



The Midnight Cry

December 2010, Volume 2, Number 9

A Magazine of Urgent Understanding



**The Five
Witnesses
of Christ**

You Decide!



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From the Editor ...



The mid-term elections are over! A tremendous POWER struggle has thrust the politically conservative Republican Party into control of the US House of Representatives, given them gains in the Senate and sweeping victories in the gubernatorial and legislative races in the state governments.

Satan the devil is the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4). In Luke 4, Satan intrudes on the 40-day fast that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was concluding. Jesus was at His physical end—He was exhausted and starved physically, but He was at the peak of spiritual strength by being totally yielded to God (II Cor. 12:9). Satan, beholding the emaciated appearance of Christ, and not understanding the situation, thought it was the opportune time to "tempt" the Son of God. (Mr. John Durrad's article in this issue, titled "The Five Witnesses of Jesus," touches on the humanity of God in the flesh.)

In verses 5-7, the devil offers Christ the kingdoms of this world:

“ And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.”

Was that a true statement by Satan? Does he have the POWER over all the kingdoms of the earth and to give it to whom he wishes?

Jesus Christ was not "tempted" or fooled by Satan's offer! He knew that evil creature—He had originally created him as the "anointed cherub," Lucifer, and saw him change from a "light-bringer" to the rebellious and completely evil "ruler of darkness," Satan, the devil! Jesus, totally in charge, commanded Satan to "get away from here, Satan!" Our Lord knew Satan was a wretched LIAR!

He tells us in John 8:44 why we must never believe ANYTHING Satan or his ministers proclaim:

“ Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

Jesus, as the God of the Old Testament, the WORD, spoke through His prophet, Daniel, the following words to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon:

“ This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High”

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THE FIVE WITNESSES OF CHRIST

By John Durrad

Jesus Christ said, "I am the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:26). Quite a statement! He also said, "I and my Father are one." Quite a statement (John 10:30)! He also claimed that no man can come to the Father except through Him. Jesus Christ was claiming to be the Saviour of mankind. He was claiming to be the very Son of the Almighty God. He was claiming to be God in the flesh. Do we believe that? Does every member of the Laodicean Church and those of the multiple hundreds of the split-off groups believe that? Do we believe Christ was who He said He was? Not many in Christ's day believed Him.

“While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him (John 12:36-37).

They didn't believe Christ, and He was among them! But how do you, dear reader, know Christ was – and is – who He claims He is? Anyone could say what Christ said, but just saying something doesn't make it true. Christ knew this. He even said

that if He bore witness of Himself, His witness would not be true. He knew the principle of establishing a fact by a witness. A witness is one who, or that which, furnishes evidence or proof. A witness can establish a fact. We know that in a court of law, if a witness fails to show up, the whole case can collapse.

In Matthew 18:15-17, Christ shows us how important a witness is when we are dealing with real or imagined offenses between brethren. And we know that even between God's people offenses do sometimes occur (James 3:2).

So then, where is the witness, or witnesses, who can confirm that Christ is who He claims He is? Well, of course, we have to go right back to scripture, the inspired Word of God, for the answer. Where else would we look? If you are part of God's Church, you have an added ingredient, which many in Christ's day, and most today, do not have. That is, of course, God's Holy Spirit, and that gives us faith. However, we do still have to prove all things.

So let us look at the witnesses that Christ brought forward to testify that He indeed was, and is, The Christ. "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgement is just: because I seek

not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witnesses of myself, my witness is not true" (John 5:30-31). This doesn't mean that Christ isn't speaking the truth--just that He wouldn't be believed. So here is Christ Himself saying that we don't have to just accept His word; we can have proof. He knew something else would be necessary to bear record (witness) that His words were true.

“There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John [the Baptist], and he bare witness unto the truth (John 5:32-33).

Christ is saying that when He makes claims about Himself, they are not believed; but someone else – John – is making these claims for Him, too.

THE FIRST WITNESS

The first witness Christ brings forward is John the Baptist.

“But I received not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

He was a burning and a shining

light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light (John 5:34-35).

Christ's testimony was not from man; but nevertheless, John's testimony was as a shining lamp which caused many to rejoice (John 1:1-8).

So who was this John? What were his credentials? Where did he get his authority? How did he know and understand that Jesus was the Christ?

“There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments, and ordinances [Levitical] of the Lord blameless (Luke 1:5-6).

