

The Lordship of God in Christ as the Gospel

The designation of God as Lord indicates His sovereignty over the affairs of the universe and His right to its ownership. He has this right and authority as the Creator. However, this lordship was challenged in the history of the universe by the rebellion of Satan and the fall of man. To reestablish proper order in the universe, God in Christ went through the process of incarnation, death, and resurrection and became the life-giving Spirit, the Lord Spirit, so that He could rescue fallen human beings from their rebellious sinful nature and constitute them as members of His organic Body and as co-kings to reign with Him. In order for God to carry out this purpose, there needs to be an appropriate response and cooperation from human beings, that is, to recognize who is Lord—Jehovah in the Old Testament as Jesus in the New Testament—and to obey Him by believing into Him and confessing Him as Lord and to allow the life of the Lord Spirit to transform them into His glorious image so that they may reign in life with Him as priestly servant-kings forever. This is the heart of the gospel revealed in the New Testament.

The Lordship of God in the History of the Universe

The lordship of God in the universe was challenged and usurped by the leading angel, the Daystar, Lucifer, who wanted to make himself on the same level as God (Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:13-18). This angel also caused other created beings to join him in rebellion against God (Rev. 12:4) and became God's adversary, Satan, the devil (Job 1:6; Zech. 3:1-2; Rev. 12:9). God then judged the rebellious Satan and those who followed him in rebellion. Consequently, the earth became waste and emptiness, and darkness was on the surface of the deep waters (Gen. 1:2). God intended to restore proper order in the universe through humankind created in His image and committed with His authority to have dominion over every creature and over all the earth (v. 26; Psa. 8:4-8). However, Satan tempted humankind to partake of his rebellious nature, signified by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which resulted in the fall of man. To recover and restore humankind to His original intention, God became a man, Jesus Christ, God incarnate (John 1:14). Christ was crucified to destroy Satan, to nullify his rebellious nature of sin injected into man, and to redeem humankind back to God (Heb. 2:14; Titus 2:14). Christ

resurrected, overcoming death, and in His resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit to impart the divine life into redeemed humanity. Christ then ascended to be seated in the highest place in the universe, on the throne of God, and was made the Lord of the universe (Acts 2:36). He was also made Head over all things to the church, His Body (Eph. 1:22-23). The church as the Body of Christ is the corporate man who will exercise God's dominion over the earth, which will be manifested as the kingdom of God during the coming millennium on earth (Rev. 20:4) and will be consummated in the eternal kingdom of God. In the present age God is preparing co-kings to rule with Christ. Meanwhile, human government also exists to establish a semblance of proper order on earth by exercising a measure of God-given authority (Dan. 4:17). At the second coming of Christ, the rule of human government, the kingdom of this world, will be terminated, becoming the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He and the overcoming believers will reign forever and ever (7:27; Rev. 11:15).

Our Response and Cooperation

In order to prepare co-kings from among redeemed human beings, there is the need for them to recognize who is Lord and to submit to Him. This can be seen by studying the words used in the Bible to indicate lordship, in particular *'Adonāy* and κύριος. Then there needs to be an appropriate response—the obedience of faith and our cooperation with the transforming life of the Lord Spirit to make us priestly servant-kings.

Words Used to Indicate the Sovereign Lordship of God

A number of words in Hebrew are used to indicate the lordship of God. The most common is *'Adon*, which occurs mostly as the plural *'Adonāy* when referring to God indicating Lord as Master. Other words used to refer to God include *Ba'al*, indicating Lord as Owner, Husband (Hosea 2:16);¹ *Melek*, Lord as King “over [Israel]” (1 Sam. 12:12), as King “forever” (Psa. 10:16), as King “of glory” (24:8), as King “over all the earth” (47:2); *Moshel*, Lord as Ruler “among men righteously” (2 Sam. 23:3), as Ruler “over all” (1 Chron. 29:12), as Ruler “over all the kingdoms of the nations” (2 Chron. 20:6), as Ruler “among the nations” (Psa. 22:28), and as Ruler “in Jacob /

Unto the ends of the earth” (59:13); *Sar*, Lord as Prince “of Peace” (Isa. 9:6), as Prince “of princes” (Dan. 8:25); and *Ro’sh*, Lord as Head “over all” (1 Chron. 29:11).² Two Aramaic words are also used: *Mara’*, meaning Lord as Master “of kings” (Dan. 2:37) and as Master “of the heavens” (5:23); and *Shalit*, Lord as Ruler “over the kingdom of men” (4:17, 25, 32).

