

# Being a Great Witness

All Scripture is KJV: Matthew 10:1-42 & Matthew 11.

## INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY

Being a Great Witness is what the God head really wants us to be.

In fact, it is the first purpose of our lives once we come to know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.

Today we are going to see in the scriptures the greatest of all witnesses after that of our Lord Jesus himself.

The scriptures of the OT spoke about a Saviour that would one day come in the flesh for all to see and believe on. But not many people thought highly about that prophecy or even wanted it to be a reality. Especially the Jews, the Pharisees, and Sadducees.

But God in all His wisdom was about to unleash His plan of redemption upon the whole world which had been foretold in the OT.

You see the last book of the OT is Malachi and the first book of the NT is Matthew, and therefore it is by no coincidence that God would not leave us hope in closing the OT as well as in opening the NT.

- In Malachi 3 the Lord concludes about a prophecy of Himself.

## Malachi 3:1 King James Version

1. **Behold, I will send my messenger**, and **he shall prepare the way before me**: and **the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple**, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

- Well, here we have the LORD (Jehovah) speaking a prophecy about a messenger that he would send to the world, before he would come in the flesh. And we know that this is speaking about none other than John the Baptist.
- We know that it is John the Baptist because Jesus spoke of this prophecy.

## Matthew 11:10 King James Version

<sup>10</sup> For this is he, of whom it is written, **Behold, I send my messenger** before thy face, **which shall prepare thy way before thee**.

- Here Jesus is speaking to the disciples and tells them to remember the scripture in the OT of Malachi 3:1 where just as the LORD said he would prepare his messenger John to come before Him.

- The LORD as Jehovah in the OT was saying that He would prepare after His messenger (John the Baptist) had come, that he John would prepare the way of who we know is Jesus the Christ that would come.
- ✓ Further on in the same verse of Malachi 3:1 we see him say that “**the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple**”.
- ✓ Well, we actually see this come to reality when Jesus speaks again to His disciples in the NT of John 2:13-17.

### **John 2:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

<sup>14</sup> **And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:**

<sup>15</sup> **And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple,** and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

<sup>16</sup> And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

<sup>17</sup> And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

- ✓ We see the fulfillment of this scripture of Malachi 3:1 here in John 2:13-17.
- ✓ Verse 15 says that Jesus made scourge (whip) of small cords and he drove them out of the temple.
- ✓ Well, he was fulfilling Malachi 3:1 by “suddenly” coming into his temple.
- ✓ Again, a fulfillment of the prophecy.

1. We began this message by saying “Being a Great Witness”.
2. And for sure there is to be no compromise on the Word of God.
3. Being a Great witness requires that we have a great “Light”.
4. And that light is the “light of the Gospel”.

✚ The light of the gospel can only shine as bright as the Word of God itself.  
✚ If you Taint or diminish the Word of God and then the whole gospel will be dull.

- ✓ Also, if you “Change to modern bible versions” which have altered the Word of God, then also the light will be dulled. This is supported by what the scriptures had said in the OT of the Book of Jeremiah.

### **Jeremiah 26:2 Authorized (King James Version)**

<sup>2</sup> Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD's house, **all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word:**

1. God's instruction to the prophet Jeremiah was “diminish not a word”.
2. Jeremiah heeded what God had said, and he recorded the very words of scripture of what God had instructed him to do, but sadly “**man**” in all his

lusts and wisdom has not taken the Word of God seriously, and in doing so, has in the last 200 years altered the very Word of God to fit his own modern agenda since the early 1800 century.

Whilst we have the great commission of the gospel in **Matthew 28:19-20** we have even more information on the gospel message here in **Matthew Chapter 10** where Jesus spoke to His disciples about being a witness for Him.

- a. The very last words of Jesus to mankind was the teaching of the great commission. It was a commission for the believers to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to all of mankind.
- b. The word Gospel means "Good news"
- c. And that Good news is life eternal only through Jesus Christ by believing on Him as Lord, God, and Saviour of mankind. God who is able to forgive all sin.