These were John's parents. He had been taught correct principles from childhood. John's parents were righteous before God. An angel had appeared before Zacharias to tell him his wife Elizabeth would bear him a son to be called John, who would turn many in Israel to God. He would go before Christ in the spirit and power of Elijah to make ready a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:11-17). This was the man who Christ would point to as a witness to Him! And John spoke forcefully and plainly in identifying Jesus as the Christ. John let there be no doubt as to the identity of Jesus! He boldly exclaimed in John 1:15, 17, 29, and 32, 34, 35, 36:

“...This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me...For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth

came by Jesus Christ...The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world... And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him...And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

John's work was to preach repentance and fulfil Luke 1:11-17 in preparation for Christ to come with the Gospel of the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:14 and Acts 13:24-25). John's witness of Christ was true. It established the facts of Christ's teachings.

Christ didn't stop with John. There are more witnesses to bring forward. "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (John 5:36).

THE SECOND WITNESS

The Second Witness is Christ's works.

Christ said to not believe Him if He did not the works of His Father; but if He did, then at least believe the works and know that the Father and Christ are of one mind (John 10:24-26, 31-32, 37-38). Christ did works which included miracles such as healing. Christ's works actually started THE WORK. Christ's first coming revealed Him as a messenger; He brought a message from God the Father. He came as the messenger of the Covenant. And that covenant message was His

gospel. The word "gospel" means "good news"!

Jesus' proclaiming, or announcing, that good news was the beginning of THE work. This was the very work of God. God the Father, who sent Jesus Christ with that tremendous message from Heaven, viewed it as important. Jesus Himself viewed it as important, and so did John the Baptist, who prepared the way before Christ's first coming. This was Christ's work – the work of God.

Jesus Christ lived a way of life that involved action, deeds. He created God's Church for the very purpose of good works (Eph. 2:10). Christ set the example for all of us, to make us a people zealous of good works (Eph. 2:14). Christ did good works, and these works involved God's law, but they were not just works of the law. They were works of charity, love, outgoing concern for humanity, His creation.

The scribes and Pharisees kept the law, the letter of the law. But Christ did more than that. He kept the spiritual intent of the law, which is also expected of those with God's Holy Spirit. While keeping the strict letter of the law, the scribes and Pharisees ignored the true intent and forgot about judgement, mercy and faith.

Christ explained that it was not the hearers or preachers of the law who would be justified before God, but the DOERS. Christ was a doer. Christians are to be doers. The works that Christ did were not primarily works of law, but works of service, love, compassion and concern. Christ was showing us that true Christianity is a state of mind, not a set of legalistic dogmas.

God has given us certain laws and practices which produce charac-

ter. We need laws to ensure an orderly society, but there is no law that a Christian may keep that will make him righteous, or that will guarantee salvation. Salvation is not a matter of law, but of grace, as Christ plainly taught. And yet law-keeping is still very much a part of the Christian way of life, part of which is a genuine concern for others. "Bear ye one another's burden's, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).

How much concern did Christ have for others? Did He bear our burdens? The greatest of Christ's works was His sacrifice for every one of us. What greater witness could He leave us with than His death and resurrection?

And yet Christ has another witness to bring forward.

“**And the Father, himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape** (John 5:37).

THE THIRD WITNESS

The third witness is the Father Himself.

“**If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which hath testified of his son** (1 John 5:9) (See also 1 John 5:10-13, 20).

During His earthly ministry, Jesus revealed that a father-son relationship existed between Him and His heavenly Father. Throughout the Bible, God stresses the family relationship. First, between God the Father and the Son, and then between each begotten Christian and the Father. The Church is revealed

as the mother of us all, and Church members refer to each other as brothers and sisters. Throughout God's revelation, He shows us that there is a family known as God. In his book *Mystery of the Ages*, Mr. Armstrong wrote:

“**Now once again to Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God..." This originally was written by Moses as God inspired him. Moses wrote in Hebrew. The Hebrew word translated "God" is Elohim – a noun or name, plural in form, but normally singular in grammatical usage. It is the same sort of word as family, church, group – one family consisting of two or more members – one church composed of many members – one group of several persons.**

It is referring to precisely the same persons, making up or comprising the one God, as we found in John 1:1 – the Word and God – and each of those TWO persons is God.

In OTHER WORDS, GOD IS NOW A FAMILY of persons, composed so far of only the TWO – God the Father and Christ the Son. But IF the Holy Spirit of God dwells in someone, and he is being led by God's Spirit, then (Rom. 8:14) he is a begotten son of God. But, at the time of Christ's return to earth in supreme power and glory to set up the KINGDOM OF GOD, restoring the GOVERNMENT of God abolished by Lucifer, then all beings filled and led by God's Spirit shall become BORN Sons of God. The GOD FAMILY will then RULE ALL NATIONS with the GOVERNMENT of GOD RESTORED! (MOA, Pages 50-51)

What a witness that Christ is who

He said He is! Christ said He is the Son of God, and His Father confirms it! But not only that, God also states that His Son is Creator. (Heb 1:1-2) Christ made the world. This is an amazing truth. Our eternal Father is witness that Jesus Christ is not only His beloved Son, but He is also our very Creator and Saviour.

