was speaking of could not be another Deity, another God! That would make two, and that’s an impossibility!) The word used to describe the lordship of the Messiah is the Hebrew word used for *beings who are not Deity, who are not Almighty God!*

As I said the implications were enormous. Anthony Buzzard in his writings asserted that the word *adoni* occurred 195 times in the Hebrew Bible, and in each occurrence it is used solely to refer to lords who were not God, i.e. humans and occasionally angels. Therefore, I had to investigate this claim to see *whether those things were so* (Acts 17:11). And to my amazement I discovered that this assertion is **true!**

My Christian walk has never been the same since. It caused me to have *another look and revisit* who Jesus is, and what the early church meant when they called Jesus of Nazareth, *Lord!*

Below is the list of the 195 occurrences of the word *adoni* in 163 verses, for your viewing. I have listed the NASB translation of each verse, and put in **bold** the actual English words translated from *adoni*.

1. Genesis 18:12 “Sarah laughed to herself, saying, ‘After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, **my lord** being old also?’”
2. Genesis 23:6 “Hear us, **my lord**, you are a mighty prince among us”
3. Genesis 23:11 “No, **my lord**, hear me...”
4. Genesis 23:15 “**My lord**, listen to me...”
5. / 6. Genesis 24:12 “He said, ‘O LORD, the God of **my master** Abraham, please grant me success today, and show lovingkindness to **my master** Abraham.”
7. Genesis 24:14 “and by this I will know that You have shown lovingkindness to **my master**.”
8. Genesis 24:18 She said, “Drink, **my lord**...”
9. / 10. / 11. Genesis 24:27 He said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of **my master** Abraham, who has not forsaken His lovingkindness and His truth toward **my master**; as for me, the LORD has guided me in the way to the house of **my master’s** brothers.”
12. Genesis 24:35 “The LORD has greatly blessed **my master**...”
13. / 14. Genesis 24:36 “Now Sarah **my master’s** wife bore a son to **my master** in her old age, and he has given him all that he has.”
15. Genesis 24:37 “**My master** made me swear, saying...”
16. Genesis 24:39 “I said to **my master**...”
17. Genesis 24:42 “O LORD, the God of **my master** Abraham...”
18. Genesis 24:44 “...whom the LORD has appointed for **my master’s** son.”
19. / 20. Genesis 24:48 “...and blessed the LORD, the God of **my master** Abraham, who had guided me in

the right way to take the daughter of **my master's** kinsman for his son.”

21. Genesis 24:49 “So now if you are going to deal kindly and truly with **my master...**”

22. Genesis 24:54 “Send me away to **my master.**”

23. Genesis 24:56 “Send me away that I may go to **my master.**”

24. Genesis 24:65 “And the servant said, ‘He is **my master.**’”

25. Genesis 31:35 “She said to her father, ‘Let not **my lord** be angry...’”

26. Genesis 32:4 “Thus you shall say to **my lord** Esau...”

27. Genesis 32:5 “...and I have sent to tell **my lord**, that I may find favor in your sight.”

28. Genesis 32:18 “...it is a present sent to **my lord** Esau.”

29. Genesis 33:8 “To find favor in the sight of **my lord.**”

30. Genesis 33:13 “But he said to him, ‘**My lord** knows that the children...’”

31. / 32. Genesis 33:14 “Please let **my lord** pass on before his servant, and I will proceed at my leisure, according to the pace of the cattle that are before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come to **my lord** at Seir.”

33. Genesis 33:15 “Let me find favor in the sight of **my lord.**”

34. Genesis 39:8 “But he refused and said to his master’s wife, ‘Behold, with me here, **my master...**’”

35. Genesis 42:10 “Then they said to him, ‘No, **my lord...**’”

36. Genesis 43:20 “...and said, ‘Oh, **my lord...**’”

37. Genesis 44:5 “Is not this the one from which **my lord** drinks...”

38. Genesis 44:7 “They said to him, ‘Why does **my lord** speak such words as these?...’”

39. Genesis 44:9 “...and we also will be **my lord's** slaves.”

40. / 41. Genesis 44:16 “So Judah said, ‘What can we say to **my lord**? What can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; behold, we are **my lord's** slaves...’”

42. / 43. Genesis 44:18 “Then Judah approached him, and said, ‘Oh **my lord**, may your servant please speak a word in **my lord's** ears...for you are equal to Pharaoh.’”