### **The Great Commission - Being a great witness.**

#### **Matthew 28:1-20**

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**

<sup>19</sup> **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**

<sup>20</sup> **Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:** and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

So.....

### **The sending out of the light of the gospel.**

- ✓ Remember that this was even before Jesus was crucified as we read in Matthew Chapter 10.

#### **Matthew 10:1-42**

<sup>1</sup> And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

<sup>2</sup> Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

<sup>3</sup> Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

<sup>4</sup> Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:**

**6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

**7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

- ✓ You have to understand that from the outset that as Jesus spoke about the lost sheep of the house of Israel he was speaking only about the tribe of Judah and Benjamin essentially. Although there were people from the other ten tribe there.

**Why is that?...**

- ✓ Well because of what happened in the OT prior to Jesus coming in the NT
- ✓ So, what happened?

The Kingdom of Israel which consisted of the twelve tribes of Jacob split into two portions after the death of King Solomon.

The Northern portion of Jeroboam which had previously been home to ten tribes, then became known as the Kingdom of Israel.

The Southern portion of Rehoboam became known from then on as the Kingdom of Judah.

The Kingdom of Israel, (10 tribes) was carted off into slavery and annihilated by the Assyrians and they ceased to exist as a functional people and so became known as the Samaritans.

The Southern Kingdom, Judah, (2 tribes) would eventually be conquered by Babylon.

Though the Kingdom of Judah roughly corresponded to land designated by the two southern tribes Judah and Benjamin, it did contain descendants from all twelve tribes. Moreover, by the time of the Babylonian captivity all of the people of the Kingdom of Judah considered themselves as Judahites (or Jews) first and foremost. (2 Kings 16:6)

1. But what happened as a result of the preaching of the Disciples?
2. Well Matthew 11 gives us insight into what happened.

Matthew 11 starts off by telling us the story about the preaching of the disciples to the nations.

- ✓ These nations were the cities of the Jews. Not the Samaritans or the Greeks.

In the first verse of Matthew 11 we are told that Jesus made an end to the disciples preaching to those cities. This could not have been too long after Jesus sent them out because Jesus' ministry was only for three and a half years in total.

Nevertheless.....

**Matthew 11 King James Version (KJV)**

**11:1** And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

1. What we see as a result of the disciples preaching, it was a way of Jesus sending out the disciples to present Himself to the nations before He Himself would go out into these nations to deliver His messages.
2. This would enable Jesus to both teach and preach when he went to those cities in which the disciples had already preached.
3. That's why in Mathew 10 Jesus told the disciples to speak in His name.
4. This was a "kind of advertising" we would call it today. To do a little "pro" work before the actual speaker would present the event.

When Jesus told the disciples to go, he knew that He would have to make it positive and realistically simple to those who would be presented these truths from a Lord and Saviour.

- ✓ It would have to have the reality of raising the dead, healing the sick and doing something that only God could do. They were sent in Jesus' name.
- ✓ Therefore, Jesus would deliver a message that was "only true" but also that would have a profound effect on those "unsaved" Jews (the house of Israel) who would hear it and see it.

Remember how that in the NT scriptures the Jews "always asked for a sign" to show the authenticity of the messages that was delivered by the Apostles.

But, remember it was ok for Jesus to voluntary present the miracles of these signs for healing or raising of the dead, but it was NOT OK for the Jews to demand it before they would believe.

Because this is what they even asked Jesus to do in Matthew Chapter 12.

- Just because Jesus chose to do the miracles and signs before the Jews, did not mean that Jesus was obligated to do it when they asked for it.
- We see this in the rebuke that Jesus gave them in Matthew 12.

#### Matthew 12:39

But he answered and said unto them, **An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign**; and there shall no sign be given to it, **but the sign of the prophet Jonas**;

#### Matthew 16:4

**A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign**; and there shall no sign be given unto it, **but the sign of the prophet Jonas**. And he left them, and departed.