So Christ has given us three witnesses that He is indeed the Christ: John the Baptist; Christ's very Works; God the Father. What more do we need? Well, Christ still has two more witnesses to bring forward.

“**Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me** (John 5:39).

THE FOURTH WITNESS

The Fourth Witness is the Scriptures.

“**But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou has learned them: And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works** (2 Tim 3:14-17).

If one begins reading the Bible continually from beginning to end, we may find it difficult to understand, unless we already have at least a basic knowledge of scripture. The Bible simply cannot be read like any

other book. It is a mystery because it is a coded book. The truths of the Bible are revealed here a little, there a little, scattered from beginning to end. The revelation is only to those with God's Holy Spirit. Christ is the WORD of God, the spokesman, the executive. Jesus was the Word in person. The Bible is the same Word in print.

Christ's very Word, the Bible, gives prophetic witness to His first coming to earth:

“ Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (Is. 7:14).

This was prophesied hundreds of years before the event.

“ Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 'Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel,' which being interpreted is, God with us (Matt 1:22-23).

The scriptures attest to Jesus Christ – and why not? This is God's Word, and the scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35).

So the veracity of Christ is sure, proven by four witnesses. But Christ has yet one more witness.

“ Your approval or disapproval means nothing to me, for as I know so well you don't have God's love within you. I know, because I have come to you representing my Father and you refuse to welcome me, though you readily enough receive those who aren't sent from him, but

represent only themselves. No wonder you can't believe! For you gladly honour each other, but you don't care about the honour that comes from the only God! Yet it is not I who will accuse you of this to the Father – Moses will! Moses, on whose laws you set your hopes of heaven. For you have refused to believe Moses. He wrote about me, but you refuse to believe him, so you refuse to believe in me. And since you don't believe what he wrote, no wonder you don't believe me either (John 5:41-47, *The Living Bible*).

THE FIFTH WITNESS

The Fifth and final Witness is Moses.

Many Bible critics deny that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible—"The Pentateuch," the law. The Bible refutes that:

“ And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of the law in a book, until they were finished. That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee (Deut 31:24-26).

It is not unreasonable that Moses wrote the law. He was an educated and literate man. He was a chief participant in the Exodus and the wanderings of the Israelites. Those who deny that Moses wrote the law say it was written in various periods of religious development, written over a span of centuries. Why would man want to deny

that Moses was the author? The answer is simple! Once men admit that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, it becomes impossible to deny THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE LAW, and men look for every excuse not to obey God!

Moses wrote down the law; but God, not Moses, is the real author of the law. This gives the words of Moses great authority (Deut. 18:15, Acts 3:22). Moses was a great witness for Christ.

“ And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after (Heb. 3:5).

Three men, Peter, James and John, were able to see the Kingdom of God in a vision (Matt. 17). In this vision, Jesus, who was with them, became transfigured, appearing as the glorified Christ. Two others appeared with Him in this vision, a glimpse into the coming Kingdom. They were Elijah and Moses! Both Elijah and Moses have qualified for very high positions in the Kingdom of God. Moses was the one through whom the God of the Old Testament – who later became Jesus Christ – gave the law and statutes of government. So when Christ came to earth some 1400 years after Moses, He knew those laws; He had given them to Moses! They were the immutable, not susceptible to any alteration, laws of God!

Many people throughout the ages have said they are the Christ. People say it today, but nobody believes them, and why should they? Rather, they are mocked and ridiculed. Just saying something doesn't make it a fact. Not very many believed Jesus Christ. But some do believe He

Continued on page 13.

And At Midnight There Was A Cry Made...

Will You Be Wise?

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

Rev. 3: 7-12 &
Matt. 25: 1-13

The Midnight



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Who Are the “Basest” of Men?

By Robert Ardis

An historic victory in United States politics was achieved by the Republican Party in the mid-term elections on November 2. This outstanding victory was made possible by a grass-roots movement to return the nation to the ideals of the founding fathers, as declared in the U.S. Constitution. The “Tea Party” began as individual town meetings that sprang up all over the country and were promoted by prominent conservative personalities.

“Get out and vote” was the rallying cry of the competing national parties and the individual candidates. Both sides spent billions of dollars on ads that portrayed opponents as rogues, scoundrels, crooks and worse. But vote they did!

Were the voters really responsible for the historic results of that political battle? The Eternal God of heaven states in no uncertain words that

“The Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever He will, and sets up over it the basest of men (Dan. 4:17)!”

