

# H Y M N S

## Concerning Christ Heading Up All Things

- 1 In His Christ to head up all things  
Is our God's economy;  
Taking Christ as Head and Center,  
All is one in harmony.
- 2 Christ as Head will be the Center;  
God within will be the Light;  
Christ enthroned, with God, His substance,  
Will fulfill His heart's delight.
- 3 Christ as life will be the content,  
Heading up all things in light;  
All the saints will be the vessel,  
To express His glory bright.
- 4 Satan hath himself injected  
Into man all things to spoil,  
Bringing darkness and corruption  
God's eternal plan to foil.
- 5 Christ has come, Himself imparting  
Into man as life to save,  
That the pow'r of death and darkness  
May no more all things enslave.
- 6 Thru the Church which is His Body  
Christ as Head will sum up all;  
All will fitly join together,  
All things either great or small.
- 7 Under Christ, by His full headship,  
All in union will subsist;  
In the light the Church expresses  
All in oneness will exist.
- 8 Owning Christ as Head and Center,  
All will be in harmony;  
Thru the shining of His Body  
All will share His liberty.
- 9 No more darkness and corruption,  
No more death and vanity;  
All will be released from bondage  
Throughout all eternity. (*Hymns*, #981)

**G**od has established Jesus Christ as the center, meaning, goal, means, explanation, and sum total of the otherwise inscrutable purpose of the universe. Neither the philosophies of the wisest men nor the religions and theologies of the most pious can reveal the things that are hidden in the heart of God. But God has made Himself

known to His particular creation, man, through the inspired writers of the Scriptures (2 Pet. 1:19-21; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Paul speaks of the eternal purpose of God in language that is full of mystery. He declares that God has caused the riches of His grace "to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence, making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:8-10). There are many mysterious expressions in these verses: *the mystery of His will*, *His good pleasure*, *economy*, *fullness of the times*, and *head up all things*. Their significance is deep, broad, and beyond our natural understanding.

God has a good pleasure, something that pleases Him. His good pleasure led Him to make a decision that became His will. Based upon His good pleasure and His will, He established a plan, which the Bible calls His economy. The word *economy* is a transliteration of the Greek word *oikonomia*, meaning (according to Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*) "direction," "provision," or "administration." It specifies, in particular, a household administration, indicating something very intimate and close to the heart of the householder. God's economy, which He purposed in Himself, is to head up all things in Christ. The term *all things* includes not only the things on the earth but also the things in the heavens. This universal heading up will be fully realized in the "fullness of the times," suggesting that there is a time in which God will complete His purpose through the ultimate heading up of all the scattered and dispersed elements of the universe into Christ, God's anointed.

The hymn in this issue explores in detail the unveiled mystery of God's economy. It begins with the affirmation: "In His Christ to head up all things / Is our God's economy." The Greek word translated "to head up," *anakephalaiōsasthai*, is used only in Ephesians 1:10. It can mean to "sum up" or to "recapitulate." It is the bringing together again under one head elements that have been detached, disconnected, isolated, or heaped up in a confused disarray. Although in God's creation there is an unmistakable characteristic of orderly arrangement, there are many occurrences of chaos and disorder which now plague the earth. All of these turbulent and unruly events can be harmonized into one only through God's economy, which is in Christ.

Stanzas 2 and 3 muse on the manifestation of this universal heading up. The author, Witness Lee, reflects on the revelation given to John concerning the ultimate manifestation of God's eternal goal—the New Jerusalem: "Christ as Head will be the Center." The unique center in the divine economy is the man Jesus who is both the Son of God and the Christ of God (Matt. 16:16). God's economy is to head up all things in the person of His Son, who, as the embodiment of God, is His full expression (Eph. 1:10; Col. 2:9; John 1:18). In the fullness of the times, God will consummate His purpose by uniting, joining together, all creation in this unique person. Our dear Lord Jesus is the attracting center, the magnet that draws all positive things and persons together into Himself.