44. Genesis 44:19 “**My lord** asked his servants...”

45. Genesis 44:20 “We said to **my lord...**”

46. Genesis 44:22 “But we said to **my lord...**”

47. Genesis 44:24 “...we told him the words of **my lord.**”

48. Genesis 44:33 “...let your servant remain instead of the lad a slave to **my lord**”

49. / 50. / 51. Genesis 47:18 “When that year was ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, ‘We will not hide from **my lord** that our money is all spent, and the cattle are **my lord's**. There is nothing left for **my lord** except our bodies and our lands.’”

52. Genesis 47:25 “Let us find favor in the sight of **my lord**”

53. Exodus 21:5 “I love **my master**, my wife and my children; I will not go out as a free man.”

54. Exodus 32:22 “Aaron said, ‘Do not let the anger of **my lord** burn...’”

55. Numbers 11:28 “Moses, **my lord**, restrain them.”

56. Numbers 12:11 “Then Aaron said to Moses, ‘Oh, **my lord...**’”

57. Numbers 32:25 “...spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Your servants will do just as **my lord** commands.’”

58. Numbers 32:27 “...in the presence of the LORD to battle, just as **my lord** says.”

59. / 60. Numbers 36:2 “and they said, ‘The LORD commanded **my lord** to give the land by lot to the sons of Israel as an inheritance, and **my lord** was commanded by the LORD...’”

61. Joshua 5:14 “What has **my lord** to say to his servant?”

62. Judges 4:18 “Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, ‘Turn aside, **my master...**’”

63. Judges 6:13 “Then Gideon said to him, ‘O **my lord**, if the LORD is with us...’”

64. Ruth 2:13 “Then she said, ‘I have found favor in your sight, **my lord...**’”

65. 1 Samuel 1:15 “But Hannah replied, ‘No, **my lord...**’”

66. / 67. 1 Samuel 1:26 “She said, ‘Oh, **my lord!** As your soul lives, **my lord**, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to the LORD.’”

68. 1 Samuel 22:12 “And he answered, ‘Here I am, **my lord.**’”

69. 1 Samuel 24:6 “Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to **my lord**, the LORD’S anointed...”

70. 1 Samuel 24:8 “...called after Saul, saying, ‘**My lord** the king!’”

71. 1 Samuel 24:10 “I will not stretch out my hand against **my lord**, for he is the LORD’S anointed.”

72. 1 Samuel 25:24 “She fell at his feet and said, ‘On me alone, **my lord**’”

73. / 74. 1 Samuel 25:25 “Please do not let **my lord** pay attention to this worthless man, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name and folly is with him; but I your maidservant did not see the young men of **my lord** whom you sent.”

75. / 76. 1 Samuel 25:26 “Now therefore, **my lord**, as the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, since the

LORD has restrained you from shedding blood, and from avenging yourself by your own hand, now then let your enemies and those who seek evil against **my lord**, be as Nabal.”

77. / 78. 1 Samuel 25:27 “Now let this gift which your maidservant has brought to **my lord** be given to the young men who accompany **my lord**.”

79. / 80. 1 Samuel 25:28 “...for the LORD will certainly make for **my lord** an enduring house, because **my lord** is fighting...”

81. 1 Samuel 25:29 “...then the life of **my lord** shall be bound in the bundle of the living”

82. 1 Samuel 25:30 “And when the LORD does for **my lord**...”

83. / 84. /85. 1 Samuel 25:31 “this will not cause grief or a troubled heart to **my lord**, both by having shed blood without cause and by **my lord** having avenged himself. When the LORD deals well with **my lord**, then remember your maidservant.”

86. 1 Samuel 25:41 “...to wash the feet of **my lord’s** servants.”

87. 1 Samuel 26:17 “...and David said, ‘It is my voice, **my lord** the king.’”

88. 1 Samuel 26:18 “He also said, ‘Why then is **my lord**...’”

89. 1 Samuel 26:19 “Now therefore, please let **my lord** the king...”

90. 1 Samuel 29:8 “...the enemies of **my lord** the king?”

91. 1 Samuel 30:13 “...and **my master** left me behind when I fell sick three days ago.”

92. 1 Samuel 30:15 “...or deliver me into the hands of **my master**”

93. 2 Samuel 1:10 “...and I have brought them here to **my lord**.”

94. 2 Samuel 3:21 “...and gather all Israel to **my lord** the king”

95. 2 Samuel 4:8 “...thus the LORD has given **my lord** the king”

96. 2 Samuel 9:11 “According to all that **my lord** the king...”