#### Mark 8:11

And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, **seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him**.

#### Mark 8:12

And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, **Why doth this generation seek after a sign?** verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

#### Luke 11:29

And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, **This is an evil generation: they seek a sign;** and **there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.**

- Again in the Epistles of the NT the apostle Paul gave the same message Jesus had given about a wicked generation that were looking for signs to believe in Jesus.

### **1 Corinthians 1:22**

**For the Jews require a sign,** and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

- ✓ It's interesting to note that when Jesus addresses the Jews in the early and latter parts of His ministry, he used the same example of an evil and adulterous generation.
  - ✓ This culminated in that Jesus gave the Jews the same answer every time when they asked for a sign from Him to believe in Him.
  - ✓ Jesus said to them that they would be given no sign. Because they had already received the sign of Jonas (Jonah) in the OT.
1. So, ....anyone trying to receive a different answer from Jesus from what's already in His Word.....is going to be referred back to the OT with Jonah.
  2. And that testimony of Jonah speaks volumes about "the sign of the Messiah Jesus" who had already come to bring the greatest gift of salvation to mankind.
- ❖ What more of a sign did they want?

When we compare why Jesus sent out the disciples to preach, we see it was for the same reason that John the Baptist was sent out.

- ✚ In fact this was exactly what John the Baptist had done when Jesus began His ministry.
1. John the Baptist was sent to bare the testimony of Jesus who would come to heal the nations.
  2. But now in Matthew 11 we see John the Baptist held up in a prison about 2 years since Jesus had seen him last.
  3. **John the Baptist would never leave the prison alive, but he would be beheaded at the request of Herodias'.**
- ✚ Jesus did not only allow the disciples to preach and teach but he did also as we see in the book of Acts 1.

### **Acts 1 King James Version (KJV)**

1. The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that **Jesus began both to do and teach,** <sup>2</sup> Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

- ✚ As we continue now to read about what Jesus did in His ministry after he had sent out His disciples. It's interesting that John the Baptist whilst in prison gets to hear about the ministry of Jesus.

## **Matthew 11 King James Version (KJV)**

1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

**2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples.** **3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?**

1. Was this John's question about Jesus?
2. Or was it the question of the two disciples that John had sent to enquire?
3. It appears that these are the questions of John's disciples and not John the Baptist.
4. Because John of all people would certainly know that it was Jesus the Messiah performing these miracles.

Verse 6 is the answer for John as to who it is? **6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.**

- ✚ No man could claim that statement except Jesus who was the Messiah.

**4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:**

**5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.**

**6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.**

- ✓ This is a reference to eternal life when you believe in Jesus.

**7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?**

1. If Jesus knew that John did not believe he was the messiah then why would Jesus rate John the Baptist as the greatest man to have ever been born of a woman?
2. John the Baptist was crying (proclaiming) or heralding Jesus' name in the wilderness.
3. He was not dressed in a kings clothing but in Camel skin and eating that of a poor man. Locusts and honey.

4. This was a man of substance as we can see the way in which Jesus described John to the people.

**8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.**

**9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.**

1. Jesus referred to John the Baptist as more than just a prophet.
2. For this was a man which was prophesied in the OT that would come to herald the arrival of Jesus.
3. For this was written in the book of Isaiah.

**10 For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist:**

notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

- ✓ Jesus was careful not to elevate a man over another man when he said this.
- ✓ But it was said of John just so that we would be sure of how high Jesus held John in the faithfulness of His ministry.

**12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.**

**13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.**

**14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.**

**15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

**16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, 17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.**

**18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.**

**19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.** But wisdom is justified of her children.

**20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:**



21 **Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida!** for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 **And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell:** for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

1. Sodom will receive a lesser judgment than Capernaum.
2. Capernaum thought that they were going to heaven, but in fact the city was headed for hell.

✓ **The reason why we can be a great witness for Jesus is because he was that “Great Witness”.**

Prayer in closing.....