

# Midnight Cry Messenger

FREELY SHARED WITH THOSE WHO ARE HUNGRY FOR TRUTH — NOT TO BE SOLD

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## People Who Know Their God

by Phil Enlow

As long as I can remember I have heard preachers refer to part of a verse in Daniel to exhort and encourage God's people. That verse is Dan. 11:32 – "... the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (KJV).

Daniel was a prophet who lived during the time of Israel's Babylonian captivity. God enabled him to occupy a position of great honor and influence in the Babylonian empire and also the Persian Empire that followed. It is a testament to God's ultimate sovereignty in human affairs that he was able not only to survive the Persian conquest but to retain that position of honor in the new order.

Remember the revelation of that truth to which

Nebuchadnezzar was brought, recorded in Dan. 4:34-35 – "His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done?'"

That is surely a truth we need always to remember, especially when it appears that evil is triumphing. Nothing is ever out of God's control or an obstacle to the fulfillment of His purpose, however it may seem.

Another result of Nebuchadnezzar's experience was that people wherever his empire held any influence heard about Daniel and his God, no doubt including the Persians. What a great God we serve!

That verse in chapter 11 of Daniel is part of a series of visions and revelations given concerning the future. There is a lot of theological debate concern-

ing their fulfillment but at the very least it is safe to say that Daniel was shown a number of things that were to unfold during the time of the Persian Empire and beyond.

Persia was to continue its position of dominance until a great king from Greece would arise and conquer them. From our perspective it is obvious the prophecy referred to Alexander the Great. Alexander is considered one of the most influential people in history. He began his reign at 20 and died shortly before his 33<sup>rd</sup> birthday yet in that short time transformed the world of his day.

He not only conquered vast territories extending from Greece down to Egypt and over to northwest India but spread Greek culture everywhere as well. Descendants of his armies can be found throughout the region to this day. Alexandria in Egypt is named for him.

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## God's Last Move

by C. Parker Thomas

*The following article was published in the Midnight Cry Messenger in 1969.*

"Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many; And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

"And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it

is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." Luke 14:16-24.

This parable is more than a picture of the gospel invitation and man's typical excuses in saying "no." It is a prophetic picture of the three major moves or divine dealings with man beginning with the Jewish or Israelite nation. There are many beautiful types in it that we might mention briefly. The man and the great feast certainly represents God, the Father, and His provision of matchless grace through human instruments in the proclamation of the gospel.

The servant represents the Spirit working in and through human instruments in the proclamation of

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**Editor: Phil Enlow**

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## Editor's Letter

Dear Saints,

Greetings to all in the wonderful name of Jesus! I trust this issue finds you spiritually alert and looking to the Lord. He has promised never to leave us nor forsake us. At the same time we are exhorted to be awake and sober (1 Thess. 5:6).

Unless you are living in a cave you are aware that the chaos and uncertainty of this present world is growing by the hour. God does not want His people to live in fear but He also doesn't want us to live with the fantasy that everything will continue as it is. That's not the world we live in.

Such a time came in Daniel's time, recorded for us in Daniel 5. God had revealed Himself mightily to Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon's greatest king. However, at this time Belshazzar reigned and from the events of Daniel 5 it is easy to see that both Daniel and his God had been largely forgotten.

Belshazzar had arranged a great banquet. During the banquet he and his nobles drank wine from the vessels taken from God's temple in Jerusalem and as they drank they praised their heathen gods. Babylonian society had sunk to a new low of pride, complacency and contempt for the one true God.

Kind of sounds like America. In spite of her many faults God has greatly blessed America but as a nation we have turned away and are running as fast as we can away from God. The terrorist attack of Sept. 11 shook us for awhile, but the descent into darkness has not only resumed but grown much faster.

In the middle of Belshazzar's drunken feast they suddenly saw a disembodied human hand writing on the wall. Belshazzar was terrified and promised riches and power to anyone able to interpret the writing. No one was able. At this time Daniel was evidently not part of the current power structure but somebody remembered him, so he was called in. The message was in Hebrew and was a message of imminent judgment. That very night the kingdom fell to the Medes and Persians.

How long does America have? How long will the current world order stand? I don't know, but as they say, "The handwriting is on the wall."

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After his death the empire was broken into four parts by various factions each seeking to wield power. Of these, one, the Seleucids, was north of the restored nation of Israel and another, the kingdom of the Ptolemies, was in Egypt to the south. Israel was frequently caught in the middle of their conflicts. All of this was foretold to Daniel by heavenly messengers including Gabriel.

### Heavenly Battles

Chapter 10 gives us an interesting glimpse into the spirit realm. Daniel has fasted and sought God in earnest prayer for three weeks. He is overwhelmed when the angel comes but is encouraged and given strength to stand up and listen.

In Dan. 10:12-13 the angel says, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia."