97. / 98. 2 Samuel 11:11 “...and **my lord** Joab and the servants of **my lord**...”

99. 2 Samuel 13:32 “Do not let **my lord** suppose they have put to death...”

100. 2 Samuel 13:33 “Now therefore, do not let **my lord** the king...”

101. 2 Samuel 14:9 “The woman of Tekoa said to the king, ‘O **my lord**, the king...’”

102. 2 Samuel 14:12 “...speak a word to **my lord** the king”

103. 2 Samuel 14:15 “...speak this word to **my lord** the king”

104. / 105. 2 Samuel 14:17 “Then your maidservant said, ‘Please let the word of **my lord** the king be comforting, for as the angel of God, so is **my lord** the king”

106. 2 Samuel 14:18 “And the woman said, ‘Let **my lord** the king please speak.’”

107. / 108. 2 Samuel 14:19 “As your soul lives, **my lord** the king, no one can turn to the right or to the left from anything that **my lord** the king has spoken”

109. 2 Samuel 14:20 “But **my lord** is wise, like the wisdom of the angel of God, to know all that is in the earth.”

110. 2 Samuel 14:22 “...I have found favor in your sight, O **my lord**, the king”

111. 2 Samuel 15:15 “...whatever **my lord** the king chooses.”

112. / 113. 2 Samuel 15:21 “But Ittai answered the king and said, ‘As the LORD lives, and as **my lord** the king lives, surely wherever **my lord** the king may be...’”

114. 2 Samuel 16:4 “...let me find favor in your sight, O **my lord**, the king!”

115. 2 Samuel 16:9 “Why should this dead dog curse **my lord** the king?”

116. 2 Samuel 18:28 “...against **my lord** the king.”

117. 2 Samuel 18:31 “the Cushite said, ‘Let **my lord** the king...’”

118. 2 Samuel 18:32 “Let the enemies of **my lord** the king...”

119. / 120. 2 Samuel 19:19 “So he said to the king, ‘Let not **my lord** consider me guilty, nor remember what your servant did wrong on the day when **my lord** the king...’”

121. 2 Samuel 19:20 “...to meet **my lord** the king.”

122. 2 Samuel 19:26 “So he answered, ‘O **my lord**, the king...’”

123. / 124. 2 Samuel 19:27 “Moreover, he has slandered your servant to **my lord** the king; but **my lord** the king is like the angel of God, therefore do what is good in your sight.”

125. 2 Samuel 19:28 “...before **my lord** the king”

126. 2 Samuel 19:30 “...since **my lord** the king has come”

127. 2 Samuel 19:35 “...an added burden to **my lord** the king?”

128. 2 Samuel 19:37 “...let him cross over with **my lord** the king”

129. / 130. 2 Samuel 24:3 “...while the eyes of **my lord** the king still see; but why does **my lord** the king delight in this thing?”

131. 2 Samuel 24:21 “Then Araunah said, ‘Why has **my lord** the king come to his servant?’”

132. 2 Samuel 24:22 “Araunah said to David, ‘Let **my lord** the king...’”

133. / 134. 1 Kings 1:2 “So his servants said to him, ‘Let them seek a young virgin for **my lord** the king, and let her attend the king and become his nurse; and let her lie in your bosom, that **my lord** the king may keep warm.’”

135. 1 Kings 1:13 “Have you not, **my lord**, O king...”

136. 1 Kings 1:17 “She said to him, ‘**My lord**...’”

137. 1 Kings 1:18 “...and now, **my lord** the king, you do not know it.”

138. / 139. 1 Kings 1:20 “As for you now, **my lord** the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of **my lord** the king after him.”

140. 1 Kings 1:21 “Otherwise it will come about, as soon as **my lord** the king...”

141. 1 Kings 1:24 “Then Nathan said, ‘**My lord** the king...’”

142. / 143. 1 Kings 1:27 “Has this thing been done by **my lord** the king, and you have not shown to your servants who should sit on the throne of **my lord** the king after him?”

144. 1 Kings 1:31 “May **my lord** King David live forever.”

145. 1 Kings 1:36 “Amen! Thus may the LORD, the God of **my lord** the king, say.”

146. / 147. 1 Kings 1:37 “As the LORD has been with **my lord** the king, so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of **my lord** King David!”

148. 1 Kings 2:38 “The word is good. As **my lord** the king...”

149. 1 Kings 3:17 “The one woman said, ‘Oh, **my lord**...’”