Daniel the prophet was addressing King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon on behalf of the Most High—God Almighty. In verse 25, Daniel informed the king—the most power-

ful man on the face of the earth at that time—that he would become as a *wild beast* for seven long years until...

“you [Nebuchadnezzar]... know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

Nebuchadnezzar learned the lesson the hard way—but he learned it! Mankind the world over, except in rare instances, has not learned that **God RULES in the kingdoms of men and gives it to whomsoever He will—and sets up over it the ‘basest’ of men!** Man has not learned yet—but he will!

God, the Most High, alone, has this power and authority over the nations of the earth!

He is in charge through the Living Christ Jesus! But Satan desires all of the POWERS of God and lies about the authority that he has been granted by God. He even lied to Jesus at the end of His 40-day fast:

“all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine (Luke 4:6-7).

Nevertheless, Jesus knew Satan—

that he was a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44); thus He commanded Satan to “get away from here”—and Satan slunk away.

How Does Satan Receive Rule?

Because of his rebellion against God, Satan has no real authority, but he takes what he can—even the minds of men who subject themselves to his evil. Judas Iscariot is one case in point of Satan “entering a person” [John 13:2 and 27]. Another case was the king of Babylon, most likely Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, who saw the handwriting on the wall in Daniel 5. But whichever king of Babylon is discussed in Isaiah 14:4-13, he is vividly portrayed as being possessed by Satan.

The king of Tyre in Ezekiel 28 is another evil-minded ruler under the possession of Satan:

“Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God... (vv. 12-13).

The king of Tyre spoken of here lived over 3000 years after the “garden of Eden,” but Satan, possessing

this man's mind, was definitely in Eden practicing his lies.

God Alone Is Sovereign Ruler

Few throughout history have learned and appreciated the fact that God alone is the Sovereign Ruler and gives the kingdoms to whomsoever He desires. Nebuchadnezzar was one who learned the hard way! Another famous king was Cyrus of Persia. Isaiah was inspired to write about Cyrus, by name, 150 years before he was born. Cyrus was commissioned as the Lord's anointed to destroy Babylon and then to ally with Darius the Mede, and establish the second world-ruling empire. God rules in the affairs of men.

Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1-2 declare God's power and plan that could not be thwarted:

“That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid...Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates [of Babylon]; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.”

Observe from the following scrip-

tures who the King of the earth is:

“For God⁴³⁰ is the King⁴⁴²⁸ of all the earth:⁷⁷⁶ sing ye praises with understanding.” (Psa. 47:7)

“For the LORD³⁰⁶⁸ is a great God,⁴¹⁰ and a great King⁴⁴²⁸ above all gods⁴³⁰ (Psa. 95:3).

“Thus saith the LORD³⁰⁶⁸ the King⁴⁴²⁸ of Israel,³⁴⁷⁸ and his redeemer the LORD³⁰⁶⁸ of hosts;⁶⁶³⁵ I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God⁴³⁰ (Isa. 44:6).” Genesis 14:18 states emphatically that God is possessor of heaven and earth:

“And Melchizedek⁴⁴⁴² king⁴⁴²⁸ of Salem⁸⁰⁰⁴ [who became Christ] brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.⁴¹⁰ And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God,⁴¹⁰ possessor⁷⁰⁶⁹ of heaven⁸⁰⁶⁴ and earth:⁷⁷⁶”

Thus the scriptures make it obvious that God is the possessor of heaven and earth! He is the mighty King of the earth! He alone has the authority to give rule over the kingdoms of the earth! The scriptures are for all men to know these facts, as declared in Daniel 4:17:

“...to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.”

Man Given Dominion—Not Satan

Lucifer, the anointed cherub, rebelled against his Creator and to-

tally disqualified himself. He and one third of the angels, who are now miserable, wicked demons, turned from the work God had intended for them.

Isaiah 14:12-13:

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.

The scripture plainly says Lucifer had a throne, but does he, as Satan (the adversary), still have a throne today? Yes, he does! The Bible plainly tells us this in Revelation 2:12-13. Verse 13 in the KJV uses the word *seat*, taken from the Greek *thronos* (*Strong's #2362*). Thus the RV renders #2362 as *throne* in verse 13, in addressing the Pergamos Church: “I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is...”

Jesus makes it known that Satan has a kingdom in Matthew 12:25-26:

“...Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan casteth out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?”

Definitely, Satan has a *kingdom* and a *throne*. But we have also read the scriptures that emphatically state that God is the possessor of heaven and earth; that He is King and God of the earth, and He rules in the kingdoms of men, and He alone sets over the kingdoms those

He chooses. So, where does Satan rule? And hasn't God given man dominion over the earth?

Back to the Beginning

God created Adam and Eve at the foundation of His great plan—and they and their offspring would have dominion over all the earth:

“ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth... and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth (Gen. 1:26).

