

## **The World Ruler Is it Satan or Christ?**

By

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“For he must reign, till he has put all enemies under his feet.” (I Cor. 15:25)

To the naked eye, that is, to one who simply judges by appearance, the world is under the cruel hand of some super-terrorist. In fact, it is well-known that a vast network of conspiracy actually exists with overlapping powers in the Council on Foreign Relations, the International Bankers and other organizations which are securely entrenched in government and business.

Even so, when we pray, we do not pray to the great financial or political powers, but to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, because reasonable men simply cannot get away from the fact that if Christ is Who He said He is, the He must have power over the entire universe.

He said so, Himself. “All authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18). This claim came after He had risen from the grave. If He had power to lay down His life and take it up again, then He has power that is beyond and above anything that is known to man; He must have all the power that He claims to have, including power over the world.

The problem in recognizing that He now reigns arises from the obvious facts that the majority of people do not obey Him and things simply are not going like we think they should if Jesus had control of them. A recent popular song sets forth the promise that if the singer had power over the world, he would eliminate war, hunger, sorrow, and every problem that man faces. In other words, the song is saying that man could do a lot better job of things than is being done, and therefore Christ either is **not** ruling the world or if He is, He is bungling it.

The truth is that when power becomes public, ruin follows. As long as our own nation was a Republic ruled by constitutional law there was progress. But with the advent of the State supported school, the idea of democracy — power to the people — has gained support until the nation is shattered with dishonesty, violence and bureaucratic tyranny. As minorities are granted power, under the false name of “rights,” they come out usually in worse condition than before. The young people of this generation have been given more power to rule themselves than ever before in history, and they are the most miserable.

The lesson is plain: man is not a proper judge of how the world should be ruled.

The Christian has no doubt about Christ’s power. Jesus proved His power over the world even when He was confined to human flesh in the small localities of Judea and Galilee. By a word He halted the fury of the elements, calming the wind and the sea. Without even uttering a word He healed the woman who had a hemorrhage for 12 years, and had spent every dime she had on physicians who could do nothing for her. One command from Him and the dead awakened to life again. He overruled Satan and cast out the demons. At His will the fig tree withered and died in a matter of a few hours, demonstrating Christ’s power to seal the doom of the rebellious nation of Israel, even as

He promised when He said that the Kingdom would be taken from them, and given to others (Matt. 21:43). Thus He ruled the elements, ruled over man's mortal bodies — even after they were dead, ruled over nature, over spirits and over nations.

But having such rule did not keep Him from submitting to enemies and being put to death. He claimed that He could call forth 12 legions of angels to overthrow the Roman soldiers who were under control of the Pharisees. That He submitted to their will was no sign that they were in control, rather it proves that He had power to carry out His mission: to die on the cross for the sins of His people.

David, who was a type and forerunner of Christ, wrote of Christ's rule. "Jehovah said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Jehovah will send forth the rod of your strength out of Zion: Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies" (Psa. 110). Notice what this prophecy of David tells us. First, that Jesus is to sit at God's right hand **until** His enemies are vanquished. Second, that His rule is to be in the **midst** of enemies. Jesus quoted this Psalm to show that He **was** the Messiah, and that He was ready to take the reigns of power and rule (Matt. 22:44, Mark 12:36 and Luke 20:42–43). On Pentecost, Peter explained that David had prophesied that one would sit on his throne, and "foreseeing this, spoke of the resurrection of the Christ." Peter then declared that the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit that day was evidence of the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning Christ's rule. "For David ascended not into the heavens: but he said himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet" (Acts 2:31, 34–35). In Hebrews the Psalm (110) is quoted again to show that Jesus is the One through whom God speaks and the One Who ahs all things under His power (Heb. 1:13).

We next must see that Christ's rule is to be "in the midst" of His enemies.

The Satanic power still exists. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood...but against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12). Peter preached that "through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). Jesus said that "in the world you have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). From this we learn two things; 1) That He has power over the world, for in order to overcome, one must have power over that which he overcomes; 2) in spite of this fact, we are still going to have to endure tribulation. This life is a time of selection, of testing and growth. Peter wrote that "now for a little while, if need be, you have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perishes though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:5–7). "If need be," he said. And who knows whether or not we "need be" put to grief? Certainly not ourselves. If we have anything to say about it, we will avoid trial and grief if possible. But Christ is in power, and by His inexorable rule, He chooses when we shall be put to grief, for our own glory and honor at His return. Were He not the Ruler of the universe, how could He possibly control the timing and affairs about us that try us?

It is true that "the whole world lies in the evil one," as John wrote, and Paul described Satan as the "god of this world." But the evil one has no power to rule. The world of unbelievers "lie in the evil one" because they are content to abide in Satan's fellowship. It is because unbelievers worship the devil through a million idols that he becomes their god. The fact that men worship him, does not prove that Satan is sovereign with any power to do as he pleases over the world. He is a defeated foe. Christ has

demolished his power, even though he continues to tempt men, and has his agents (spirits) everywhere conspiring and deceiving. Even in all of this, Christ hold the scepter of righteousness so that “to them that love God all things work together for good” (Rom. 8:28).

Satan continues to be active, but is held in check by Christ, who defeated him in the wilderness of temptation, and robbed him of his power at the cross. He is miserably aware of his subjection to Christ, and is said to have great wrath, “knowing that he has but a short time” (Rev. 12:12). So limited is his power that James wrote, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” This certainly doesn’t sound like the reaction of one who is a ruler in any sense. Jesus said that we need not fear the world which follows Satan’s cunning, but rather to “fear Him Who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna (hell)” (Matt. 10:28, Luke 12:4–5). Christ has power to “put all his enemies under His feet,” and the final destiny of his enemies will be death in hell.

Two things that grip the world today are fear and anger — fear of the things happening all around, fear of life and fear of death; angry because they cannot quite come to grips with the enemy and defeat it. But to those who are called by Christ, there is neither fear nor anger, but faith and hope. He is “working all things after the counsel of His will.” Man’s disbelief does not diminish Christ’s rule. He was not put in power by popular vote. When evil seems to triumph, Christ uses it for His own final purpose, even as Joseph stated concerning his brothers who sold him into slavery. “You thought evil against me, but God meant it for good” (Gen. 50:20).

Men may think that they rule because the vote, elect, pass laws and judge. But Daniel wrote that it is God “who removes kings and sets up kings” (Dan. 2:21).

In the end, Christ swill be manifest as the Only Potentate, the real ruler of the world. We do not know when He will return. Neither did He, nor did Peter nor Paul. But we know that He rules, and that should be sufficient cause for us to rejoice, to give thanks and to humbly submit to His commands.

In the face of the enemy’s accusations and hatred for Christ, let us lift our voices as did David in praise to Christ as the Lord, who rules the world in the midst of His enemies. In the hour of tribulation, we have not to rely on the words of weak and treacherous men, but on the word of the faithful King who has all power, and whose word cannot fail.

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