150. 1 Kings 3:26 “...and said, ‘Oh, **my lord**, give her the living child’”

151. 1 Kings 18:7 “Is this you, Elijah **my master**?”

152. 1 Kings 18:10 “...where **my master** has not sent to search for you”

153. 1 Kings 18:13 “Has it not been told to **my master**...”

154. 1 Kings 20:4 “The king of Israel replied, ‘It is according to your word, **my lord**, O king’”

155. 1 Kings 20:9 “So he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, ‘Tell **my lord** the king...’”

156. 2 Kings 2:19 “...as **my lord** sees; but the water is bad”

157. 2 Kings 4:16 “And she said, ‘No, **my lord**, O man of God, do not lie to your maidservant.’”

158. 2 Kings 4:28 “Then she said, ‘Did I ask for a son from **my lord**?’”

159. 2 Kings 5:3 “She said to her mistress, ‘I wish that **my master**...’”

160. 2 Kings 5:18 “In this matter may the LORD pardon your servant: when **my master**...”

161. 2 Kings 5:20 “Behold, **my master** has spared this Naaman the Aramean”

162. 2 Kings 5:22 “He said, ‘All is well. **My master** has sent me’”

163. 2 Kings 6:5 “Alas, **my master**! For it was borrowed.”

164. 2 Kings 6:12 “One of his servants said, ‘No, **my lord**, O king...’”

165. 2 Kings 6:15 “Alas, **my master**! What shall we do?”

166. 2 Kings 6:26 “...saying, ‘Help, **my lord**, O king!’”

167. 2 Kings 8:5 “And Gehazi said, ‘**My lord**, O king, this is the woman...’”

168. 2 Kings 8:12 “Hazeal said, ‘Why does **my lord** weep?’”

169. 2 Kings 10:9 “I conspired against **my master** and killed him...”

170. 2 Kings 18:23 “...make a bargain with **my master** the king of Assyria”

171. 2 Kings 18:24 “...one official of the least of **my master**’s servants”

172. 2 Kings 18:27 “But Rabshakeh said to them, ‘Has my master sent me only to your **master**...’”

173. / 174. / 175. 1 Chronicles 21:3 “Joab said, ‘May the LORD add to His people a hundred times as many as they are! But, **my lord** the king, are they not all **my lord**’s servants? Why does **my lord** seek this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt to Israel?’”

176. 1 Chronicles 21:23 “Ornan said to David, ‘Take it for yourself; and let **my lord** the king...’”

177. 2 Chronicles 2:14 “...**my lord** David your father.”

178. 2 Chronicles 2:15 “Now then, let **my lord**...”

179. Psalm 110:1 “A Psalm of David. The LORD says to **my lord**: ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’” (Note: the NASB incorrectly has “**my Lord**”)

180. Isaiah 36:8 “...with **my master** the king of Assyria”

181. Isaiah 36:9 “...of **my master**’s servants”

182. Isaiah 36:12 “But Rabshakeh said, ‘Has my master sent me only to your **master**...’”

183. Jeremiah 37:20 “But now, please listen, O **my lord** the king...”

184. Jeremiah 38:9 “**My lord** the king...”

185. Daniel 1:10 “and the commander of the officials said to Daniel, ‘I am afraid of **my lord** the king’”

186. Daniel 10:16 “And behold, one who resembled a human being... ‘O **my lord**...’”

187. / 188. Daniel 10:17 “For how can such a servant of **my lord** talk with such as **my lord**?”

189. Daniel 10:19 “May **my lord** speak, for you have strengthened me.”

190. Daniel 12:8 “**My lord**, what will be the outcome of these events?”

191. Zechariah 1:9 “Then I said, ‘**My lord**, what are these?’”

192. Zechariah 4:4 “...to the angel who was speaking with me saying, ‘What are these, **my lord**?’”

193. Zechariah 4:5 “So the angel...And I said, ‘No, **my lord**.’”

194. Zechariah 4:13 “And I said, ‘No, **my lord**.’”

195. Zechariah 6:4 “...and said to the angel who was speaking with me, ‘What are these, **my lord**?’” ✧

## Beware of Disobedience to Jesus in the Matter of Water Baptism

Bible readers sometimes forget that Jesus was baptized in water as a model for us; Jesus baptized in water more disciples than John (John 4:1-2); and Jesus commanded baptism for all would-be disciples, until the end of the age, the future one Second Coming (Parousia) of Jesus (Matt 28:19-20). The following quotation from a leading evangelical scholar and commentator makes our point. It is a necessary corrective to some unitarians who have been misled by former associations.

