

Osama Bin Laden had the power to bring death, and destruction into the world through his network of suicide bombers, and terrorists.

President Barack Obama had the power to send an elite unit of soldiers into Pakistan to kill Osama Bin Laden – and to watch it live from a camera on the helmet of one of those soldiers.

Both are exercises of worldly power, albeit very different to each other; but both of which we feel we have very little control over.

And that's the way of the world, isn't it: that's the way it always seems to be.

Where, one may ask, is God in all of this; and, therefore, can we really believe what we've just heard from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians when he boldly asserts that God, the Father, is all-powerful?

That God, the Father: "Exerted [that power] when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that can be invoked, not only in the present age but in the age to come. Eph. 1: 20 – 21

No, we can't believe it if Jesus hadn't really risen bodily from the dead.

No, we can't believe it if Jesus hadn't ascended bodily to heaven: to the Father's House, to fulfil the promise He made on the night before His crucifixion that He was going: "To prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am." Jn. 14: 2 – 3

The bodily Resurrection of Jesus logically leads, I believe, to His bodily Ascension.

You can't have one without the other.

If Jesus hadn't really risen from the dead – it was all a con-trick by the Disciples – or the memory of Jesus so filled their hearts that it seemed to them He was still alive then, there would be no need for His bodily Ascension.

In the 1977 an English academic, Professor John Hick, edited a book: 'The Myth Of God Incarnate.'

In the Preface to the book, quoting the poet T.S. Eliot who apparently quipped that: 'Christianity is always adapting itself into something which can be believed,' he went on to challenge the belief that Jesus is truly God, and truly Man.

Yes, He was a good man: 'A man approved by God for a special role within the divine purpose,' but that the constant Christian belief in Jesus 'as God incarnate, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity' were 'mythological.'

See John Hick, ed.: The Myth Of God Incarnate; ix

The book, although primarily an academic work, became an overnight, popular bestseller around the world. I believe it opened the floodgates to what Pope Benedict speaks of so often; the secularism, and relativism that's infected large tracts of the Christian church.

For, if you throw the baby Jesus out with the bath water, as it were; if you say He wasn't God in the flesh, then anything goes.

Jesus just becomes a man who died by crucifixion.

Yes, His spirit may have lived on in the hearts of the Disciples, and inspired them, and still inspires, Christians down the ages.

But He's no longer, as Blessed Pope John Paul II said of Him, that:

"The Redeemer of man, Jesus Christ, is the centre of the universe and of history."

Pope John Paul II: Redemptor Hominis 1

He becomes an object, a 'myth,' for theologians, philosophers, and atheists to dissect, and disregard at will.

But, do you suppose for one moment that all of the eye-witnesses to the bodily Resurrection, and the Ascension of Jesus were liars on a monumental scale?

Do you suppose for one moment that they would have laid down their lives, as Peter did, for 'The Myth Of God Incarnate?'

NO!!.... I know I wouldn't.

As Paul testifies in 1 Corinthians 15: "What I received I passed on to you as of first importance: Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time. Last of all, I also saw him" 1 Cor. 15: 3 – 6 & 8

Paul has no doubt that That God, the Father: "Raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms." Eph. 1: 20

If not, Paul says: “Your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.” 1 Cor. 15: 17 – 19

And, for the very fact that He has risen from the dead, Jesus can say to His Disciples as He’s about to ascend to His Father in the heavenly realms: “I have been given all authority in heaven and earth.” Mt. 28: 18

But the Lord’s power isn’t exercised in the way Osama Bin Laden’s was, or indeed, President Obama’s is.

The power, and authority Jesus employs is through His Cross.

The last thing the Disciple would have seen of Jesus as He ascended were the nail-holes in His feet.

And He will return bodily on the clouds at the end of the ages in the same way that He left us bodily at His Ascension; still bearing within His body those wounds of love.

“My kingdom is not of this world.” Jn. 18: 36 Jesus said to Pilate.

No, it isn’t: it’s much, much more than that.

It’s not a myth. He’s not a myth.

His is a Kingdom that is not of this world – it’s diametrically different – yet it’s a Kingdom that is very much in this world.

His Kingdom lives in His Church.

The Father: “Has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.” Eph. 1: 22 – 23

And, as living members of His Body, the Church, all of us have to fulfil that last commandment Jesus gave to us to: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all the commands I gave you And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.” Mt. 28: 19 – 20

So, until He comes again at the end of time, that’s our mandate; to bring others to know Him, and love Him.

The Apostle John, in his vision of the: “Wedding feast of the Lamb.” Rev. 19: 7 in heaven, writes in the Book of Revelation: “‘Look, he is coming with the clouds,’” and ‘every eye will see him, even those who pierced him;’ and all peoples on earth ‘will mourn because of him.’ Rev. 1: 7 (Dn. 7: 13 & Zech. 12: 10)

Let them not mourn because we’ve failed in that ‘Great Commission’ from Jesus to go and make disciples for Him.

To invite them to the Lamb’s Supper of the Eucharist.

Because, in the Eucharist: “*Now*, heaven has been unveiled for us with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. *Now*, heaven touches earth and awaits you. Jesus Christ Himself says to you: “Behold. I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, *I will come in and eat with [you], and [you] with Me*” (Rev. 3:20) The door opens *now* on the marriage [feast] of the Lamb.” Scott Hahn: The Lamb’s Supper, p. 163 because of the bodily Resurrection, and bodily Ascension of the Lamb who was slain, yet lives to reign.

And the Lord always fulfils His promises: “For the Lamb on the throne will be [our] Shepherd. He will lead [us] to springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe every tear from [our] eyes.” Rev. 7: 17