Particular Greek words are used to translate these Hebrew words in the Septuagint. *’Adon* and *’Adonāy* are mostly translated κύριος, “Lord as master.” However, κύριος most commonly translates *YHWH/Jehovah* in the Old Testament. This has the effect of removing the distinction between *’Adonāy* and *Jehovah*. Δεσπότης, “master,” is used occasionally to translate *’Adon* and *’Adonāy* (Dan. 9:16), especially for *’Adonāy YHWH* by δεσπότης κύριος (Gen. 15:8; Jer. 1:6). Δεσπότης is used in the New Testament five times to refer to God as Master (Luke 2:29; Acts 4:24; 2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 4; Rev. 6:10). Βασιλεύς, “king,” is used to translate “King” (1 Sam. 12:12), and this continues in the New Testament to refer to Jesus as “King of those who reign as kings” (1 Tim. 6:15; 1:17; Rev. 17:14). *Moshel*, “Ruler,” is translated ἄρχων, “ruler, leader” (1 Chron. 29:12). ἄρχων also translates *Nagid* as “Leader” (Isa. 55:4) and *Nasi’* as “Prince” (Ezek. 34:24), and it is used for Christ in the phrase *the Ruler of the kings of the earth* (Rev. 1:5). Christ is also an ἄρχηγόν, “this One God has exalted...as Leader” (Acts 5:31). Finally, Christ is the Head, κεφαλή, “of all rule and authority” (Col. 2:10) and “of the Body, the church” (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19).

These Hebrew and Greek words mostly indicate God’s lordship over His people, the earth, and all things in the universe. The most common words, *’Adonāy* and κύριος, are most commonly associated with the names *Jehovah* and *Jesus* respectively. Both of these names have particular significance to our appropriate response to the divine lordship.

The Origin and Use of the Designation ’Adonāy

There is some uncertainty as to the origin of the designation *’adon*. Eissfeldt considers that “the most probable explanation is that *’adh* (*’adhan*)...[is an] onomatopoeic [word] for ‘father,’” which may also be supported by the Ugaritic texts (59).

’Adon means “lord” and can be used for a human lord or master as well as God as Lord or Master. It occurs over 770 times in the Old Testament. The singular form *’adon* is used in the Old Testament mostly for an earthly lord (over 180 times). It is used to refer to God about 30 times, sometimes when there is some uncertainty as to who is being addressed. God is referred to as “my Lord” (e.g., an Angel of Jehovah—Judg. 6:12 and the Captain of

Jehovah’s army—Josh. 5:14). He is also the Lord of all the earth (3:11, 13; Psa. 97:5; Micah 4:13; Zech. 4:14; 6:5), the Lord Jehovah (9 times, e.g., Exo. 23:17), and the Lord (Psa. 114:7; Mal. 3:1).

About 13 times the plural *’adonim* (apart from *’Adonāy*) is also used to refer to God. He is the Lord of lords (Deut. 10:17; Psa. 136:3), our Lord (Neh. 8:10; 10:29; Psa. 8:1, 9; 135:5; 147:5), your (the queen’s, Zion’s) Lord (45:11; Isa. 51:22), their (the men of Tekoa’s) Lord (Neh. 3:5), and his (Ephraim’s) Lord (Hosea 12:14). The plural *’adonim* also occurs more than 50 times in reference to individual human beings, including Abraham (Gen. 24:9), Potiphar (39:2), Joseph (42:30), and various kings including the king of Egypt (40:1), Eglon (Judg. 3:25), Saul (1 Sam. 26:15), David (1 Kings 1:11), Solomon (2 Chron. 13:6), Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:27), as well as the prophets Elijah (2:3) and Elisha (5:25), as the so-called “plural of majesty.”³

