Here’s a unique opportunity.

Well, it’s not unique because it’s one you’ve had before. But you get it now again!

As most of you probably know, the book I am working on, tentatively titled, The Triumph of Christianity, is about the Christianization of the Roman Empire. How did the Christian movement grow from about 20 people soon after Jesus’ death to some 30 million people in less than four hundred years? That’s a lot of converts! And it’s not an easy question to answer. I’ve been thinking about it for a long time. (I actually taught a PhD seminar on the topic nearly 20 years ago!)

I am especially excited about this book because I have moved to a new publisher. My past seven trade books have all been with HarperOne. That was a great experience and I will never, ever regret it. But I have decided to move on to something else, and last summer negotiated a contract with Simon & Schuster, one of the three largest trade publishers in the world. They have a strong historical focus, and I look very much forward to working with them.

I have started writing the book, and plan to have a draft of it finished by, say, mid-July, gods willing.

That’s where opportunity is knocking. I would like to use this moment to raise some extra funds for the blog.

So here’s the (possible) deal. I will give anyone who is willing to donate $1000 to the blog the opportunity to read a draft of the book and make comments on it. I will then consider the comments as I make further revisions, prior to submitting the book to my publisher. (I did this with my last book if you recall; and I found it extremely useful.) If you do this, I will acknowledge you by name in the acknowledgements in the book.

This is a win-win-win situation, if you have the funds that make it possible. You get to see the book before it goes into production; I get the benefits of your insights; and most important for me, we raise more money for the charities that the blog supports. No one loses!

So, are you interested? I would get the book to you electronically in three or four weeks, and I would like you to have comments back to me about a month later at the latest. All it would take would be a donation on your part in advance.

Everyone who is interested, let me know. Everyone who is not interested, well, you’ll need to wait sixteen months or so before you see the book in published form!