“Our tendency to see baptism as a symbolic optional extra, or to be embarrassed by the inclusion of a physical act as part of the spiritual process of conversion, contrasts with the strongly ‘realist’ language of the NT about the saving significance of baptism (e.g. Jn. 3:5; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:20-21). While there are no NT grounds for believing that baptism *by itself* makes a person a Christian, **the idea of an unbaptized Christian is equally foreign to its thought**. ‘Without it [baptism] a believer did not enter the primitive community of faith’ (S.S. Smalley).”<sup>2</sup>

“Salvation is given to those who obey Jesus,” says Hebrews 5:9. Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15; 2 John 1:6), and with a tone of frustration Jesus said, “Why do you keep calling me ‘lord, lord’ and refuse to do what I say?” (Luke 6:46). Then 2 John 9: “If anyone does not abide in the teachings of Messiah,” beware of him! Paul was in perfect agreement in 1 Timothy 6:3: “If anyone does not agree with the health-producing words, namely those of our Lord Jesus,” he is arrogant, uninstructed and opinionated. After all, as Hebrews 2:3 says, Jesus was the first preacher of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and that

<sup>2</sup>R.T. France, “Conversion in the Bible,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 65:4, 1993, p. 306.

is the one and only saving Gospel, preached by Jesus (Mark 1:14-15) and by Paul and the Apostles with equal tenacity (Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:24-25; 28:23, 31; cp. 1:6). The Kingdom of God Gospel is essential for salvation, the “obedience of faith” which frames Romans in 1:5 and 16:26. To bypass essential obedience, for example by making water baptism an “optional extra,” is to violate the core of the New Covenant. Belief and obedience to Jesus and the Apostles must never be questioned. To do so is to risk being discarded at the return of Jesus (Matt. 7:21-23). Salvation is given only to those “who obey Jesus” (Heb. 5:9).

Where then will those stand who have been deceived by deceiving exponents of the Bible who constructed a homemade system of understanding which resulted in discarding the words and teachings of Jesus (and of Paul and Peter, who baptized in water new converts, Acts 10:47-48)? ✧

## A Challenge to Students of the Bible

The following quotations from leading authorities on the Bible should cause us to “examine all things carefully.” Popular majority opinion is not necessarily correct. May we respectfully request of our readers that they pay careful attention to the issues raised below.

“It may be said at once that there is no trace of a doctrine of a Trinity in the Gospel of John.”<sup>3</sup>

“The notion of the Holy Spirit as a third divine personality is one of the most disastrous importations into the Holy Scriptures.”<sup>4</sup>

“There is no trace of the idea of ‘three divine persons in one’ in the New Testament...No Apostle would have dreamt of thinking that there are three divine persons...The mystery of the Trinity proclaimed by the Church did not spring from biblical doctrine.”<sup>5</sup>

“The Trinitarians edited their notorious Trinitarian text into the first Epistle of John [1 John 5:7, see the KJV and compare it with all modern versions].”<sup>6</sup>

“Arguments for the Trinitarian dogma do not exist in the Bible as they were later preserved in Orthodoxy.”<sup>7</sup>

“Paul would have had no knowledge of a dogmatic Trinity, since that came into the world only centuries after his death.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> E.F. Scott, D.D., *The Fourth Gospel*, p. 341.

<sup>4</sup> W. Beyschlag, *N.T. Theology*, Vol. 2, p. 279.

<sup>5</sup> Emil Brunner, *Christian Doctrine of God, Dogmatics*, Vol. 1, p. 226.

<sup>6</sup> Pinchas Lapide and Jürgen Moltmann, *Jewish Monotheism and Christian Trinitarian Doctrine*, p. 40.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought*, p. 287.

<sup>8</sup> Pinchas Lapide and Jürgen Moltmann, *Jewish Monotheism and Christian Trinitarian Doctrine*, p. 38-40.

“The Jew Jesus knew of a Trinity in a dogmatic sense just as little as the Jew Paul.”<sup>9</sup>

“The image of God in the primitive Church was unitary [= God is one Person, not three].”<sup>10</sup>

“During the bloody intra-Christian religious wars of the fourth and fifth centuries, thousands upon thousands of Christians slaughtered other Christians for the sake of the Trinity.”<sup>11</sup>

“Many Christians are genuinely concerned and many Jews justifiably frustrated trying to find in the Trinity the pure faith in One God.”<sup>12</sup> (Muslims often reject the Christian faith outright because of the strange doctrine that God is three in One.)