Man was given dominance over all the earth! And although Adam sinned, man was still in authority over the earth, even in the time of King David, as Psalm 8 testifies:

“ ..What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet...

The apostle Paul quotes from Psalm 8, and then through God's Spirit adds the following in Hebrews 2:8-9:

“ Thou hast put all things in subjection under his [man's] feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not

put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

Continue with verses 10, 14, and 15:

“ For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings... Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

But if man was given dominion over the earth and all in it, why was he “subject to bondage”? What “bondage”?

Comparing the following scriptures will answer the question:

“ Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness (Rom. 6:16)?

Every person who has ever lived, except Jesus, has yielded themselves—have become in bondage—to sin unto death.

“ Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of

the law (1 John 3:4).

“ For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6:23).

“ Wherefore, as by one man sin²⁶⁶ entered into the world,²⁸⁸⁹ and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Rom. 5:12):

Now read Strong's definition of the word *world* (#2889),

kos'-mos: “Probably from the base of G2865; orderly arrangement, that is, decoration; by implication the world (in a wide or narrow sense, including its inhabitants, literally or figuratively [morally]): - adorning, world.”

Sin

Realize that sin entered into the “world” by Adam's sin. He *yielded himself to obey* the voice of his wife instead of the voice of God; thus sin came into the *world*—the *world*—humanity—not the earth. The *world* is the “orderly arrangement” of earth's *human inhabitants*. “World” is equivalent to “all humanity”! However, the *earth* had already been racked with the sins of Satan and his demons.

Remember Jesus' words from John 8:44:

“ Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

What powerful words from our Savior! And we must understand that we, too, were children of Satan through our own sins. Compare John 8:44 with Ephesians 2:1-5:

“And you hath he quickened [made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins. Wherein in time past ye walked⁴⁰⁴³ according to the course¹⁶⁵ of this world,²⁸⁸⁹ according to the prince⁷⁵⁸ of the power¹⁸⁴⁹ of the air,¹⁰⁹ the spirit⁴¹⁵¹ that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation [behavior] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Now let's add a few scriptures to present a clear picture of the dire bondage we were in, and how God rescued us through His mercy and grace:

“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be (Rom. 8:7).

“In whom the god²³¹⁶ of this world¹⁶⁵ hath blinded the minds of them [through lies and deception] which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God,²³¹⁶ should shine unto them (II Cor. 4:4).

Notice “god” and “God” are the same Greek word, *theos* (#2316). Also the word “world” is *Strong's* #165, *aion*, defined as “an age, perpetuity (forever and ever), world, course...” Note that we saw #165 used in Ephesians 2:2 above as: “... according to the course¹⁶⁵ of this

world,²⁸⁸⁹ according to the prince of the power of the air...”

Ephesians 2:4-5: “But God,²³¹⁶ who is rich in mercy, for his great love²⁶ wherewith he loved²⁵ us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by (grace ye are saved;)”

John 3:16: “For¹⁰⁶³ God²³¹⁶ so³⁷⁷⁹ loved²⁵ the³⁵⁸⁸ world,²⁸⁸⁹ that⁵⁶²⁰ he gave¹³²⁵ his⁸⁴⁸ only begotten³⁴³⁹ Son,⁵²⁰⁷ that²⁴⁴³ whosoever³⁹⁵⁶ believeth⁴¹⁰⁰ in¹⁵¹⁹ him⁸⁴⁶ should not³³⁶¹ perish,⁶²² but²³⁵ have²¹⁹² everlasting¹⁶⁶ life.²²²²”

Revelation 13:8 last clause: “... the³⁵⁸⁸ book⁹⁷⁶ of life²²²² of the³⁵⁸⁸ Lamb⁷²¹ slain⁴⁹⁶⁹ from⁵⁷⁵ the foundation²⁶⁰² of the world.²⁸⁸⁹”

The Basest of Men

And we have believed another very mistaken preconceived idea: we have believed that God has placed in the ruling positions of governmental authority the most evil of men! Daniel 4:17 tells us:

“...the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

We have assumed that the “basest of men” refers to every evil person from Cain to Hitler to Saddam Hussein, or the wicked rulers of many of today's nations. That is a misconception and the diametric opposite of the intended meaning.

Notice above in Daniel 4:17 that *basest* is *Strong's* #8215, defined as: “...*shef-al*’ (Chaldee); from H8214; *low*: - basest.” This is the only place in the Old Testament where #8215 is used.

#8214 is defined as: “*shef-al*’ (Chaldee); corresponding to H8213: -

abase, humble, put down, subdue.”