Here we see a demon prince connected with Persia and a very real battle between the angelic and demonic kingdoms. This is an example, not only of the kind of thing that happens beyond the realm of our senses, but of the fact that although God is over all, there are real battles for both men and angels to fight in the outworking of His purposes.

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My mind was recently drawn again to a subject I had preached on awhile back and the burden I felt is expressed in the lead article, "People Who Know Their God." It is our nature to desire security and comfort and America has provided plenty of that – along with an unhealthy dose of complacency. I sense more and more that God wants to get His people ready for the unfolding of events that are on our doorstep.

My mind also went back to an old article by Bro. Thomas entitled, "God's Last Move." The focus in his article concerned the fact that while the end of the age will be full of trouble, yet God is still at work and will use that very time of trouble to finish what He is doing in the earth.

Although very different, both articles share the same burden, that God's people have a vision beyond mere survival, but rather of being instruments that God can use at such a time.

Till next time may God's rich blessings be yours.

Your brother in Christ,  
Phil Enlow

### The Book of Truth

The angel also makes reference in verse 21 to "the Book of Truth." The "Truth" the angel shared with Daniel from that book had to do with events that were in the future from Daniel's point of view. That reminds us that although we on earth experience the unfolding of events over time yet in a very real sense history has already been written! Guess what! The devil loses! Notice the references to "the appointed time" in chapter 11, verses 29 and 35, for example. When God appoints something, it happens!

Beginning in verse 21 we find a ruler arising in the northern kingdom who is described as a "contemptible person." He is known in history as Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a wicked man who did whatever it took to gain both power and wealth.

The major conflicts Antiochus had were with Egypt but he hated the Jews and their religion. He sought to undermine them in various ways but finally crushed them without mercy. He famously defiled the temple, slaughtering a hog on the altar and rededicating it to Zeus. He outlawed any observance of the Jewish law, committing atrocities against any who resisted.

His deeds bring to mind many of the things done by ISIS in our day. Some who kept the Sabbath were betrayed and burned to death. Mothers with their infants were thrown from the city wall over the issue of circumcision. Tens of thousands were killed or sent off into slavery.

### Compromise and Betrayal

Of course times like these tend to expose people's true condition. Many among the Israelites had no true faith, no real loyalty to God or His covenant and were easily compromised. Verse 32 begins, "With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant ...." Their primary motivation was self-interest, self-preservation. Gaining favor from a wicked ruler by betraying fellow Jews was a small price to pay. Where was their supposed God in all that was happening? Why didn't He stop it?

Remember the words of Jesus foretelling a time of persecution to come in Matt. 24:10-13 – "At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved."

The principles we see at work both in Daniel 11 and also in Matt. 24 have occurred throughout history, but will be especially evident at the end of the age. The devil's purpose is to destroy any divine influence among men and God's purpose is to sepa-

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rate and purify those who are His.

And so we see that even in the time of Antiochus and his attempt to destroy the Jews' religion there were those who remained faithful, refusing to compromise. It is easy to suppose, when we read in the scriptures about great victories won through faith, miraculous deliverances from fire, lions, and giants, that God's response to those who remain faithful at such a time would be to immediately enter the scene and once again do something amazing.

But that didn't happen. Dan. 11:36 tells us that "The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place."

### What is Victory?

That doesn't fit many people's ideas about God, that He would stand back and allow evil to reign to the point of seeing His faithful ones suffer and even die. That is because our thinking is so earth-bound. We don't see the big picture of what God is doing. To us it is a great victory when God delivers someone from trouble and a seeming defeat when He doesn't, particularly when that one dies at the hands of evil men.

But read once again Hebrews chapter 11 where the so-called heroes of faith are listed. Yes, God did many great and miraculous things through those who had faith. But look at verses 35-38 where it says, "Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground."

Then note what follows in verse 39: "These were all commended for their faith..." ALL! God's purpose was served in every instance regardless of the earthly outcome and all were equally worthy of honor in His sight. We are in need of a more heavenly definition of "victory." In fact 1 John 5:4 reminds that faith IS the victory, a victory that overcomes the world.

From time to time my mind goes to Isa. 57:1-2. There the Lord gives us a glimpse of how He sees the death of His faithful ones. "The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the

righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death."

Far from being a tragedy, the death of a saint is deliverance and victory! The more we grasp this the less we will fear death. Remember Paul's words in Phil. 1:21, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."

Often we look for escape from trouble. God is looking for faithfulness, however circumstances may unfold in a particular life. Remember Rev. 2:10 where the church at Smyrna was told of persecution to come and then exhorted, "Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life."

And so evil reigned for a time. In Dan. 11:33-35 we read, "Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time."

I sense that these are truths that God's people especially need in this hour as evil is being allowed to reign among men in ever-increasing measure. We haven't seen anything yet. I am convinced that the greatest expression of evil the world will ever see is yet to come. Many of our brothers and sisters live under persecution right now but many others are asleep and unprepared.

God is seeking even now to get His people ready for all that lies ahead. Thank God we are on the winning side but there are still battles to be fought.