God is mostly referred to using the form *’Adonāy* (around

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440 times). *’Adonāy* is probably a plural pausal form of *’adon* with a first-person possessive suffix (literally meaning “my Lords”). However, the force of the pausal personal suffix is rarely evoked or captured in translation (Exo. 34:9, LXX) and “can thus be understood only as an intentional characteristic of the word in its function as a divine name and epithet” (Quell and Foerster 1060).⁴ *’Adonāy* is reserved exclusively for God as Lord. Over 330 times (75 percent) *’Adonāy* is associated closely with the name *YHWH* (*Yahweh* or *Jehovah*) either as a compound *’Adonāy YHWH*, “Lord Jehovah” (291 times, first in Gen. 15:2), and much less frequently *YHWH ’Adonāy*, “Jehovah the Lord” (7 times, e.g., Hab. 3:19), or *YHWH ’Adonenu*, “Jehovah our Lord” (3 times, e.g., Neh. 10:29). The latter two may be better considered cases of apposition rather than compound titles. *Jehovah* occurs in apposition to *Lord* in expressions such as “the Ark of Jehovah, the Lord (*’Adon*) of all the earth” (Josh. 3:13; Amos 5:16). *’Adonāy* also occurs quite commonly in parallel poetic structure with *Jehovah*, such as, “The place, O Jehovah, which You have made for Your dwelling, / The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established”

(Exo. 15:17). Jehovah is also addressed as Lord, e.g., “Moses said to Jehovah, Please, Lord” (4:10).

In a later reading tradition the name *YHWH* (*Yahweh* or *Jehovah*) was not pronounced, since it was considered too sacred, and people feared uttering the name in vain or blaspheming it (20:7; Deut. 5:11; Lev. 24:11-16). One convention was to replace the name by the reading of *'Adonāy* for *Jehovah*. This is reflected both in the Masoretic pointing of the consonants *YHWH* with the vowels of *'Adonāy* (thus producing the word *Jehovah*) and the Septuagint translation of the name *Jehovah* by κύριος “Lord.”

A few theophoric names bear the designation *'Adon* with the prefix *'Adon-* as an expression of the experience, appreciation, and aspiration of the Old Testament believers in relation to the lordship of God. Some names associate *Jehovah* with *'Adon* and indicate what Jehovah is to His people personally, such as Adonijah, “my Lord is Yah” (a shortened form of *Jehovah*—2 Sam. 3:4), and Tōb-adonijah, “my Lord Yah is good” (2 Chron. 17:8). Some names describe His qualities, attributes, or actions, such as Adoni-zedek, “Lord of righteousness, my Lord is righteous” (Josh. 10:1), Adoniram, “my Lord is exalted” (1 Kings 4:6), and Adonikam, “my Lord has arisen” (Ezra 2:13).

The close association of the name *Jehovah* with *'Adonāy* as well as the replacement of the divine name with *'Adonāy* indicate that the Lord is not just God the Creator but Jehovah, the I AM. The name *Jehovah*, derived from the verb *to become*, or *to be*, implies that His lordship is intrinsically related to our existence. He is the One who exists, the self-existing and ever-existing One, and He is whatever we need, especially when we are conscious of our own frailty and impotence as well as the shortness of our existence on this earth (Psa. 39:4-5).⁵

The verbs associated with the designation *'Adonāy*—particularly with the name *Jehovah*, either in the compound title or in close proximity—also indicate the significance of the Lord Jehovah as the I AM in the existence of His Old Testament people, especially in their consciousness of need for help. Example of this are Abraham’s invocation of the Lord Jehovah in his impotence (Gen. 15:2) and Moses’ querying Jehovah as *'Adonāy* due to his slowness of speech (Exo. 4:10, 13), his plea for *'Adonāy*’s presence in the midst of the people of Israel (34:9), and his prayer for *'Adonāy*’s power to be great to deliver the children of Israel and bring them into the promised land (Num. 14:17). Jehovah as *'Adonāy* is also invoked by Gideon, Manoah, and Samson in their times of need (Judg. 6:15, 22; 13:8; 16:28). David also called upon the Lord Jehovah in his considerations to build Jehovah a house (2 Sam. 7), and Nehemiah requested *'Adonāy* for

