

# Focus on the Kingdom

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## What We Can Learn from Chinese Christians

by Barbara Buzzard

“In most societies, the parents lay down their lives for their children, and would willingly die to see the lives of their sons and daughters preserved. Strangely, it is these very children, for whom so much sacrifice was made by their loving parents, who are now choosing to kill their own unborn babies.”<sup>1</sup>

Where would you say this is happening currently? Would you guess it to be China where a “One Child Policy” was dictated until 2015,<sup>2</sup> making abortion extremely common?<sup>3</sup> Or would you guess it to be the West where “women’s rights” have almost become a new religion? In our free western culture, we have the same contradiction — that same condition where parents who would have given their own lives for their children now live in a culture where those children are choosing to kill their own babies. Is it not shocking that we in the West have arrived at the same immoral position as the Chinese?

In a society like China which emphasizes the good of the whole, the state has rights and interests that supersede those of the individual. Which is to say that no individual has value except as a contribution to the whole. That philosophy is lived out when an unborn child is thought to be a drain on society and therefore must die for the betterment of all. *What a hideous lie is in place here — that abortion is good for society.*

In the West with our emphasis on individual human rights, that philosophy is lived out when parents decide that a child must die because it does not fit in with their plans/desires. *What a hideous lie is in place here — that abortion is good for the individual.*

In both cases the conclusion of the matter is death for the innocents, and in many places in the West that would include abortion right up to the moment of birth. Do please picture the *just-before-birth moment* — would it not be evil to subscribe to this killing?

The book *The Lives of the Innocents* had to be written anonymously so that the author did not suffer

punishment. “Daily in China, 35,000 babies are killed by abortion. That adds up to nearly 13 million in a year’s time! In addition, millions of abortion pills cause innumerable undocumented deaths of unborn babies.”<sup>4</sup>

Please know this: “Many unauthorized clandestine burial grounds have sprung up in close proximity to abortion facilities; the grief of millions of Chinese women is profound, and results in rampant depression and misery.”<sup>5</sup> How is it that what is mistakenly called a “routine medical procedure” can cause torment, guilt and shame to millions of women?

The simple and yet profoundly awe-inspiring biology presented to Chinese Christians reveals a dedicated author and lover of life, e.g. “In the fifth month, the child has complete skin, hair and nails. The baby is sometimes awake and sometimes asleep — the baby can dream. The child is not fully developed and only half way to full-term, but this is a person, a real human being who could survive and live if born at this point. Abortions are often performed at this stage. When the baby could be born alive, he or she is killed instead. In the womb, the baby is silently screaming and kicking...and the already growing relationship with the mother *is snuffed out by an untimely death.*”<sup>6</sup>

The utter blasphemy of this child killing was mandated in China *but is chosen* by Westerners and is promoted, celebrated, and affirmed by many of our political leaders. *We are drenched in sin.*

In China where biology reference books might not be as available as in the West, the *Innocents* book combats the lie that the unborn is only a fetus with this challenge: it is impossible for a man and a woman to conceive anything other than a human child! The argument is used by those who favor abortion that the baby in the womb is not quite the same as those who are living. *The justification of abortion is based on viewing the unborn child as subhuman.* Of course the West has brazenly confused its citizens by saying, “It’s not a child; it’s a fetus.” This is a distinction without a difference. This is a cruel and distorted comparison, a *lie of great magnitude!*

<sup>1</sup> Anonymous, *The Lives of the Innocents*, free online in Chinese and English at [creation.com/study-guide-main-list](http://creation.com/study-guide-main-list) (p. 54)

<sup>2</sup> If the first child was a girl, a second child was allowed after 2015. Then the one-child policy was lifted in 2016, allowing for a second child and later raising that cap to three (because of a shrinking workforce). The *World*

*Business Watch* predicts that China’s pets will outnumber kids by the year 2030.

<sup>3</sup> Since some parents only wanted a boy, you can only imagine how many girls were destroyed.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

## The Misuse of Scripture in Order to Defend the Killing of the Unborn

A most interesting point in opposition to those who claim that breath is the beginning of human life is this: Are the dead no longer human? Of course they are! The dead and those not breathing remain human (Rev. 6:9). This is borne out by the respect for the dead that we rightly show in our cultures. The dead do not cease to be human.