### The Secret

But what is the secret? What was it that enabled some to stand strong in the days of Antiochus and others to just crumble? Our text tells us: "... the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (KJV). In the NIV: "... the people who know their God will firmly resist him." In the ESV: "... the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action."

Each translation says the same thing using slightly different wording. The key is obviously that certain people "knew their God." We all are aware of the difference between knowing *about* someone and actually *knowing* them. All of the Israelites knew *about* God. It was their national heritage, embodied in traditions that dated back to Moses and Abraham.

But that clearly was not enough – and it's not enough today. Multitudes practice some form of Christian "religion" that embodies traditional beliefs in God and Jesus Christ. But how many have actually come to *know* Him in a transforming en-

counter resulting in the new birth? And how many who actually have been born again have learned to know Him in a really practical way.

### Paul

There is a difference between coming to know Him in the sense of the new birth and that kind of knowledge. Think of Paul's words in Phil. 3:10-11 – "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead."

Obviously Paul *knew* Christ in the first sense yet in this scripture he expressed an intense desire to *know* Christ in ways that were yet future. And remember, Philippians was written quite late in his ministry. In other words, he sought after the kind of knowledge that comes only with maturity and very personal experience.

One simple example is in Phil. 4:12-13 – "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

Paul had *learned*. How had he learned? Did he merely sit in a class and listen to a lecture? Of course not! In the course of his life and ministry he found himself in a great variety of real life experiences in which he *learned* to look to God. He experienced many very difficult things, including persecution with real suffering, dangers, imprisonments, beatings, a stoning in which he survived, and many other things. See 2 Cor. 11:23-33, for example.

In those experiences he sought, not just good principles to live by, but rather to go through them in close communion with Christ, learning to see them through His eyes. He sought to do as Jesus invited in Matt. 11:29, to take his yoke and learn from him. In it all he found there was One Who strengthened him.

Suffering became "sharing in *his* sufferings," a natural part of being a Christian in a hostile world. He saw the need to become "like him in his death," that is, to die to his old life with all of its corrupt motivations. But he also sought to experience in practical ways the power of the new life he had been given.

There is no substitute for these things. Everyone wants to experience Christ on the mountain top but few in the valley, and fewer still in the kinds of valleys Paul went through. And we only truly learn when we go through things while humbling ourselves to what God is seeking to do in us. 1 Peter 5:6-7.

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Paul learned enough about God's ways to know that "... suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." Rom. 5:3-4.

When Paul experienced his "thorn in the flesh" he learned a deep lesson. Of course, his first reaction was to plead with the Lord to take it away. 2 Cor. 12:9-10 gives us the Lord's answer and Paul's reaction. "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

That kind of experience and knowledge makes all the difference when things get difficult. Where an inexperienced believer might panic, one who has learned these things is able to remain strong and push through, not because *they* are strong but because they have experienced God's faithfulness and learned to rely on His strength alone.

### David

David was a man after God's own heart. Where his fellow Israelites knew some things *about* God, David had, from his youth, made it his business to get to *know* God in his everyday life. God used every experience to prepare him for his life's calling, to be a king over God's people.

While David was tending his father's sheep God allowed both a hungry bear and a hungry lion to come around looking for a meal. Others would probably have run but David stood his ground, trusting God, and was given victory over both. Those victories stood him in good stead later when he was confronted with Goliath. He had a real knowledge of God to draw upon and was once again given a great victory.

David's lifelong experiential knowledge of God resulted in some bedrock convictions that he powerfully expresses in Psalms that have encouraged God's people through the ages. Psalm 103 is one example among many.

He praises God for "benefits" like forgiveness, healing, deliverance, and renewed strength. He speaks of God as "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love" (verse 8). The greatness of God's love is compared to the height of the heavens above the earth (verse 11). His forgiveness results in our sins being removed from us as far as the east is from the west (verse 12).

David saw God as a compassionate father (verse 13). His love for those who fear Him is "from everlasting to everlasting" (verse 17). Verse 19 says,

"The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all."

But the kind of knowledge and conviction David expresses in Psalm 103 came at a price. It is true that there were times that the Heavenly Shepherd led him through green pastures and beside still waters but there were also times he spent in the valley of the shadow of death. Often he expressed the depths of his anguish in Psalms that were preserved for our learning.

### How Long, O Lord?

In Psalm 13:1-2 he writes, "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? Have you ever felt like that?"

In Psalm 22:1-2 we find a cry of David that is partially quoted by Jesus on the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, and am not silent." That's not a cry of unbelief but rather the anguish of an embattled soul fighting the "fight of faith." 1 Tim. 6:12.

The wonderful convictions David expresses about God in the Psalms can be summed up in that word "faith." Faith is a conviction that comes about when we open our hearts to the work of God's Spirit. It is a supernatural gift of God. It produces a conviction that enables us to trust God, to hope, to persevere.