favor with the king regarding his return to Jerusalem to assist with the rebuilding of the city (Neh. 1:11). The psalmist(s) recognizes that Jehovah our Lord’s name is excellent in all the earth (Psa. 8:1) and that he has no goodness beyond Him (16:2). He is our help, salvation, hope, Deliverer, shield, and trust (38:22; 39:7; 40:17; 59:11; 71:5). He daily loads us with good, and with Him are the goings forth even from death (68:19-20). He is ready to forgive, abundant in lovingkindness, and compassionate and gracious (86:5, 15). He has been our dwelling place in all generations (90:1). The prophets appreciate the Lord as the One who made the heavens and the earth by His great power and by His outstretched arm. Nothing is too wonderful for Him (Jer. 32:17). He is the One who utters divine prophecy, as indicated by the expression *thus says the Lord Jehovah*, particularly in Ezekiel (210 times), Jeremiah, and Amos. He deals with His people in their chastising, in the judgment of the nations (Isa. 10:12), and in their restoration (11:11; 49:22). He will swallow up death forever, wipe away the tears from all faces, and remove the reproach of His people from all the earth (25:8). The Lord Jehovah will come as a mighty One, and His arm will rule for Him; His reward is with Him, and His recompense is before Him (40:10). Related to the Messiah, the Lord gives the sign of the virgin with the child, called Immanuel (7:14). He lays a stone in Zion as a foundation, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, signifying Christ as the cornerstone for God’s building (28:16; 1 Pet. 2:6; Eph. 2:20). He operates in His servant, pointing to Christ in His human living (Isa. 50:4-5, 7; 61:1).

These verses indicate how crucial the Lord Jehovah was to the Old Testament saints in their life as well as His working to prepare the Messiah to carry out a more intrinsic salvation within the being of the New Testament believers.

The Origin and Use of the Designation Κύριος

Κύριος in its origin is probably an adjective derived from a noun κύρος “power or authority,” and it denotes having power or authority. As mentioned above, κύριος was used mostly to translate both *'Adonāy* and *Jehovah* by the Septuagint translators following a tradition that avoids the pronunciation of the divine name in Hebrew by replacing it with the designation *'Adonāy* “Lord.” This has the effect of leveling the distinction between the two words and masking the more intrinsic significance of becoming or being embodied in the name *Jehovah*.⁶

In perhaps as few as two hundred years after this merging of the name *Jehovah* with the designation *Lord*, Jehovah became a man, Jesus Christ. The name *Jesus* means “Jehovah Savior” or “the salvation of Jehovah” (Matt. 1:21). Jesus confirmed that He was Jehovah by testifying

both in an absolute sense that He was the I AM (John 8:24, 28, 58) as well as in a predicated sense that He was the reality of positive things, using expressions such as, “I am the bread of life” (6:35), that are indicated by John’s use of the pleonastic expression ἐγώ εἰμι, “I am...”

This is also confirmed by the writers of the New Testament applying verses from the Old Testament that mention Jehovah (and are translated using κύριος) to the Lord Jesus—for example, in Paul’s writings (Rom. 10:13; 14:11; 1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor. 10:17; 1 Cor. 2:16; 10:26; 2 Tim. 2:19) as listed by Capes (115-148), who states, “Paul’s application of Yahweh texts to Christ, therefore, has significant christological implications. It implies that he considered Jesus to be more than man...that Christ was in some sense Yahweh himself, manifest as the Messiah” (164). Capes argues that this is more than just the “transference of *functions* from God to the exalted Jesus” but that Paul “considered Jesus to be one with God” (165). Verses mentioning *Adonāy* are also applied to the Lord Jesus—for example, “I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne” (Isa. 6:1), and “Isaiah...saw His glory and spoke concerning Him” (John 12:41-42), indicating the lordship of Christ. When the Lord Jesus states, “Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord” (Matt. 7:22; Luke 6:46), this is perhaps an indication that He is the Lord Jehovah of the Old Testament.⁷ The designation κύριος “Lord” is applied to Jesus both before and after His resurrection. Many times in His earthly ministry Jesus was referred to as Lord, indicating His divine status, especially when someone was in a helpless and hopeless situation requesting a miracle—for example, a leper (Matt. 8:2), a centurion with a paralyzed servant (v. 6), the disciples being tossed about in the boat at sea (v. 25), the blind men (9:28), and Peter walking on the water (14:28).