Exodus 21:22-23 is twisted by those who favor abortion:

“If men fight and hit a pregnant woman and her child is born prematurely, but there is no serious injury, the one who hit her will surely be punished in accordance with what the woman’s husband demands of him, and he will pay what the court decides. But if there is serious injury, then you will give a life for a life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.”

This Scripture is not about abortion. It is about *unintentional* harm coming to a baby (which is the opposite of abortion). It does not speak to the *intentional* killing of a child in the womb. The scenario is two men fighting who unintentionally injure a pregnant woman, so that her child is born prematurely, not that her baby dies. But those arguing for abortion say that this incident results in the death of the baby and since capital punishment is not then carried out, killing the baby must be OK or without consequence.

**“However, any reliable translation shows that this is not at all the sense...Plainly, this passage says and means: if men are fighting and injure a woman who is pregnant, so that her child is born prematurely, and yet no harm results [the baby is healthy and lives], he shall be punished as appropriate...It is a very strong support for recognizing the full humanity of the unborn child...if someone caused the death of an unborn baby, the penalty would be death — a life for a life.”<sup>7</sup>**

The NET Bible note agrees: “*Child is born prematurely*: This line has occasioned a good deal of discussion. It may indicate that the child was killed, as in a miscarriage; or it may mean that there was a premature birth. The latter view is taken here because of the way the whole section is written: (1) ‘her children come out’ reflects a birth and not the loss of children, (2) there is no serious damage, and (3) payment is to be set for any remuneration...U. Cassuto says the point of the phrase is that neither the woman or the children that are born die.”

Again, this passage is not about abortion. It is a tragedy that this fallacious argument is still used today to give *approval* to the killing of a child created in

God’s image. This passage is about *unintended* injury. It is *not about the intentional killing* of an innocent child.

## Eye Opener

One Chinese Christian gives us a window into the difficulties faced there. When she became a Christian she already had a daughter but found herself pregnant shortly after. To have a second child would mean that she would lose her job, and possibly her apartment. She was terrified but her pastor spoke Truth to her: “Only God has the right over life.” She says that out of fear of God she decided to keep the baby. She could actually hear during the night police knocking on doors to force pregnant women to the hospital to get abortions! Fervent prayer helped her through. She delivered a healthy boy and was somehow spared the usual fines associated. Not only is the payment of a huge fine the punishment for a second child, but social prejudice against the “illegal child” was strong. There was no “liberty and justice for all,” no “unalienable rights.”

This book advises that Christians prayerfully choose to obey God rather than man (Acts 4:19; 5:29) and refuse to participate in the senseless and brutal slaughter of unborn children. Can you imagine the courage this takes in that society? The author says, “We need to settle the fact that ultimately it must be our decision as individuals that we will never willingly have a part in any abortion.” This surely is the sort of courage that pleases our Maker and should be modeled by Christians everywhere.

God “so loved” the unborn that He provided a way for them to escape death. We are reminded that when the Jewish midwives were instructed by Pharaoh not to allow boy babies to survive (Ex. 1:16-17), they chose to disobey and accept the consequences rather than kill the babies. Their fear of and allegiance to God was greater than fear of Pharaoh.

## Good and Evil, Right and Wrong

For the Christian — recognizing that the unborn is human — the discussion is over. Killing a child is never the right thing to do. Since God gave life, we should leave it to Him to take it away. It is a right we do not have, no matter how much we imagine it. We must live out the implications of our beliefs and allow ourselves to be shaped by those beliefs.

As Christians we are *not allowed to call evil good, nor the opposite*: “The LORD despises those who acquit the guilty and condemn the innocent” (Prov. 17:15). We are commanded to love the truth (2 Thess. 2:10) and to hate evil (Ps. 97:10b). We are warned against the destruction that will befall “those who say

<sup>7</sup> *The Lives of the Innocents*, p. 41, 42.

that evil is good and good is evil” (Prov. 5:20a). I shudder to compare these Scriptures with the way many are hailing, promoting and celebrating abortion. There is no shame among them.