Everything about human nature and this present evil age stands utterly opposed to real faith. And God allows the faith He imparts to His own to be tried. Life's pathway often leads us through places where *everything* seems to rise up against faith. Circumstances seem not only contrary but totally impossible. Feelings are absent. God seems silent. Demons are allowed to relentlessly spew their evil "wisdom" into our minds. Our strength is insufficient. All seems lost.

Yet, however strange it may seem to our natural minds, it is in those very times that much of the knowledge of which Daniel 11:32 speaks is nurtured. It is wonderful that God's Word can be planted in our minds through ministry but far greater when its truths are tested in battle and the God of that word is found trustworthy.

There is a saying that we often hear: if God brings you to it He will bring you through it. That, indeed, is a wonderful truth simply expressed. It also explains many things that God brings about in the lives of His own, things we would not naturally choose. He knows what lies ahead. His plans involve working in us and through us. He knows what it takes to accomplish His plan. Yet how readily to

we shrink from life's battles, seeking to escape *from* them rather than fighting *through* them.

### The Heart of our Warfare

Much of David's warfare involved real physical battles against enemy armies. And the trials prophesied in Daniel 11 also involved outward persecution. But the heart of our warfare as believers is not external circumstances but what happens in our hearts and minds.

The enemy of our souls knows this and is merciless in his attempts to find vulnerable places in our minds. How we need to guard our hearts and minds and learn to recognize the source of many thoughts that arise in difficult times. What believer has not experienced this?

"If God really loved you this wouldn't be happening." "You did something wrong and God is punishing you." "God won't hear *your* prayer." "Why doesn't God answer your prayer? You pray and nothing has changed." "You got yourself into this mess and God is expecting you to fix it." "God is disappointed in you." "You know you're going to lose this battle; why don't you give in and save yourself all this trouble?" "Your situation is hopeless." "Look at all your failures and shortcomings; why would God care about you?" "Evil is winning; what a fool you are to trust in God."

While we are in such a battle the terrible things the devil tells us can even *seem* true. And that is the crux of the battle: will we cast away our confidence or will we stand and believe God's word? Heb. 10:36-39. The prizes won in spiritual battles are worth those battles. They build a store of experience and confidence that is critical to moving forward in God.

### All We Need

And think of the fact that David had such an amazing and personal relationship with God in the days of the Old Covenant. We have the rich storehouse of truth and spiritual provision in Christ under the New! All that we need for life and godliness is available to us not through commandments to keep but through the "great and precious promises" of God. 2 Peter 1:3-4.

And, as Paul said in Rom. 8:18, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." God has given us an amazing hope and we have "... this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure." Heb. 6:19.

That is what has enabled God's people to stand firm through the ages. It is not that they have learned correct theology but rather that they have experienced God in all kinds of ways in real life.

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They know their God. It is not a matter of debate but of personal experience. Note the word “their” in Daniel 11:32. God wasn’t just “God”; He was “*their* God.” Is He yours? Do you know Him like that?

It should be self-evident that the various spiritual conditions of the Jews in the days of Antiochus didn’t happen overnight. Clearly some had been nurturing what Heb. 3:12 calls “a sinful, unbelieving heart” long before Antiochus showed up. Some had no doubt kept up the outward forms of their religion and culture but God knew what was in their hearts and allowed events to uncover their true condition.

Likewise those who remained faithful did so, not because of mere theory or cultural tradition but because they had had real life experience in getting to know their God. They knew He was real and to be trusted and served in a way others did not.

### More Than Standing Firm

I like the English Standard Version translation of our key phrase: “... the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.” It highlights well the results that follow truly “knowing” God.

The first thing is that they stood firm. This expresses the uncompromising position they took when Antiochus outlawed their covenant relationship with God and persecuted those who didn’t submit. Forced to choose sides under threat of torture and death they chose to remain faithful to their God, even when He for a time continued to allow evil to reign.

The second thing is “take action.” The Hebrew word translated “take action” simply means “do” in the broadest sense. That is probably why translations vary as there is little that is specific to go on. Nevertheless it should be clear that there is action involved. Standing firm is necessary and involves a firm defense of one’s position but “action” or “doing” goes beyond that. It means going on offense.

It may well be that the Lord deliberately left the specific action vague since it could involve different things in different situations. But one thing it surely does mean: even when evil reigns God’s kingdom still takes action and advances one way or another. Whatever God may allow the devil to do He nonetheless has an eternal purpose that will continue to unfold till Christ returns in power and glory. And He works through people.

God is even now working in His people to prepare them, each one according to his or her unique place in His kingdom, for all that lies ahead. I believe many will be called and prepared to lay down their lives as a testimony to a perishing world.

Isaiah 57:1-2 will apply and heaven will greatly honor them. But I believe others will be mightily anointed to advance His kingdom in the face of Satan’s onslaught.