After the Lord Jesus passed through death and resurrection and ascended, He was made Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). His human status was uplifted to divinity. Now a man is on the throne of God, administrating the affairs of the universe. As Witness Lee states,

As God, the Lord was the Lord all the time (Luke 1:43; John 11:21; 20:28). But as man, He was made the Lord in His ascension after He brought His humanity into God in His resurrection. And as God’s sent and anointed One, He was Christ from the time that He was born (Luke 2:11; Matt. 1:16; John 1:41; Matt. 16:16). But as such a One, He was also officially made the very Christ of God in His ascension.

The Lord was made Lord, the Lord of all, to possess all; and He was made Christ, God’s Anointed (Heb. 1:9), to carry out God’s commission. (Recovery Version, Acts 2:36, note 1)

Jesus Christ our Lord was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead (Rom. 1:4). In resurrection He became the life-giving Lord Spirit to enter into us and reconstitute us with Himself (1 Cor. 15:45; John 20:20-22). Now He is the Spirit of the Lord (Acts 5:9) and the Lord Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17-18), the transforming presence of the Lord Jesus in the believers. Although Jesus is addressed as Lord in the Gospels, it is only after His resurrection that we find the compound title *the Lord Jesus* (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:3; Acts 1:21; 4:33; 7:59). In Acts and the rest of the New Testament He is not only referred to as Lord Jesus (32 times) but Lord Jesus Christ (62 times, e.g., Acts 11:17; 15:26; 28:31; Rom. 1:7; 5:1), Jesus our Lord (3 times, e.g., 4:24), Jesus Christ our Lord (5 times, e.g., 1:4; 5:21), Christ Jesus our Lord (6 times, usually with a preposition preceding—6:23; 8:39), Christ Jesus my Lord (Phil. 3:8), the Christ, Jesus the Lord (Col. 2:6), Christ, the Lord (Luke 2:11), the Lord Christ (Rom. 16:18; Col. 3:24), but never the Lord Christ Jesus. This respects the order in His process—He was incar-

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nated as Jesus first then anointed as Christ and made Lord later.

The early believers announced “the Lord Jesus as the gospel” (Acts 11:20), which is “the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thes. 1:8). The apostles did not preach themselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and themselves as the believers’ slaves for Jesus’ sake (2 Cor. 4:5). This is the good news, that we can not only be rescued from the heap of collapse of the fall by acknowledging Jesus as Lord, but we can also fulfill God’s purpose to head up all things in Christ by responding to Him by faith and cooperating with Him to be transformed into co-kings.

Our Response: Obedience of Faith— Believe and Confess

We need to recognize Jesus’ status as Lord. He has power and authority over the affairs of this universe. We need to confess (or acknowledge) with our mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead so that we may be saved (Rom. 10:9). As

Murray J. Harris states, we affirm

his absolute supremacy, not only over the physical and moral universe (Matt. 28:18; 1 Pet. 3:22), and not only over human history (Rom. 9:5), not only over all human beings (Acts 10:36; Rom. 10:12), whether living or dead (Rom. 14:9), not only over the church (Eph. 1:22), but also over our own lives as his willing slaves. The simple but crucial point is that the two words 'Lord' and 'slave', *kyrios* and *doulos*, are correlatives. (90)

Our confession should also acknowledge that Jesus is Jehovah, because Paul quotes the Septuagint of Joel 2:32 [3:5 LXX], saying, "Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). This indicates not only initial salvation but also the believers' practice of calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:2). Our confession is also a result of and a testimony to the presence of the Holy Spirit. "No one can say, Jesus is Lord! except in the Holy Spirit" (12:3). As Witness Lee says,