“Those who want to follow the will of God will place supreme value on human life. Rather than killing an unborn child, they would resort to flight and hiding and paying fines, willingly facing opposition and ostracism in order to preserve life.” And these are the actions taken by amazing Chinese Christians. If God despises abortion, so must we. If God places supreme value on human life, so should we. And yet — at least one Christian author charges that the church in the West and specifically in the U.S. has become an appendage of the world and as such is a church of cowards.<sup>8</sup> Reflecting on the fact that the freedoms we enjoy are not conducive to courage, the *courage of their convictions* of many Chinese seems to be in stark contrast to our rather flabby approach. The Chinese who are persecuted and deprived of much individual freedom appear more courageous, more devoted to the biblical way and more obedient than we Westerners.

What is missing here? Do we despise abortion? The Scriptures require us to hate what God hates. “Let those who love the LORD hate evil” (Ps. 97:10). “To fear the LORD is to hate evil” (Prov. 8:13). We don’t have the liberty to ignore sin (murder), or to be indifferent to it. We have ingenious ways of deflecting our own guilt and desensitizing God’s anger by saying that He loves the sinner but hates the sin. How then does Proverbs list among the ones God hates: “hands that kill the innocent” (Prov. 6:17)?

### The Power of Truth

The statistics of abortion are presented to us in a passive way. They read like this: in 2023 there were *X* millions of abortions reported. The starker and more agonizing *truth* is that *millions of parents choose to kill their children every year.*<sup>9</sup>

What is precious here? Personal freedom or lifestyle choices? The conclusion of the matter is that God alone has the right to take life since He alone is the One who gives life (Deut. 32:39; Job 1:2; 1 Sam. 2:6). As pointed out in the *Innocents* book, murder and the shedding of innocent blood will always be *abhorrent* to our holy and righteous God. And likewise they must be abhorrent to us. Do we abhor abortion or have we become immune to the horror?

Bottom line: the innocent *have* to be protected because they are made in the image of God. That is why we value life. “For God will bring every deed into

judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil” (Ecc. 12:14). ✧

## Works of the Law vs. Good Works

by Carlos Xavier

Most agree that the Christian walk of faith takes real effort, i.e., real works on the part of the believer. After all, Jesus did say we must “strive” or “exert every effort” to enter the Kingdom of God (Luke 13:24). As the NET Bible notes, “‘Make every effort’; ‘Do your best’; ‘Work hard’; Greek ‘Struggle.’ The idea is to exert one’s maximum effort (BDAG ‘strain every nerve to enter’) because of the supreme importance of attaining entry into the kingdom of God.” And Paul later commands us to “work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12).

But these good works should not be confused with “the works of the Law,” a phrase used negatively by Paul in reference to the Law of Moses (see Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10, 12). The works of the Law include circumcision, calendar observances (weekly Sabbaths, monthly new moons, annual holy days), and food laws. Paul contrasts the law of Moses with “the law of Messiah,” which is the law that we are all now under (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2; see also “the law of faith,” Rom. 3:27).

So we understand that “no one is made right by the works of the Law,” i.e., the Law of Moses (Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:20). But now “we are God’s handiwork, created in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we would conduct our lives in them” (Eph 2:10). This is because “Christ has made peace between Jews and Gentiles, and he has united us by breaking down the wall of hatred that separated us.” He accomplished this, Paul goes on to explain, by “making void in his flesh the Law of commandments contained in decrees” (Eph. 2:14-15)

So like Paul, and the father of the faith himself Abraham, we are to be faithful workmen of God — not doing “the works of the law” of Moses, but following the Law of Messiah. James 2 summarizes this nicely when he explains that “the faith of Abraham,” along with his works, made his faith complete (James 2:18-26). In other words, it’s not *either* faith *or* works but *both* faith *and* works. ✧

<sup>8</sup> Matt Walsh, *Church of Cowards* (2022)

<sup>9</sup> Planned Parenthood and others have announced that they intend to invest \$100 million to promote killing more babies in abortions and electing pro-abortion candidates.