There is nothing God has ever done that He cannot do again and more. He rescued Daniel from lions and gave him a high place in the greatest empires of his day. He opened the Red Sea and destroyed Pharaoh’s army. He preserved Paul in spite of great persecution to spread the gospel across Asia Minor and Europe and even win some of Caesar’s household to Christ. Other apostles spread the good news throughout the known world of their day. Philip was carried in the Spirit from one place to another to preach. Only God knows what He has planned but I am convinced that God’s people in the last hour will not only “stand fast” but will also be enabled to “take action.”

### Choices

Eternal choices are being made right now. People are choosing either to side with this present evil world and its “god” or with the one true God and His Son Jesus Christ. The darkness that is spreading across our planet will make those choices evident.

It is not time to sleep but rather a time to get to know our God, to experience His faithfulness in all kinds of circumstances. We certainly don’t need to be presumptuous and run ahead of God but we do need to respond to what He brings our way by looking to Him in faith for His strength and wisdom.

It is always good to remember a favorite scripture of believers everywhere: “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” 1 Cor. 10:13. Note that the “way out” is that we might “stand up under it.” In other words, God allows many kinds of circumstances in our lives, some of them difficult, but He always provides what we need to stand up and push through.

Thank God Rom. 8:28 is still in the book: “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

And what a wonderful conclusion we find in that passage: “... I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom. 8:38-39.

I’m so glad that the Lord does not always lead us through the valley of the shadow of death. Sometimes we experience the green pastures and the still waters! But He knows what is needed in every life

all along the way. And His way leads home.

The wonderful truth of Daniel 11:32 is echoed in 1 Cor. 15 where we see an exhortation that involves both standing and doing. Paul sets forth the glorious truth of the resurrection to come when death itself will finally be destroyed. In the light of that victory, given to us by God through our Lord Jesus Christ, he says, “Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” 1 Cor. 15:58.

Where do you stand in all of this?

## God’s Last Move

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the gospel. The three excuses given by those who rejected the invitation typify the three categorical excuses given by all men who say “no” to the gospel.

The one who had bought a piece of ground represents that group who mind earthly things. Phil. 3:19. Particularly does it represent those whose heart and affection is in possessions, material things and wealth. They are too occupied with the riches of earth to set their affections on heavenly things. Colossians 3: 1-2, “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

“No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Matt. 6:21, 24). Mammon represents earthly wealth and treasures including possessions. Neither do you have to be rich to serve mammon. In fact most of the common and poor people as well as the rich are serving mammon instead of God. This is the greatest hindrance to the kingdom of God of anything I know, It is the number one thing that causes men to say “no” to the great invitation.

The man who had to go and prove his five yoke of oxen represents that group who are too busy to take time for God. They are somewhat different from the first group in that they are not particularly mammon idolaters. They may or may not have good intentions concerning the gospel but they neglect doing anything about it because of the pressing problems and obligations of life. They may be good moral, hard-working people but they refuse to take time to know God and serve Him; they are busy.

The third man who had married a wife represents that group whose sensual and fleshly appetites master their life. There is nothing wrong with marriage as long as men recognize and honor God in it, but when anything replaces God in our affections and desires it becomes idolatry. There are many in this

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group who would come to Christ were it not for their carnal appetites that must be gratified.

The theatre, the dance, and the varied worldly pleasures and entertainments are the devices of Satan that are used to hold this group captive. Neither are all in this group debauched alcoholics and libertines. Some are good moral people who simply live to please self and family. They are not particularly interested in an abundance of earthly possessions, neither can it be said they are industrious or busy people. They just want to have fun, enjoy life, satisfy self, and of course serving God would interfere.

No doubt, this is the general picture and condition of man in his rebellion against God in every age and dispensation. However, in this parable we have other truth that I feel has been hidden from the Church because it was not the appropriate time for it to be revealed.

It will be noticed that there are three distinct invitations or dealings with man in this parable. Each one of them represent a certain and specific time period.

The first mission came to an end when the three men (ground, oxen, and wife) representing three different types of unbelievers said "no" to the gospel invitation. Though there are three types of unbelievers here, it is still just one group and one mission or dispensation. This is a picture of the Israelite nation settled in the promised land. It is one of prosperity, industry and pleasure. It typifies any nation blessed of God, settled in the land but married to their idols with no time for God.

Jehovah knew Israel would turn away from Him after they settled in the land. In Deuteronomy 8 we have Him warning them of this very thing as they prepared to cross Jordan into the promised land. Nations and men forget God when they begin to prosper and have material things. Sure enough in fullness of time they turned away from the Lord, who wonderfully brought them forth from Egypt's bondage and settled them in the land that flowed with milk and honey. They were given their last opportunity under the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ.

It was the nation, Israel, that Christ wept over saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time

of thy visitation." Luke 19:42-44.

This visitation in the person of Jesus Christ was the last climactic overture on the part of Jehovah to reconcile Israel. It also heralded the beginning of a new dispensation. Luke 16:16 says, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

John 1:17 says, For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

I, personally, believe this new dispensation beginning with the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ is the second move or dispensation depicted in Verse 21 of Luke 14. I contend this second move or dispensation represents the day of grace which began with the earthly ministry of Christ.