#8213 is defined as: “...*shaw-fale*’; A primitive root; to *depress* or *sink* (especially figuratively to *humiliate*, intransitively or transitively): - abase, bring (cast, put) down, debase, humble (self), be (bring, lay, make, put) low (-er).”

Notice also #8217, defined as: “... *shaw-fawl*’; From H8213; *depressed*, literally or figuratively: - base (-st), humble, low (-er, -ly).”

None of these words or their root words have anything to do with “*evil character*,” as has been assumed. No! Just the opposite! It is describing a humble person, one who has been abased or humiliated.

Examine the following scriptures where these same words are underlined:

“The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low,⁸²¹³ and lifteth up (1 Sam. 2:7).”

“A man's pride shall bring him low:⁸²¹³ but honor shall uphold the humble⁸²¹⁷ in spirit (Pro. 29:23).”

“And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth⁸²¹³ himself: therefore forgive them not (Isa. 2:9).

“The lofty looks of man shall be humbled⁸²¹³... (Isa. 2:11)

“Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase⁸²¹⁴ (Dan. 4:37).

“ And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled⁸²¹⁴ thine heart... (Dan. 5:22)”

“ Who remembered us in our low estate:^{7945, 8216} for his mercy endureth forever... (Psa. 136:23)

“ Better it is to be of a humble⁸²¹⁷ spirit with the lowly,⁶⁰³⁵ than to divide the spoil with the proud (Pro. 16:19).

In none of the scriptures are those words used to indicate the evil or bestial type character that we have always assumed. Not at all! In fact the opposite is obvious! Once the misconception is removed, the New Testament makes apparent what God is stating.

Observe I Corinthians 1:26-29:

“ For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.

Now compare our calling, which Paul mentions above, with Revelation 5:10 and Daniel 7:27:

“ And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth... And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom

under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

With the above scriptures in mind, once again read Daniel 4:17:

“ This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest [humblest] of men.

God is righteous and *changes not!* This is part of God's ultimate plan! The humble are the ones God can work with to produce the kings and priests that shall reign with Christ in the Kingdom of God. But man has rejected God's ways! God allowed man to go his own way and do his own thing for 6000 years. Now 6000 years have ended and man will soon learn, for sure, that all the many forms of governance the nations have tried will not work! Eventually it shall be known that man cannot rule himself, or others, unless it is done God's *righteous way*.

In I Samuel 8:5-8, the record of Israel rejecting the Lord their God as King and Ruler is the sad commentary on man's rebelliousness. God told Samuel,

“ ...for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

In verses 9-18, Israel was warned of the consequences of their decision, but they stubbornly refused to heed the words of God. They desired to follow the idolatrous

nations around them, rejecting the true God and bringing themselves into subjection to vain men under the influence of the *god of this world* (II Cor. 4:4 and Eph. 6:11-12). Instead of being God's model nation living by His righteous law, Israel rejected God's plan and became as wicked as the rest of the hopeless world. But God is not mocked (Gal. 6:7)! During the Millennium, Israel will finally be the example and light to all other nations in living by God's righteous Law.

Until that time, very hard lessons need to be learned. Only those who yield themselves to God's rule in their lives will be spared the horrors of the Great Tribulation that is fast approaching. The faithful of God will be protected in the place He has prepared. And the whole earth will soon witness a GREAT HISTORIC POLITICAL and MILITARY VICTORY—Jesus Christ will become KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS over ALL the EARTH. And the 144,000 FIRSTFRUITS who were humbled during their lifetime of struggle shall be exalted to be the kings and priests who will reign with Christ over Planet Earth.

All men will, indeed, know that the Most High rules in the Kingdom of GOD and gives it to whosoever He will—and sets over it those blessed whom He has exalted! ❖

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From the Editor

ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men (Dan. 4:17).

The scripture plainly informs the reader that God only “**rules in the kingdom of men**”—Satan has no authority to give rule to anyone! And actually, God has given man dominion over the entire earth. Hebrews 2:6-8 states:

“**But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and**

honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

God has given man rule over the kingdoms of the world, but He also states in Daniel 4:17 that He would set up over the kingdom the “basest” of men. The word “basest,” according to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, when used as an adjective has the meaning: *morally bad; contemptible; lowly; inferior in quality or value.* Does this mean that the new Republican congress and the opposing Democrat forces of President Barak Obama that have been placed over the government of the United States are the “basest” of men—the

most evil and lowest in character—to rule over the US?

Haven’t we believed in the past that the terribly evil and cruel despots of recent history, such as Hitler, Stalin, Saddam Hussein, etc., were the “basest” of men, and that they were placed in their ruling positions by God? Is that the truth—or preconceived ideas? The article in this issue of *The Midnight Cry*, titled “Who are the Basest of Men?” will explore the subjects mention here and reveal the surprising facts when examined under the light of God’s truth. What a wonderful blessing it is to drink in life-giving truth from the very Word of God!