**H**e is also the uniting center, the organic joining of all these elements. In the holy city, New Jerusalem, John saw the throne of God and of the Lamb as the center, and the river of water of life flowing out from the throne in the midst of its golden street with the tree of life on both sides of the river (Rev. 22:1-2). This signifies that Christ as the redeeming God seated on the throne, the ruling center in the New Jerusalem, is also the organic source of the life of God that flows out to the entire city. And in the enthroned Christ, "God within will be the Light." Christ, the Lamb of God, will be the lamp shining in the holy city, and God will be the bright light shining out from and through Him (21:23). Surely, Christ is *the center!* No one and nothing is in competition with Him. God is pleased to dwell in Him and be manifested through Him (Col. 1:19). The Son of God seated on the throne is the fulfillment of the good pleasure of God. Thus, the hymn affirms, "Christ enthroned, with God, His substance, / Will fulfill His heart's delight."

Furthermore, "Christ as life will be the content, / Heading up all things in light." Christ is not only the unique center, but He is also the all-inclusive content of the entire universe. The apostle Paul, recognizing the central and absolute place of Christ in the purpose of God, points out that Christ is our life, and we are hidden with Christ in God (3:3-4). Hence, in the new man (signifying Christ embodied in and mingled with all the redeemed and regenerated people of God) "Christ is all and in all" (vv. 10-11). Christ as the content is heading up all things in the light of God that shines through and out from Him. But at this point, there is a shift in the focus of the hymn; the saints, the people of God, who have been chosen, redeemed, regenerated, sanctified, transformed, and conformed to the first-born Son (Rom. 8:29-30), are seen as the enlargement of Christ: "All the saints will be the vessel, / To express His glory bright." Christ, as the embodiment of the Triune God, is the unique content of the universe, and the saints, as the Body of Christ, constitute Christ's unique vessel to express His glory, which is the glory of God. Hence, He embodies God, and He dispenses God in Himself into all

of His chosen people making them the extension and enlargement of Himself.

The fourth stanza answers the unspoken question: Why is there the need for a universal heading up? It is because all things in God's creation have been strewn into disarray by the injection of Satan, God's enemy, into man. Man was created to express and represent God (Gen. 1:26-28), but Satan, through the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "injected" himself into man and spoiled all of God's creation, bringing in darkness and corruption. God's response to the satanic chaos is celebrated in the fifth stanza: "Christ has come, Himself imparting / Into man as life to save." How wonderful are these simple words. Christ has come! By His coming God reaches us. Death, darkness, and corruption have been vanquished from God's creation through His marvelous redemption. Through redemption we are made right with God. And through regeneration (the imparting of Himself as life into us), we are being headed up in Him to be one with the Triune God.

**I**n Christ the believers are joined together and headed up organically as the church. Following the heading up of the church, the rest of the universe will be headed up: "Thru the Church which is His Body / Christ as Head will sum up all; / All will fitly join together, / All things either great or small." In the sixth stanza the church is the instrument through which the Lord will gather together all things in Himself. When God raised Christ from the dead, He exalted Christ to be Head over all things; He also produced the church as the Body of Christ. He subjected all things under the feet of Christ and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church (Eph. 1:20-22). Thus, the church as the Body of Christ is intrinsically involved in the heading up of all things in Christ.

The final three stanzas enlarge upon the fact of and the effect of the uniting power of Christ in the church. Christ is the unique Head inaugurating a union of all things by virtue of all things subsisting in Him, and the church becomes the radiating glow in which that oneness will exist (Rev. 21:23-24; cf. Eph. 5:8-14). By taking Christ as "Head and Center" everything in creation will be fully harmonized in the sweet intimacy of His person. At the time of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21), there will be "no more darkness and corruption" and "no more death and vanity." The entire created universe, which has been made subject to vanity because of the satanic chaos, "groans together and travails in pain" (Rom. 8:22), anxiously watching and eagerly awaiting "the revelation of the sons of God" (v. 19). Through the full maturity of the sons of God, their longing will be satisfied: "All will be released from bondage / Throughout all eternity." The eternal goal in God's economy will be realized in His Christ.

*by Gary Kaiser*