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Transcribed by Sung-Deuk Oak

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His Majesty says, Alas for our times! “That which God (Ch'un) gives us is our nature,” The Book of History says, “Almighty God (Whang-sang-je) gives conscience, a something that pertains to every man.” These two, nature and conscience, come from one and the same source. He whom we call Ch'un is Sang-je (God). Ch'un expresses his existence, and Sang-je His attributes and power. In one case we read that he gives life, and in another conscience. This does not mean that we can hear His audible voice. In the law that governs His affairs, the two primal elements have a part, and in the changing of the seasons all things live and grow.

Man has had conscience given him that he may recognize the Four Virtues, love, kindness, courtesy, and tact. Among men there are the Five Relationships that pertain to father and son, king and courtier, husband and wife, age and youth, and friend and friend.

These are all fundamentals, things inherited, not made by man. So we read, “When God(Chun) created the universe he gave to each created thing its particular nature.”

In following the natural laws, therefore, we obey God, but in running counter to them we disobey Him. So then in our acknowledgment of God(Chun) and in our service of Him we cannot but obey the Four Virtues and the Five Laws of Relationship.

Since the days of Pok-heui-si, Sillong, Yo and Soon, men who have served God (Ch'un) with all the heart, and done His will with reverence and fear, have had only the Four Virtues and the Five Laws of Relationship to govern them. Our great master Confucius regarded the ancients as his spiritual parents. Till the days of the Song Dynasty, those who understood God's law, and taught it to the people, had only these precepts to guide them. Any departure whatever from them was regarded as heresy, how much more this dark and deceitful religion that comes to us from beyond the borders, and that has no place in the Sacred Books?

There are laws in the state that demand the life of any one who practices these things. This is what we mean by the king's rule that guards his people against error.

Alas for our times! Our country was once a land of enlightenment, blessed from past ages with good customs and sound teaching that have long endured. Our great and holy father, at the appointment of God, set up this kingdom and made known the principles of religion, taught the people and exalted the sayings of Confucius.

Good kings of the past and their children never ceased in their efforts to warn the people to fulfill the will of God (Ch'un) so that blessings might ever attend them. There have been born to us great numbers of upright literati, with noted ministers, and even the common people have been greatly blessed. In the homes the teachings of Confucius have been revered, and from house to house the doctrine of the Songs has been made our own. Men renowned for loyalty and filial piety and women for a virtuous and faithful life have abounded. The ceremonies that attended marriage, mourning, and sacrifice have been faithfully observed. Scholars, farmers, manufacturers and merchants, each in his own way has lived and done his part, one helping the other to better ways, so that the state might be blessed thereby.

Now our King Chung-jong, a man, blessed with the mind of God (Ch'un), and with all the gifts of the many kings who have preceded him, was a scholar and crowned with the grace of kingship, and yet he was pestered with abominable creatures like Seung-hoon, who purchased every sort of western book that he could lay his hands on, calling them Ch'un-joo-Hak (The Religion of God). Wholly unauthorized by any use in the past, with all manner of subtlety and in

a way no Sage ever thought of, this cult increased and grew so as to deceive and fascinate the people, till it brought upon us a world of barbarians and wild beasts.

King Chung-jong seeing this and fearing what the end might be, severely punished the leaders, but the leaders only, letting the others go free in the hope that their love of life might induce them to turn to a better way. He could not possibly have shown more leniency. Even swine and monsters of the deep, yes owls and wolves, would have been moved by this to repent, but these people, having lost all conscience, and being incapable of reform, continued till the year sin-yoo (1801) when they were dealt with according to the evil ways.

People of shallow judgment gave help on these evil doings; while the ignorant masses have been carried away by them. Even ministers of state have been known to frequent its groups; and homes where the ancient Classics used to be studied, have fallen victims as well. Thus even the literati have shared its unholy practices Chu Moon-mo (a Chinaman) with his hair cut, and disguised as a native, has traveled about our markets. Sa Yang, by letter, attempted to call for foreign men-of-war to aid him. Such evil acts and unseemly deeds have grown rampant.