Your brother in Christ,



Continued from page 6

The Five Witnesses of Christ

is who He says He is. Some believe He is the Son of God, the very first of the firstfruits.

What about you? If you really believe these things, then you want to be in the Church that Jesus Christ is the Head of. The Church of God’s Faithful (CGF) is set apart by truth. We have over 75 new truths, and the only fruit of Mr. Armstrong’s ministry that survives today is TRUTH! Jesus Christ is the one who gave these truths to His true Church.

How do we know? Because we have God’s Holy Spirit and we have God’s Word. That gives us the faith and understanding to know, and to know that we know! And if Christ told us something, we would believe Him. Christ’s Word is truth!

But Christ leaves us no room for doubt. He gives us five witnesses that will attest that He indeed is

THE CHRIST:

JOHN THE BAPTIST

Now the doubters could say that, of course, John would back Christ up because they were friends. But John was not a liar.

CHRIST’S WORKS

This is more difficult. They could not fault Christ. Even His crucifixion was illegal.

THE FATHER

Again, doubters might say that, of course, a father would back up his son. Again we say God is not a liar.

THE SCRIPTURES

Interestingly, God has so constructed His Bible that those who do not really wish to obey Him, the truth is denied them. God’s truths are *revealed* truths.

MOSES

This witness is really quite difficult for even the most persistent doubters to deny. How could Moses possibly know about Christ, to be able

to write about Him 1400 years before His birth?

“**And he said, Hear now my words: if there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches** (Num. 12:6-8)

Moses was a true witness. He knew the God of the Old Testament, the God who became Jesus Christ. To God’s people all these five witnesses are true, and one day all people will have to admit that.

The testimony stands fixed forever in God’s Word. Christ was, and is, exactly who He said He is.

The witnesses have given their evidence. The case is proven. Court dismissed! ❖

This Month's Top Articles from

The Faithful Watchman

Newsletter of the Church of God's Faithful



Through *The Faithful Watchman*, we endeavor to keep ourselves abreast of how our Lord Jesus Christ is orchestrating the ride of the 4 Horsemen as He sets the scene for the Two Witnesses to begin their 1260 days of prophesying and for the Great Tribulation to begin. Read daily updates to *The Faithful Watchman* online at setapartbytruth.org.

South Koreans and U.S. to Stage a Joint Exercise

WASHINGTON — President Obama and South Korea's president agreed Tuesday night to hold joint military exercises as a first response to North Korea's deadly shelling of a South Korean military installation, as both countries struggled for the second time this year to keep a North Korean provocation from escalating into war.

The exercise will include sending the aircraft carrier George Washington and a number of accompanying ships into the region, both to deter further attacks by the North and to signal to China that unless it reins in its unruly ally it will see an even larger American presence in the vicinity.

Mr. Obama is once again forced to choose among unpalatable choices: responding with verbal condemnations and a modest tightening of sanctions, which has done little to halt new attacks; starting military exercises that are largely symbolic; or reacting strongly, which could risk a broad war in which South Korea's capital, Seoul, would be the first target.

The decision to send the aircraft carrier came as the South Korean military went into what it termed "crisis status." President Lee said he would order strikes on a North Korean base if there were indications of new attacks.

<http://www.nytimes.com/...>

Comment: The threat of war against nations, including the USA, continues to get to the point where there will be no turning back. Jesus Christ was asked the question! "What shall be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the world?" (Age). He replied by saying that many would be deceived, there would be wars, nations and kingdoms would

rise against each other. There would be famines, diseases and earthquakes in many places; and then he said that these would just be the beginnings of sorrows.

Yes, it's going to get worse, much worse, before the Kingdom of God is set up on this earth. Why it is that mankind will have to be forced to be happy? It is because the hardness of men's hearts. Even after the Tribulation and the Heavenly signs and the opening of the Seventh Seal, men will still not want to obey God.

"And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts." Rev 9:20-21.

Yes, the worse is yet to come, but let us pray that the time is now, and get it over with!

As Europe frets, Greece flops

ATHENS, Greece — Sixteen European finance ministers meet in Brussels to address problems in Ireland.

Markets tumble following worry that the crisis in the eurozone could spread as far as Spain.

But here's why everyone's eyes should still be on Greece, which a year ago sparked the European debt crisis by revealing its budget deficit was more than double projections.

It's not just unsustainable levels of government

debt. As those who live and work in Greece know, corruption takes a toll on the economy and each family's pocketbooks.