“The doctrine which follows from the identification of Jesus with a pre-existent divine being is ultimately incompatible with the unity of God.”<sup>13</sup>

“Most Christians probably escape from the dry abstractions of Augustinian orthodoxy by reinterpreting it tritheistically. In the last resort [this] implies the existence of three divine centers of consciousness — in other words, three Gods.”<sup>14</sup>

“The Church has not usually in practice (whatever it may have claimed to be doing in theory) based its doctrine about Christ exclusively on the witness of the New Testament. Doctrine about Christ has never in practice been derived simply by way of logical inference from the statements of Scripture.”<sup>15</sup>

“[If] the eternal Son assumes a timeless human nature, or makes it timeless by making it his own, it is a human nature which has nothing essential to do with geographical circumstance; it corresponds to nothing in the actual concrete world; Jesus Christ has not after all ‘come in the flesh.’”<sup>16</sup>

“The clear evidence of the Gospel of John [is that] Jesus refuses the claim to be God...Jesus vigorously denied the blasphemy of being God or His substitute.”<sup>17</sup>

“Paul nowhere definitely equates Jesus with God.”<sup>18</sup>

“Jesus never calls Himself God, but ever claims to be the Son of God.”<sup>19</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Hans Kung, “Antwort an Meine Kritiker,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22nd May, 1976.

<sup>13</sup> Geoffrey Lampe, *God As Spirit*, 1976, p. 141.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>15</sup> Maurice Wiles, *The Remaking of Christian Doctrine*, 1973, pp. 54, 55.

<sup>16</sup> Geoffrey Lampe, *God As Spirit*, p. 144.

<sup>17</sup> J.A.T. Robinson, *Twelve More New Testament Studies*, pp. 175, 176.

<sup>18</sup> W.R. Matthews, D.D., *The Problem of Christ in the Twentieth Century*, 1949, p. 22.

<sup>19</sup> *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible*, Extra Vol., p. 312.

“Jesus is not God but God’s representative, and, as such, so completely and totally acts on His behalf that he stands in God’s stead before the world...The Gospel of John clearly states that God and Jesus are not to be understood as identical persons, as in 14:28, ‘the Father is greater than I.’”<sup>20</sup>

“The Gospel of John, like other early Christian witnesses, thinks of Jesus as legal agent, and apostle of God, who was physically and personally a human being (‘low Christology’), but legally he was equal to God (‘high Christology’). Jesus held a status that was legally equal to God (John 10:33), but, on the other hand, the Father (as the principal) was greater (John 14:28) than the Son, who was the agent.”<sup>21</sup>

“It would be ridiculous to imagine that Jesus is God, *tout simple*. The New Testament writers do not claim this for him; they know he is very much one of us.”<sup>22</sup> (This author writes as a Trinitarian, but still recognizes that the statement “Jesus is God” without further qualification is misleading.) ✧

## Comments

• “I thought I would just write to say thanks. I have been looking for some time at Jesus’ preexistence. Although in principle I have been in agreement with the thought, I have had a problem with some Scriptures. Tonight I have solved the problem. I have been going through your article ‘The Nature of Preexistence in the NT’ and came across the word *prouparchon*. I had not realised there was a Greek word for preexistence. I checked the meaning in Moulton/Milligan *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* and my Greek lexicons, and this solved my problem. Because it is used in Luke 23:12 and Acts 8:9 surely the NT writers would have used it in discussing Jesus’ preexistence. They did not.” — *England*

• “I want to learn. Leaving the Watchtower and its cult-like environment leaves one feeling as if we are not meant to understand Scriptures, and it all has to be interpreted for us from the New York Governing Body. Any disagreement has to be the fault of the person, not the doctrine. Also any disagreement leads to a label of apostasy and disfellowshipping. My family left this year. We are all feeling very lost and nearly godless. My relative nearly bled to death and refused blood per organizational rules. She was a fortunate one — she lived. Many JW’s die with this doctrine of no blood. I don’t know where to start in my studies. I feel you have the truth without the cult and false doctrines. I believe this earth is our home. Why else would He say He will bring a ruin to those ruining the earth?” — *Florida*

<sup>20</sup> Jacob Jervell, *Jesus in the Gospel of John*, 1984, p. 21.

<sup>21</sup> G.W. Buchanan, *Biblical and Theological Insights Based on Ancient and Modern Civil Law*, pp. 128, 129.

<sup>22</sup> *The Truth of God Incarnate*, ed. Michael Green, p. 23.

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