If King Soon-jo and the Dowager Queen Chung-soon had not dealt with these hobgoblins by axe and hammer, and destroyed them utterly, there is no saying what would have been the end for state and people.

Alas, now forty years have passed, and the laws against them have fallen into disuse, while the evil has increased and grown. Evil spirits and reptiles ever hiding their shadows, sow their obnoxious seeds, and rebels against the state go here and there under assumed names. They learn foreign languages for the sake of filthy lucre, and harbour foreigners in their midst not only once but many times. This poison has reached the farther limits of the land and the days we live in are worse even than 1801.

I, humble though I be, following in the way of my fathers and my beloved mother, cannot but use the power that God has given me to stamp it out. Though I cannot expect to reform or restore souls utterly darkened by it, or to rescue those hopelessly tangled in its toils, who go forth indifferent to death, still as the parent of my people, I cannot but feel for them a sorrow of heart and deepest commiseration.

I have heard that if you punish people without definitely letting them know their faults, you will raise keen resentment.

I intend, therefore, to take up the matter of this evil item by item, and show its wrong, scatter the facts among the officials, and people of the eight provinces, so as to have them understand fully. Give your closest attention to this I pray.

Alas, those who believe in this religion say, "Our teaching means the worship and service of God (Ch'un)." Now the worship and service of God is something that is right and true; but their way of worship consists only in forgiving sin and dispensing their so-called love. By their acts they really insult God (Chun) and dishonour His Name. Our idea of service, on the other hand, is that we follow the Four Virtues and the Five Relationships which show forth God's purpose and will. One can see without further explanation the difference between the two.

He whom they call Jesus, we cannot understand. Was he man or evil spirit? Is the whole story concerning him true or false? His followers say that he was in the beginning God (Ch'un), and that he came to earth, that he died and that he again ascended and became God Almighty (Ch'unjoo), the ruler of all men and things.

In essence Ch'un (God) is without sound or smell, while man has a body and all that goes with it. It is impossible that man should ever be God or that the two should be united. The statement that God (Ch'un) had come down to be a man, and that the man had gone up again and become God (Ch'un) is surely the limit of absurdity, intended to deceive people and lead them astray. Think this over I pray you. Is there any such statement in all history?

Alas, if you had no father how could you be born, and if no mother who would bring you up? The desire to repay one's parents for all their kindness will always remain the base of every religion but these Christians say, "The parents of the body are only parents of the body, but the

priest of God (Ch'un-joo-ja) he is the parent of the soul." We should, therefore, love him and not them, and so they cast off their parents. How can men ever harbour such a gross view as this?

The law of sacrifice is the grateful acknowledgment of all that parents have done, so that they are viewed by the filial son as still alive and not dead. This is a most natural thought for men to have; but these Christians destroy the tablet and do away with sacrifice altogether, saying that the dead know nothing. If this be so what about the soul then that they talk of? Their statements, head and tail, do not agree but are most inconsistent.

The tiger is a wicked beast, but still even the tiger knows its parents and its offspring. Even wolves and sea monsters have the spirit of sacrifice to God. These religionists though they have heads that are round and heels that are square are not equal to the brute beasts. Who would dream that man could lose his conscience to such a degree? The law of right as relates to the Superior Man can never be done away with from the earth.

These people talk of priests and pope. This is not only like the barbarians with their chiefs but like ordinary robber bands. It is like taking away the power by force from the officials of the land. They do not recognize the authorities that exist, and desire to do away with every law of the state. How could you possibly think of greater confusion and disorder than this?

The very dual principle in nature points to our parents, a proof that can never be denied. The fact that these men do not marry is an exceedingly foolish thing, and yet they claim special virtue on account of it. Those of this faith have no law that governs the separations of the sexes, but mix in a way most disorderly. If we ceased to marry, where would the race be? And if we mixed as they do the fundamental principles of life would disappear. If we deny both king and father what meaning would there be in talking of husband and wife? All such names as "Holy Mother," "Spiritual Father," "Baptism," "Confirmation" but add to the general confusion. It is like the tricks of the spirit of the fox, the witch-woman, the sorcerer or the charmer, who pretend to cure, exorcize spirits, and deceive the people generally. How can any man with the slightest grain of common sense ever let himself be so led away?