John the Baptist came preaching repentance and preparing the way for Christ but he did no miracles. By way of contrast the ministry of Christ was one of miracles, signs and wonders. Beginning His ministry He went into the synagogue at Nazareth on the Sabbath Day and read the prophecy of Isaiah that referred to this very ministry that heralded a new dispensation.

Please note the similarity of Luke 4:18 to 21 as Jesus read from the prophecy of Isaiah. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he bath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Now Luke 14:21, "...the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in hither the poor and the maimed, and the halt and the blind."

The record in Mark 16 where the great commission was given by the Lord also tells us that signs were to follow. Beyond reasonable shadow of doubt, these scriptures have reference to the same move or dispensation of God's grace.

One other thing I call to your attention about these two moves that are notably different is: In the first invitation, Luke 14:17, the servant was sent to some who had already been bidden and told to come for all things are now ready. It seems this group (Israel) had a standing invitation but now the time for response had come. Certainly this speaks of the national election of Israel. Though chosen of God as the nation to represent him in earth, they rejected the Savior and Lord who chose them.

Please bear in mind this first call was to a people already bidden. Particularly does this have reference to the last great overture made to Israel through their ministry of Christ. Though his ministry heralded a new move of God, it also brought the curtain down on the old. While his earthly minis-

try was to the Jew, by precept and example he was preparing and teaching the disciples who would specifically begin the church age with the outpouring of Pentecost. Matthew 10:5-8.

The second invitation was a general one and not to a specific or already bidden people. The servant was told this time to go out more or less at random (streets and lanes of the city, Luke 14:21) and bring in a variety of despised, needy folks. It is evident from a comparison of these two invitations that the first was confined to a specific people with the second being more liberal and general.

This is borne out perfectly in the two commands of Christ where he told the disciples, first: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Matthew 10:5-6. And later when he said: "...Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. Now let's consider the third or last move of God which is pictured in Luke 14. In verse 22, we have the servant coming back from the second mission and telling the Lord, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded and yet there is room." He still lacked guests for this great supper. There was room for more guests. And the Lord said unto the servant, "Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled." This is the last move and the master must have a full house. Every place around that supper table has to be filled. This time the servant was told to go, not to a specific bidden group nor into the streets and lanes of the city, but INTO THE HIGHWAYS AND HEDGES, Highways and hedges are farther out than streets and lanes of a city.

This, beloved friend, is none other than the preaching of the gospel as a witness to all nations before the end comes. Matt. 24:14, It is the last phase of the church age that finishes the job and completes the work of preaching the gospel to every creature. The purpose of the church in the world is to be his witness unto the uttermost part of the earth beginning at Jerusalem. Acts 1:8.

If you will notice carefully in Acts 1:8, the Lord said, "...Ye shall be witnesses...unto the uttermost part of the earth." This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations then shall the end come. Matthew 24:14,

There is no room for doubt or speculation of this question. IT SHALL BE DONE, Neither can the church be raptured until this job is finished.

Please notice also that on this third effort which goes into the highways and hedges (uttermost parts of the earth), the servant was told to "compel them to come in..." In looking up this word, compel, in the Greek (*anagkazo*) I discovered a tremendous

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truth. The word means constraint, influenced by distressful necessity. The underlining thought is that there will be such distress and suffering until there is no other alternative but "to come." On this last move no other chance is taken. The master of the house gives orders to "compel" them to come. He has waited long enough, now forceful measures are taken to complete the job.

Beloved, this last move is none other than the end-time harvest that I feel we are now approaching. Perhaps it is closer than we would dare believe.

I believe, with all my heart, the swing from the second group to the third is now underway. Very few deny the falling away is here. The civilized nations (streets and lanes of a city) have already had their call. This includes America. For the most part, men have made up their minds. More and more Spirit-filled ministers are turning to the mission fields. One well known missionary said recently, "I wouldn't pastor a church in America." The blighting curse of formalism and cold indifference to the things of God provoked him to say that. Though some are still making great boasting claims, holding their meetings, counting their converts and raising large sums of money for bigger programs, I believe very little real good is being done. A few nights ago I had a dream that was so vivid it might be called a night vision. I was standing on the shore looking out across some water watching a boat pulling a big net behind it. The boat seemed to be very modern and up-to-date. A portion of the net was above the water and I noticed several birds of the vulture variety that were trapped inside. Then the boat did a strange thing. It submerged and the net which it was pulling floated over the spot where the boat had submerged. With the net directly over the boat, it rose to the surface and, of course, the net and its contents were cleverly trapped on the deck.

As I gazed upon the deck where the net was lying, I saw one fish flouncing around. Immediately upon awakening this dream, or vision, came vividly before me. I knew it was from the Lord and as I began to meditate upon this strange dream the Holy Spirit began to interpret it for me.