Greece was recently rated the most corrupt country in Europe according to Transparency International's 2010 Corruption Perception Index, and 78th out of 178 ranked countries. According to the organization, Greece loses about 8 percent of GDP to corruption. In comparison, if all had gone according to plan, the Greek government's austerity measures would have brought the deficit down to 7.8 percent of GDP — in other words, no corruption, no deficit.

<http://www.globalpost.com/...>

Comment: Europe is in trouble. Spain, Greece, Ireland are in dire need of a bailout from the EU to stop them going under financially. It would seem that a main problem is corruption throughout Europe, but especially in Greece. Greece has been rated the most corrupt country in Europe losing about 8 per cent of GDP to corruption. With it being possible to bring the deficit down to 7.8 per cent of GDP the stunning statement was made, "no corruption, no deficit."

Perhaps this should come as no surprise as we know politicians can be very economical with the truth, and those in powerful positions make sure that they don't suffer in these sorry economical times, but rather in too many cases increase their salaries and bonuses whilst laying off ordinary workers.

Speaking spiritually the Bible tells us that corruption cannot inherit incorruption, and to be in the Kingdom of God a change from flesh to spirit is needed.

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor 15:53

Before that happens God expects us all to deal fairly with each other in the flesh, before He is prepared to give us immortality. Looking at the moral state of the world today, we have a lot to learn!

Cholera death toll in Haiti rises above 1,000

PORT-AU-PRINCE—More than 1,000 people have

died from cholera in Haiti and 16,800 have been hospitalized, health officials said Tuesday, as the outbreak spreads among earthquake survivors in the capital's tent cities.

The health ministry death toll of 1,034 — accurate up to Sunday — is 117 higher than the last official toll announced at the weekend, nearly a month after the disease surfaced in the desperately poor Caribbean nation.

Authorities also said 16,799 people had received hospital treatment, some 2,150 more than the last update on November 14.

Haitian officials and aid workers fear the epidemic could spread rapidly if it takes hold in Port-au-Prince's makeshift camps where hundreds of thousands of earthquake refugees live in cramped and unsanitary conditions.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/...>

Comment: It was only just over two years ago when a tropical storm bringing high winds and heavy rain caused the death of a number of people in Haiti. Now in the aftermath of the recent earthquake that has left over one million people homeless the disease of cholera spreads in the crowded slums of this Caribbean country.

Haiti suffers; the world suffers, as the weather continues to impact on people in a devastating way. God controls the weather and God is not pleased with the way that people and nations conduct themselves.

"God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.

For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength...Out of the south cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the north, By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened... He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy." Job 37:5-6, 9-10, 13.

Many people will blame God because they do not like to be corrected for their wrongdoings nor do they want to retain God in their knowledge. (Rom 1:28)

This world is no stranger to adverse weather conditions, and as our societies descend ever deeper into the morality pit its trials will get increasingly worse.

Hijacking of a very middle class protest: Anarchists cause chaos as 50,000 students take to streets over fees

It was supposed to be a day of peaceful protest, with students exercising their democratic right to demonstrate against soaring university fees.

But anarchists hijacked the event, setting off the most violent scenes of student unrest seen in Britain for decades. Militants from far-Left groups whipped up a mix of middle-class students and younger college and school pupils into a frenzy.

The focus of the violence was Tory HQ in central London, where hundreds of thousands of pounds of damage was caused.

Effigies of David Cameron and Nick Clegg were burnt to cheers from a roaring mob.

At least 14 casualties were taken to hospital, seven of them police officers, and 35 demonstrators

were arrested.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/...>

Comment: It started out as a peaceful protest with the majority of students wanting just that. However, the average student should be clever enough to realise that this protest would turn out to be anything but peaceful. Many students were dragged into extreme violence by militants whose aim was to cause as much damage and chaos as possible. Even so there is no excuse for what occurred, and those students that had been whipped up to do things they normally would not consider, must be punished along with the militants.

*“Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.”
Prov 28:7*

With C.C.TV cameras and press photographers on the scene many of the perpetrators of violence will be recognisable to be prosecuted by the law. Otherwise well behaved students will find themselves with a criminal record. Not a good way to start ones career.

If you recognise the signs of the times as prophesied by Herbert W. Armstrong and the World Wide Church of God, and if you are seeking God’s True Church at this late hour, write or call to request our FREE Literature, or download our booklets at www.setapartbytruth.org.

The Midnight Cry Has Begun

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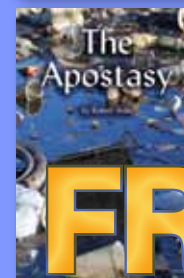
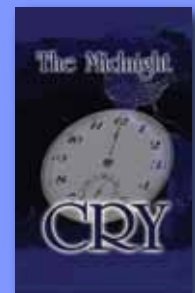
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