## The Pre-Tribulation Rapture: Truth or Trap?

by Anthony Buzzard

None of us can claim to have escaped all of the many doctrinal traps which Satan lays for the unwary or uninstructed. I was for many years a sincere believer in the Trinity, but prolonged study changed everything. I was also a sincere Sabbath-keeper until I realized that Paul taught otherwise (Col. 2:16-17).

Many a sincere preacher has been trapped by the remarkable notion, now widespread, that seven years before Jesus comes to establish the Kingdom of God on earth, he will arrive silently and secretly to snatch away the faithful to heaven. This event will apparently leave airplanes pilotless and cause driverless cars to lurch off the highway.

Few know that leading theologians, amongst them leading exponents of pre-millennialism, have felt the need to write whole books in refutation of the fantastic theory of a second and third coming of Jesus. George Ladd's *The Blessed Hope*, Alexander Reese's *The Approaching Advent of Christ*, and Robert Gundry's *The Church and the Tribulation* are classics in the field of eschatology and should be examined by those seeking the Truth of the Bible.

### No Biblical Evidence for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture

There is no text in the New Testament to support the idea that Jesus will come back in two stages separated by seven years. This teaching is unknown in theology before the 1830s, where it was launched by members of a small denomination called the Brethren in England. Note carefully, however, that many leading Brethren disagreed with the new discovery and denounced the doctrine as unbiblical.

The verdict of Campbell Morgan, a leading London evangelical preacher, is significant. He had been taught to believe in a double second coming, once for the church and then with the church, but later examination of the theory changed his mind. A letter published in *Christianity Today* (Aug. 31st, 1959) tells the story:

"During a Boston pastorate, I was privileged to attend a course of lectures given by Dr. Morgan at Gordon College. At the end of one session, I ventured to ask him, 'After your long study and extensive exposition of the Bible, Dr. Morgan, do you find any warrant for the distinction which many Bible teachers draw between the second coming of the Lord for His own (the Rapture) and the coming of the Lord with His own (the Revelation) with a time period of 3½ or 7 years between these two events?'"

"'Emphatically not!' Dr. Morgan replied. 'I know that view very well, for in the earlier years of my ministry I taught it and incorporated it in one of my

books entitled *God's Method with Man*. But further study so convinced me of the error of this teaching that I actually went to the expense of buying the plates of that book from my own publisher and destroying them. The idea of a separate and secret coming of Christ to remove the church prior to his coming in power and glory is a vagary of prophetic interpretation without any biblical basis whatever.'"

Preachers of Campbell Morgan's reputation are not prone to making such forceful statements unless there is massive evidence for doing so. The convictions of Alexander Reese in *The Approaching Advent of Christ* are no less clear. Both men felt the need to speak out against what they saw as a trick being played with the Bible, by which the resurrection of the dead and their transformation to immortality along with the living Christians was being moved to a point of time separate and distinct from the coming of Jesus in glory. Such a radical interference with the biblical program should not be allowed to gain ground amongst Bible students without a strong protest.

### A Thief in the Night?

The carelessness of popular handling of the Bible is shown by the fact that many will quote the verse in 1 Thessalonians 5:2 about "a thief in the night" as if they have never bothered to look it up in its context. Inspection of the context will reveal immediately that this text says nothing about a secret coming of Jesus seven years before his public manifestation. The verse carries in fact the very opposite sense from the one given it by the pre-tribulation theory: The coming like a thief is supposed, according to pre-tribulationism, to affect the Church only and not the unbelieving world. But let us see what 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2 actually says:

"Now, brothers and sisters, about periods and times we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that **the Day of the Lord will come like a thief** in the night. When people are saying 'We have peace and safety,' then **sudden destruction will come on them...and they** will not escape."

The coming of Christ like a thief, Paul says, will take *the unbelieving world* by surprise. It will not be a secret event affecting the church only: "But you, brothers and sisters, are **not in darkness** so that the day would surprise you like a thief?" (1 Thess. 5:4).

It is all perfectly straightforward. The thief-like coming will affect the non-Christians adversely because they will be unprepared. It is almost beyond belief that these simple verses should have been used to invent a prior event — a secret coming seven years earlier.