### THE INTERPRETATION

The Lord told me that this modern fishing boat with fine equipment and clever way of fishing was a picture of the average evangelistic effort to reach men for Christ in America today. He said the modern boat and net represented the well organized religious effort with their fine equipment of tents, trucks, magazines, radio, T. V., musical programs, etc. He said the clever way the boat submerged and

came up under the net represented the varied and clever methods that are employed to get professions of faith.

The foul birds were the same as the foul and unclean birds of Rev. 18:2. He said these foul birds are the unregenerate people that are being herded into the churches and various religious movements. He said even as it was in the dream the vast majority of religious professions today are the foul, unclean bird variety with the one fish representing a true conversion.

Though many are still claiming great results, I believe the above revelation to be from God and that it is the true picture of things as they actually exist.

As we enter this third and last move of God, many questions flood our minds as to how it shall be accomplished. Though I do not profess to have all the answers, I believe the Scriptures are fairly plain as to some things relative to it.

James said, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." James 5:7.

The latter rain must come before this final harvest (preaching of Gospel to the uttermost part of the earth) can take place. Two rains are in view from this and other Scriptures. The seed-time rain or former (Pentecost) and the harvest time or latter rain. It is evident the Scripture taken from Joel 2:28-31 quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost was only partially fulfilled. We know positively that the sun was not turned into darkness and the moon into blood at that time. Neither was the Spirit poured upon all flesh. The fulfillment of that prophecy precedes the signs of the sun being darkened and the moon turning into blood.

All this takes place just before "the great and the terrible day of the Lord." Joel 2:31. This is definitely the second coming of Christ because these things did not take place the first time. James 5:7 also links the coming of the Lord, harvest of precious fruit of earth, and latter rain together.

This last move of God will be the greatest harvest of all. Joel refers to it also as a harvest by saying, "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened and the stars shall withdraw their shining." Joel 33:13-15. Once again we have the great harvest day of the Lord and the signs of darkened sun and moon all linked together. This end-time harvest that completes and fulfills the commission given to the church will be accomplished in a very short period of time.

Romans 9:28 says, "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth."

In looking up the root meaning of the word "short" in Strong's Concordance of the Bible, I discovered it means a decisive, speedily, short work. The underlining thought is that it will be an unrelenting, decisive effort that will hurriedly complete the job without lag or intermission,

One final grand and glorious move of God by his Spirit that compels the remaining guests to come in and take their places around the supper table will be made. Once it starts there will be no recess, lag or long, drawn-out process. This will be God's blitzkrieg of miracles, signs and wonders following the ministry of death-defying human instruments that literally take him at his word and carry this Gospel of the kingdom to every nation, kindred and tongue.

As a result, the end-time harvest will be the greatest in the history of the world, In Revelation 7:9-14, we see this great multitude that will be saved during this period.

Now, let's consider the external means or circumstances that are going to facilitate or make possible this last great move of God, In Rev. 7:14, we see this great harvest of souls coming "out of great tribulation." Yes, it is during the tribulation that this short work is going to be accomplished. The tribulation will be the external means used of God to cause his people to go into all the world with the Gospel of the Kingdom.

The work of God and the church has always grown and flourished when it was poor and persecuted. It is a true saying "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

At the time of the killing of Stephen, the great Christian Martyr, there was great persecution against the church at Jerusalem. Acts 8:1 declared "they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria," Verse 4 says, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word." If it took trouble and persecution to move the early church, how much more does it apply to this generation of soft, pampered, self-satisfied and lukewarm people? This is one of the main purposes of tribulation.

It will also be a compelling factor that necessitates the great multitudes turning to Christ during the tribulation. God uses means and circumstances to accomplish his work. This means, plus the power of God in his people, is the compelling force Christ had in mind when he said, "Compel them to come." Luke 14:23.

This same truth is substantiated from the book of Daniel, chapter 12, verse 1 which tells us of this

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great time of trouble such as the world has never experienced. Jesus referred to this same Scripture in Daniel and said it would be so terrible that no flesh would be spared if it wasn't shortened, "But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matthew 24:21-22.

In Daniel 12:6, the question is asked of the man clothed in linen, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" In verse 7, he lifts up both hands to heaven and swears "by him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished"

This "time (one year), times (two years) and an half (six months)" totals forty-two months or three and one-half years. That is exactly what we have in Revelation concerning the time of the reign of anti-Christ and the persecution of the church. Rev. 12:5, Rev. 12:14, Daniel 7:25, But please notice the last part of verse seven of Daniel 12 which says, "and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all things shall be finished."

This is your proof text as to one of the main purposes of the great tribulation, "To scatter the power of the holy people." What is our power but the Holy Spirit of Christ in us. The power of God is resident in his people but they are not using it. When he gave the great commission to teach all nations, he said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:19-20. The church has refused to believe this simple truth. Instead, it has substituted clumsy, decadent, policy-bound, carnal programs that will never get the job done.