Words like Heaven and Hell are weighty and they can easily sway the mind. But such are like the statements of the Buddha-old and decayed. They have been explained away from long ages gone by, so that nothing remains to be said by anyone. Who ever set such ideas in motion I wonder? In a word it is all a lot of nonsense. Though these people are born like others fashioned in the same mould, and have parents and relations just like the rest of us, yet they would throw all these away, give up the fundamental laws, and seek their happiness in an imaginary world full of uncertainty. This surely is a case of blind infatuation.

There is, however, a law by which blessing can be won, as the Book of Poetry tells us "To be one with the Divine Will (Myung) is the way to win fullness of blessing." Also it says: "The good man of sincere and upright life will find blessing and peace of soul. To be one with the Divine will means to be in accord with natural Law. A change of mind means a departure from the right way, and this comes from a selfish desire for worldly gain."

One can see from these that there is a way by which blessing comes. To do otherwise, even though we blessing, will only bring trouble.

I have heard that Jesus died a most terrible death. One needs only to look at that to see whether blessing is the true result of his teaching or not. They do not say, See how terribly he died, but they regard his terrible death as a source of joy. They have no fear of the sword, saw, or cangue but account them an honour. This is like being drunk with wine, or insane beyond the hope of recovery. Such a state of mind can only be due to gross stupidity or madness. Dear me Alas, alas for our times If this were a great and enlightened religion how is it that its teachings only propagate themselves in the dark and hidden comers? Why should men be called by whistle to meet in lonely places in the hills? Those who meet thus too, are outcasts, reprobate, evil doers, rebels, thieves, adulterers, calling themselves Christians. With all their insidious titles they go about hiding their heads and covering their tails.

They are like the Yellow Turban Rebels or the White Lotus Band, and yet they are people who have been born and brought up in this land of ours. Our religion, based on the Four Virtues and Five principles, has come down to us from the times of the Fathers, and has been taught by all our teachers. On what possible ground could this be set aside for any religion that comes to us from ten thousand miles from beyond the sea? Yet they think it sweet, caught as they are in its toils.

Alas those who have become thoroughly soaked in it are dead and gone, as their sins deserve. What plans this group has hidden away or how far their influence extends who can say? The dead, who have already died, are not to be pitied, but those who live must certainly change their ways or join them. They are my children, and I cannot but meditate on how to lead them from darkness to a place of light. I now make known my whole heart, not my words only but the words of God. From ancient times these things have been taught by the Sages. Be careful I beg of you my people, my ministers. As a parent teaching his child, or an older brother one younger, I address you. Study how to lead these people away from their place of danger, and those, not wholly dead, urge and counsel. Those who will not listen let them be destroyed as a warning to the world so that this evil may never show its head again. Will this not be well?

Mencius says, "If you follow the Sacred Books you will prosper with no evil to disturb you." Let your actions be such as will show forth your filial piety, reverence, loyalty and faith. Let the Sacred Books be studied till you know them all, the Book of Ceremony. To give up the religion we have, to throw overboard the teaching of the Sages and do contempt to the great who have gone before us, let it not be.

Let us literati and officials honestly, all together, follow truth of God and His laws, and then, as a natural consequence, we shall prosper; the evil too, that is amongst us will likewise disappear. Men will be moved by it to awaken to repent and come back to the right way.

Alas, the book of History says: "The sins of the People are due to the king." This evil religion's getting such a hold is due to my darkness of soul and lack of knowledge. I have only to reprimand myself. Thus the sorrows of the people fall back on me. My anxious thoughts go out to those beneath me, their comfort, their supply. How much more should I not think of the life of my subjects and their religious views, and sa to whether they become a good people or wild beasts. This is my greatest care. I beg and implore in tears and with a broken heart.

19th year of To-kwang, 10th moon, 18th day. (November 24th, 1839)