The living God causes His worshippers to speak in His Spirit. This kind of speaking is related to the spiritual gifts...When we say with a proper spirit, "Jesus is Lord!" we are in the Holy Spirit. Hence, to call on the Lord Jesus is the way to participate in, to enjoy, and to experience the Holy Spirit. (Recovery Version, 1 Cor. 12:3, notes 1 and 3)

Our acknowledgement of submission should not be mere lip service to an objective Lord telling us what to do, but obedience in the principle of faith. We believe (trust, put our confidence in) the risen Lord Spirit as Jehovah God, that He is, implying that we are not and that we need to be reconstituted and transformed from being rebel sinners to kingly God-men, able to rule with Christ and share His rule over the earth as co-kings (Heb. 11:6). We have faith in the Lord Jesus (Acts 20:21; Eph. 1:15), believing on or into Him (Acts 11:17; 16:31) and being baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus (19:5). We enter into an organic union with the Lord by being cut off from our old source through baptism and grafted into Christ through faith (Eph. 4:5; Rom. 11:17). We are washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:11). The cross of our Lord Jesus is the means for us to be crucified to the world and the world to us (Gal. 6:14). We enjoy the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (v. 18), which also comes from Christ Jesus our Lord (1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2). Our work of faith, labor of love, and endurance of hope are all grounded in our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thes. 1:3). We eagerly await the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:20; 1 Thes. 5:23; 2 Pet. 1:16; Rev. 22:20); indeed, this was the expectation in the cry of the early church in Aramaic: Maranatha!—"The Lord come!" (1 Cor. 16:22).

The church is in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thes. 1:1).⁸ He sustains it in union with Himself. In the most organic sense of the church, Christ is Head over all things to the church, His Body, which implies a transmission to the church from the Head (Eph. 1:22-23). The Body grows up into the Head in all things, and out from the Head all the Body grows with the growth of God unto the building up of the Body (4:15-16; Col. 2:19). The church as the Body with the Head is the one new corporate man that fulfills God's purpose of expressing Him and exercising His dominion on the earth (Gen. 1:26; Eph. 2:15).

In Christ Jesus our Lord the eternal purpose of God was made (3:11), and in Him is the free gift of God, eternal life (Rom. 6:23). We can count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, counting them as refuse (Phil. 3:8). He empowers us (1 Tim. 1:12). We were called into the fellowship of the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor. 1:9), and through Jesus Christ our Lord, the only God our Savior gets glory, majesty, might, and authority before all time and now and unto all eternity (Jude 25).

Our Co-operation: Transformed to Reign in Life

Our cooperation with the operation of the risen Lord, mentioned in the verses above, accomplishes two things in us: our transformation into the Lord's image for His expression and our reigning in life to be priestly slaves serving Him as co-kings reigning with Him. This fulfills the purpose of God in creating humankind for His expression and representation, indicated by the two words *image* and *dominion* (Gen. 1:26).

Being transformed into the same image is accomplished by beholding and reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord with an unveiled face, even as from the Lord Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18). Transformation has the effect of metabolically discharging the rebellious, insubordinate, sinful elements of our old man and infusing us with the righteous, holy, and glorious life and nature of God.

This life of God gives us a way to reign in life over sin and death by the operation of the law of the Spirit of life (Rom. 5:17; 8:2). Grace also reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (5:21). As Witness Lee says,

We are saved in life to the extent that the life we have received enthrones us as kings to reign over all things. God's complete salvation is for us to reign in life by the abundance of grace—God Himself as our all-sufficient supply for our organic salvation—and of the gift of righteousness—God's judicial redemption applied to us in a practical way.

God causes the believers to have life that they may reign in life, subduing the insubordination of sin, death, and all the negative things belonging to sin and death. To reign in life is to be under the ruling of the divine life...to practice the life of restriction and limitation in the divine life.