### The Rapture at the One Second Coming

Equally remarkable is the fact that Paul had just previously described the catching up of the saints to meet Jesus in the sky, an event accompanied by a “shout of command, the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God” (1 Thess. 4:16). It is in connection with this event that Paul goes on to explain that *the world* will be overtaken as by a thief. One has only to read the biblical text as one unit from 1 Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:6 to grasp Paul’s message. One coming new to the Scriptures has no difficulty understanding it. Tragically, those who should be more experienced isolate verses to support the two-stage coming.

Pre-tribs are fond of quoting 1 Thessalonians 4:14 as a text to support a prior coming for the church. The text however says that “God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep.” Jesus, in other words, is seen here coming with the church, having raised the dead and assembled them with the surviving Christians.

### A Divided Second Coming?

Pre-tribs have invented the theory which divides the second coming (as well as churches). They speak of the rapture as an event not to be confused with the “revelation.” The latter, they say, is the public revelation of Jesus, but they expect to be raptured seven years earlier. What they are waiting for in hopeful anticipation is the rapture, not the revelation. But the New Testament Church was expecting the revelation. Once again the theory puts its adherents on a collision course with the Bible: “You are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for the **revelation** of our lord Jesus Messiah” (1 Cor. 1:7).

The theory proposes that Christians will find relief from the tribulations of this life when Jesus comes secretly to take away his church seven years before his arrival to punish the world. Paul taught nothing of the sort. He tells us when the church will find relief from the tribulation:

“God will give relief to you who are troubled and to us as well. **This will happen when** the lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire dealing out punishment to those who do not know God and do not obey the Gospel of our lord Jesus” (2 Thess. 1:7-8).

### Jesus’ Outline for the End of the Age

Just as Paul described the gathering of the faithful and associated this event with the glorious public arrival of Jesus (2 Thess. 2:1-2) so Jesus also gives us a simple outline of God’s program for the end of the present age:

“When you see standing in the holy place the abomination which causes desolation, predicted by the prophet Daniel — let the reader understand — then

those living in Judea should flee to the mountains...for then there will be a great tribulation unequalled from the beginning of the world until now, and never to be equaled again...Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened...and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and brilliant majesty. He will send out his angels with a trumpet blast [cp. ‘he will come down from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet call of God,’ 1 Thess. 4:16], and they will gather together his chosen from every direction, from one end of heaven and earth to the other” (Matt. 24:15, 16, 21, 29-31).

### One Taken and One Left

Perhaps the most daring of all attempts to divide the Second Coming into two events separated by seven years is the use of Matthew 24:40-41: “Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken, one will be left. Two women will be grinding grain at the mill; one will be taken, and the other left.”

But when is this? The previous verse (39) explains: it is when the Son of Man comes to a heedless world just as the flood swept away the unbelieving civilization in Noah’s day. It is when Jesus comes to punish the world that “one is taken and one left.”

The separate “second coming” seven years early is revealed as an illusion. As Dr. Campbell Morgan said, “It is without any biblical basis whatever.”

What else have you accepted as truth from the Bible without examining it carefully? The Scriptures warn us that belief in what is false will lead to our ruin (2 Thess. 2:11). Make Bible study your first priority. You cannot afford not to.

### Postscript on Alexander Reese

The following contains a fascinating statement by the author of a recognized classic on the rapture question. The book is *The Approaching Advent of Christ* by Alexander Reese (1975).

Reese was for many years a Presbyterian missionary in Brazil, and an ardent premillennialist. After 20 years of intensive study of prophetic theories and writings, he set out to refute the pre-tribulation views he had held and propagated from his youth. He remained a premillennialist and futurist but abandoned the pre-tribulation rapture theory.

The statements which struck me as interesting were:

“I thought I was accepting truths as well established in Scripture as the main fact of Christ’s return” (p. 290).

“My mortification was greater when I learned that our professor had, earlier in life, held to the pre-trib theories, but, after careful study, had subsequently abandoned them as unscriptural” (p. 291).

“I began to search the Scriptures afresh” (p. 292).