He is going to finish the work and cut it short in righteousness. Above all, don't be deceived into thinking the church is going to fly away in a secret rapture and miss this great tribulation and last move of God. The theologians are deceived about this aspect of the coming of Christ and it is just what Satan wants, to lull God's people to sleep with a false hope of security. Your only hope of preservation and security through the tribulation lies in your humble and prayerful obedience to God as we

enter this terrible holocaust of hell on earth. Rev. 12:11; 18:4, Luke 21:34-36.

You may glibly say, "I'm not planning on being here when it comes." Humanly speaking I wish you were right and, in this instance, I were wrong, but wishful thinking will not alter the truth of God one iota. The Word of God is filled with warnings concerning this very deception. Only as men get willing to do his will can they know of the doctrine whether it be of man or of God. John 7:17. Jesus said that some will be saying, lo here is Christ, there he is, etc., and that many false Christs and prophets would arise and deceive many. Matt. 24:23-26. Paul also warned us concerning the coming of Christ and said, "the falling away and man of sin must be revealed first." II Thess. 2:1-3.

Right now great spiritual light is being given to a few chosen vessels for the purpose of awakening the slumbering, sleeping virgins, wise and foolish. Matt. 25:1-13, Isaiah saw this awakening and under inspiration said, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Isaiah 52:1. "Arise, shine: for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee." Isaiah 60:1-2.

Zechariah, the prophet, also saw this awakening and said, "but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." The evening is just before the night. This light has been shining for some time now. Great spiritual darkness is beginning to settle over the earth.

Men have seen, yet they have not seen; they have heard, yet they haven't heard. Only darkness remains for those who refuse to walk in the light. John 12:35.

May God anoint our eyes and ears to see and hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Remember the last verse in our parable, Luke 14:24, is a solemn warning from the lips of our Lord Jesus Christ who said, "For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."

### COMING EVENTS

Annual Convention  
June 24-27, 2015  
Jacksonville, Florida

November Meeting  
November 25-28, 2015  
Southern Pines, North Carolina

Visit Midnight Cry Ministries on the web:

[www.midnightcry.org](http://www.midnightcry.org)

### TV Network Broadcast

— (30 Minutes Weekly) —  
The NRB Network (DirectTV 378)  
Sun. 6:30 AM Eastern  
Mon. 3:30 AM Eastern

## Broadcasts

### RADIO STATIONS

*Monday - Friday*

Stat.	Freq.	Location	Time
KAAY	1090 AM	Little Rock, AR	7:15 AM
KXEG	1280 AM	Phoenix, AZ	9:00 AM
KCNW	1380 AM	Kansas City, KS	12:15 PM 9:30 PM
WKDI	840 AM	Denton, MD	9:15 AM
KXKS	1190 AM	Albuquerque, NM	5:30 PM
KUTR	820 AM	Salt Lake City, UT	2:15 PM
WDZY	1290 AM	Richmond, VA	2:15 PM
WWVA	1170 AM	Wheeling, WV	9:30 PM

### Short Wave Radio

WHRI ANGEL 1 – (Central & South America)

Mon.-Fri.: 0700 UTC-6.175 MHZ

Mon.-Fri.: 0900 UTC-11.565 MHZ

Mon.-Fri.: 1600 UTC-21.600 MHZ

Mon.-Fri.: 2300 UTC-7.315 MHZ

WHRI ANGEL 2 – (Europe, Russia, Middle East & Africa)

Tues.-Sat.: 0015 UTC-5.920 MHZ

KWHR ANGEL 3 (Hawaii) – (Asia, S.E. Asia & South Pacific)

Mon.-Fri.: 0915 UTC-9.930 MHZ

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### Television Broadcast

— (30 Minutes Weekly) —

#### Local Broadcasts

Albuquerque, NM - KAZQ - TV 32  
Sun. 7:30 AM

Boone, NC - MTN-TV - TV 24  
Cable 18 - Sat. 8:00 PM

Boston, MA/Manchester, NH  
WBIN-TV - TV 18 - Sun. 6:30 AM

Chicago, IL - WJYS TV-62  
Sun. 7:00 AM

Denver, CO - KCDO TV-3  
Sun. 6:30 AM

Greenville, SC - WGGS TV-16  
Sun. 7:00 PM

Harrisburg, PA - WGCB TV-49  
Sun. 9:30 AM

Jacksonville, FL - WTLV - Ch. 12 HD  
Sun. 6:00 AM

Los Angeles, CA - KDOC-TV 56  
Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

Nampa, ID (Greater Boise area) - KCLP-18  
Tues. 8:30 PM

Salt Lake City, UT - KTMW TV-20  
Wed. 7:30 PM & Sat. 10:00 PM

San Francisco, Oakland, California  
KBCW TV-44 - Sunday, 6:00 A.M.

Seattle, Washington  
KVOS TV-12 - Sunday, 10:30 A.M.