To reign in life is to rule as kings. To reign is to conquer, subdue, and rule over Satan, the world, sin, the flesh, ourselves, and all our environmental circumstances...Our Christian life today should not only be a victorious and overcoming life; it should also be a kingly and reigning life. This should be our experience today. Instead of waiting for the millennium in order to reign with Christ, we should desire to reign in life as kings today.

Furthermore, to reign is to be God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead. In the universe only God reigns and only He is the King, but we as the children of this King can also reign in His life. God reigns and we reign. Since we reign as God does, by reigning in life we become God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead. (Conclusion 3042-3043)

The consummation of the believers' reigning in life is that they reign first for a thousand years (Rev. 20:6) and then forever and ever (22:5). They reign not just as kings but also as priests of God, serving Him and other human beings (5:10).

The Lord presented a transformed concept concerning reigning when He spoke in the Gospels: "Those who are esteemed as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you shall be the slave of all" (Mark 10:42-44).⁹ This follows His own example as the Son of Man, who did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many (v. 45). Even He equates a parable of a master girding himself and having his watchful servants recline at table, and he then coming to them and serving them, to Himself as Lord to His faithful slaves at His second coming (Luke 12:37). The believers' status as slaves serving God also continues into eternity future (Rev. 7:15; 22:3).

Conclusion

The lordship of God in Christ reestablishes a proper order in the universe. Jehovah incarnated as the man Jesus established a proper order in a human being intrinsically as a prototype of a human being constituted as a kingly priest. His death and resurrection qualified Him to be made Lord and Christ in His uplifted, deified humanity, and His becoming the life-giving Spirit made His life available to be reproduced in the members of His Body,

the church. The apostles and the believers announce the lordship of Jesus Christ as the gospel. He needs human cooperation through our obedience of faith in the Lord, Jehovah God as the Lord Jesus Christ, the I AM, and in our being transformed to be priestly servant-kings, serving Him and reigning with Him for eternity.

by Roger Good

Notes

¹The name or designation *Baal* is usually avoided when used to refer to Jehovah the God of Israel, being reserved for the Canaanite god(s) (cf. Hosea 2:17). The verb *ba'al* "to rule, to marry or be a husband" is used in Isaiah 54:5, "your Maker is your Husband" (cf. also Jer. 3:14; 31:32). Both nouns in this verse are actually plural participles, lit., "the Ones who are married to you are the Ones who made you," which are followed by the clause *Jehovah of hosts is His name*, another indicator of unity yet plurality associated with the God of Israel (see "Plurality yet Unity in God" in *Affirmation & Critique* XI.1 (April 2006): 50-57).

We believe (trust, put our confidence in) the risen Lord Spirit as Jehovah God, that He is, implying that we are not and that we need to be reconstituted and transformed from being rebel sinners to kingly God-men.

²So also Micah 5:2 referring to the Messiah, "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, / So little to be among the thousands of Judah, / From you there will come forth to Me / He who is to be Ruler [*Moshel*] in Israel; / And His goings forth are from ancient times, / From the days of eternity." *Nasi'* and *Nagid* are also used to refer to the Messiah as Prince respectively, as "David...a Prince" (Ezek. 34:24) and "Messiah the Prince" (Dan. 9:25).

³Perhaps we could say that the plurality of lordship embodied in these examples is corporate, referring to individuals who are spoken of as being representatives of corporate entities, such as a household, a kingdom, or schools of prophets.

⁴The fact that אָדֹנָי [the consonants of '*Adonāy*'] was of four letters, corresponding to the tetragrammaton [the four consonants found in the name *YHWH* (*Yahweh* or *Jehovah*)], was also probably of importance to [the Masoretes], one can also, perhaps, understand why it was that the my-form established itself in use in place of the our-form [*Adoneynu*]. (Quell and Foerster 1061)

⁵On the further significance of the name *Jehovah* see "The Purpose of God in the Name of Jehovah," *Affirmation & Critique* XII.1 (April 2007): 59-67.

⁶See “The Purpose of God in the Name of Jehovah,” *Affirmation & Critique* XII.1 (April 2007): 59-67, for further discussion.