“A thorough study of the Scriptures in regard to the resurrection soon showed me that the pre-trib position of a resurrection seven years or more before the conversion of Israel, the destruction of Antichrist, and the inauguration of the Kingdom, was nowhere taught in Scripture, since everywhere the resurrection was located at the Day of the Lord” (p. 293).

“Premillennialism never had a greater millstone round its neck than the [pre-tribulation rapture] scheme” (p. 295).

“The interests of the truth demand that, where we see a wrong doctrine held, it should be refuted and replaced by the true one” (p. 298).

Since the Church is to be the “support and foundation of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15), it seems clear that mistakes in our belief and teaching systems are doing us no good. An easy-going tolerance of mistakes in our own lives and in the corporate life of the church will harm us all. It can only be advantageous, therefore, for each of us to make certain that we are standing up for the Truth of all that Jesus taught. It is fatally easy for us to teach against mistakes we find in other churches, and to bypass issues within our own church.

The pre/post-tribulation problem can, I believe, be settled by careful examination of the evidence. Alexander Reese’s book can be a most useful tool in this process. ✧

## The Gospel of the Kingdom Is for Today!

Dispensationalist William Pettingill writes in *1001 Bible Questions Answered* (1997):

“I have long been convinced and have taught that the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19, 20 is primarily applicable to the Kingdom rather than to the Church. If this were kept in mind we should not fall into confusion regarding our marching orders...The Matthew commission will come into force for the Jewish remnant after the church is caught away [the ‘pre-tribulation rapture’]...”

“The gospel of the kingdom. This is the good news that God purposes to set up on the earth, in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:16) a kingdom, political, spiritual, Israelitish, universal, over which God’s Son, David’s heir, shall be King...”

“Two ‘preachings’ of this Gospel are mentioned, one past, beginning with the ministry of John the Baptist, continued by our Lord and His disciples, and

ending with the Jewish rejection of the King. The other is yet future (Matt. 24:14), during The Great Tribulation, and immediately preceding the coming of the King in glory...”

“All the apostles preached the same Gospel...It is not found in the Old Testament, nor in Matthew, Mark or Luke” (p. 124-125).

This is false! Please listen to George Ladd when he correctly says:

“Some Bible teachers say that the Gospel of the Kingdom is not the Gospel of salvation. It is rather a gospel announcing the return of Christ which will be preached in the tribulation by a Jewish remnant after the Church is gone. We cannot deal at length with that problem, but we can discover that **the Gospel of the kingdom is the Gospel which was proclaimed by the apostles in the early Church...**”

“In Acts 8:12, Philip went down to Samaria and preached the Gospel. The Revised Standard Version accurately describes his mission in these words: ‘he preached good news about the kingdom of God.’ Literally translated, the words are, ‘**Gospeling concerning the kingdom of God**’...”

In Acts 28:23-31 “Paul preached to the Jews the Kingdom of God; they rejected it. Therefore ‘this salvation of God’ was then offered to the Gentiles...**The Kingdom was preached to the Jews, and when they rejected it the same Kingdom was proclaimed to the Gentiles. The Good News about the Kingdom of God was Paul’s message for both Jews and Gentiles**” (George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, 1988, p. 59-60). ✧

### Spot the Error!

“The Christian doctrine of the Trinity does not contradict this text [Deut. 6:4], although [the Shema] involves a *different understanding* of the concept of trinity in the Godhead” (*Deuteronomy, Tyndale Commentary*, p. 121).

What is this “different understanding”? How do you define it? Truth is cleverly covered and the “difference” is in fact a contradiction, but this is not stated. Shhh!

Millard Erickson writes that “it may be necessary, in order to convey the unusual meaning involved in this doctrine [the Trinity], to utilize...‘logically odd language.’ This means using language in such a way as intentionally to commit grammatical errors. Thus, I have sometimes said of the Trinity, ‘He are three,’ or ‘They is one’!” (*God in Three Persons*, p. 270).

Note that even Merriam-Webster’s dictionary now says that “they, them, and theirs” are permissible pronouns for one person!

## Assyria and Iran in Prophecy

Ezra 6:22 reads: “They observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with joy, for the LORD had given them joy and had changed the opinion of the **king of Assyria** toward them so that he assisted them in the work on the temple of God, the God of Israel” (Ezr. 6:22 NET).

In this verse the nation of Persia, i.e. Iran, is called “Assyria.” Assyria, as we demonstrated in our “The Assyrian in Messianic Prophecy” (at [focusonthekingdom.org](http://focusonthekingdom.org)) is the end-time enemy of Israel. How remarkable then that in our current news Iran is the mastermind behind the violent opposition to Israel.

The main players, Israel and Assyria (Persia or Iran, Ezra 6:22) seem to be pointing to the end-time prophecies. We are setting no dates of course, but do watch what Iran continues to do.

The ethnic Jews in Israel, who are of course not Christian believers, taken as a whole, will be woken up to their need to accept and believe their Messiah, and ours, who has already come, and will come again at his Parousia (Second Coming). Remember that Jews killed him, and must repent of this.

In the end, a remnant of now unconverted Jews will come to their senses and believe that Jesus was and is the Messiah, and thus believe and love truth for salvation (2 Thess. 2:10; see also Romans chapters 9-11). May Your Kingdom come!

## Comments

• “I’d like to thank you again for your magazine which has come regularly every month. I do enjoy receiving it. I wonder if one of your articles could explain your thinking on the tribulation and the rapture, pre, mid, or post-tribulation.” — *England*

*Please see the article “The Pre-Tribulation Rapture: Truth or Trap?” in this issue. — Editor*

• “I have been receiving *Focus on the Kingdom* for several years. I wanted you to know that these pamphlets of spiritual information have been an awesome gift for me and my husband. We always learn so much from you and of course Barbara, along with others. We have also purchased a couple of your books over the years. It’s been my experience that lots of people can teach the Scriptures, but you and Barbara have the ability to bring understanding into full view. So, I just wanted to thank you and everyone else who provides interesting topics to this pamphlet, and let you all know how much of a blessing and impact you have made in our lives.” — *South Dakota*

• “I receive my *Focus on the Kingdom* from you every month, and I became your student through it. I have a complete file of all of them that you sent me and none of them is missing. And I understand what to preach: the Gospel of the Kingdom. For many years I’ve been praying that God would open my heart to have a right understanding about Him. I knew that God is not a Trinity since I was a young boy. I was born a Catholic and converted to a born-again denomination at 15 years old. All everywhere around are Trinitarian. And I became a Trinitarian defender and apologist against other religions in my country. To make my story short, one day I opened my laptop and I saw you debating against well-known Trinitarian ministers like James White and others. Then at last I found the missing treasure that I was seeking. Since that time I decided to leave the denomination. I reject the Trinity because for me it is paganism, absolute paganism. Now I find people to stand with me in my walk with God YHVH, the one and only true God, and the one and only true Messiah, the man Jesus Christ. All this true knowledge was confirmed through you.” — *Philippines*

• “I want to say some words of heartfelt thanks for the helpful online material concerning Unitary Monotheism. The various YouTube presentations are especially illuminating. And I’ve just finished your *Jesus was Not a Trinitarian*, which is scholarly and excellent. First a little background about myself: As a child I was sent to the Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic schools. In my late teens I developed a keen interest in the Bible and in Church History. After much study and research — all the while praying for illumination — I became convinced Satan’s first lie was in the Garden of Eden, telling Eve she had an immortal soul (Gen. 3:4). This diabolical deception is the root cause of so many false doctrines in ‘Churchianity.’ I see clearly that the dead lie asleep in the ground, the repentant will be raised to everlasting life in the kingdom on the surface of the earth and the wicked will be reduced to ashes, never to exist again. That’s all thoroughly scriptural! In recent years I’ve started to wonder, if traditional Christianity has been so wrong about the immortality of the soul, endless torment etc. for 16 centuries what other post-biblical/unbiblical fictions has she been peddling unchallenged? That brought me to the Trinity doctrine, which I’ve never been able to understand. I’ve prayed for more illumination and done extensive research. I’m close to making an official statement to my friends about the Trinity in the coming days. So thanks again for all the online material! May God Our Father, and His Messiah the man Jesus, give joy and peace to you and your family.” — *Ireland*