⁷About 25 percent of the time *Adonāy Jehovah* is translated by κύριος repeated twice in the Septuagint, i.e., “Lord, Lord” (e.g., Deut. 3:24; 1 Kings 8:53; Ezek. 12:10). Over 60 percent of the time *Adonāy Jehovah* is translated by only one κύριος, and about 30 times (10 percent) by κύριος followed by θεός “Lord God,” which is the traditional way to read this expression, as indicated by the usual Masoretic vowel pointing.

Both *Jehovah* (Gen. 11:5; Exo. 3:4) and *Adonāy* are usually translated by κύριος without the article in the Septuagint. “The effect of this is to present *kyrios* as much more a name than a title” (De Lacey 194). The main exception is when *Jehovah* is preceded by a preposition or another particle. Then it is also sometimes translated by κύριος preceded by an article with a preposition (Gen. 4:13) or preceded by an article in an oblique case (like the dative case) without the preposition (4:3), see Larry Perkins, “ΚΥΡΙΟΣ—Articulation and Non-articulation in Greek Exodus,” *BIOSCS* 41 (2008): 17-33. In the New Testament an anarthrous κύριος is used for verses quoted from the Old Testament containing the name *Jehovah* (about 50 times) or in verses using the language of the Old Testament, for example, an angel of the Lord (Matt. 1:20), the Spirit of the Lord (Luke 4:18), and the hand of the Lord (1:66). Most of the other cases of κύριος without the article are grammatically constrained, that is, in environments that rarely if ever take a definite article, e.g., a vocative case (120 times; e.g., Matt. 7:21), a complement (Rom. 10:12), indefinite apposition, or an object of a preposition (especially the expression *in the Lord*, occurring 48 times; e.g., Rom. 16:2). Conversely, apart from these environments, most expressions referring to the Lord Jesus either as the Lord, the Lord Jesus [Christ], our Lord Jesus [Christ] are found with a definite article. While this keeps references to Jehovah distinct from other references to the Lord,

the use of κύριος in the same context referring both to Jehovah and to the Lord Jesus is a strong indicator that Jesus is Jehovah of the Old Testament, the incarnation of the same.

⁸It is interesting to note that the root of the word *church* in English (Middle English *chirche*) comes from the Greek word κυριακός, meaning “belonging to the Lord, of the Lord” (1 Cor. 11:20). This is more intrinsic than the Greek word translated “church,” ἐκκλησία, which means literally, “the gathering together of the called-out ones.”

⁹It is interesting that the English word *Lord* also has to do with service, meaning literally, “loaf warden,” one who looks after or guards the food.

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Footnotes from the Recovery Version of the Bible

“And the **Lord** is the **Spirit**; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (2 Cor. 3:17).

Lord: According to the context of this section, which begins at 2:12, *the Lord* here must refer to Christ the Lord (2:12, 14-15, 17; 3:3-4, 14, 16; 4:5). This then is a strong word in the Bible, telling us emphatically that Christ is the Spirit. “The Lord Christ of v. 16 is the Spirit who pervades and animates the new covenant of which we are ministers (v. 6), and the ministration of which is with glory (v. 8). Compare Rom. 8:9-11; John 14:16, 18” (Vincent). “The Lord of v. 16, is the Spirit...which giveth life, v. 6: meaning, ‘the Lord,’ as here spoken of, ‘Christ,’ ‘is the Spirit,’ is identical with the Holy Spirit...Christ, here, is the Spirit of Christ” (Alford). “All that transforming and indwelling Spirit is Christ Himself. ‘The Lord is the Spirit’” (Williston Walker).

Spirit: The Spirit, who is the ultimate expression of the Triune God, was not yet in John 7:39, because at that time Jesus had not yet been glorified. He had not yet finished the process that He, as the embodiment of God, had to pass through. After His resurrection, that is, after the finishing of all the processes, such as incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, that the Triune God had to pass through in man for His redemptive economy, He became a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). In the New Testament, this life-giving Spirit is called “the Spirit” (Rom. 8:16, 23, 26-27; Gal. 3:2, 5, 14; 6:8; Rev. 2:7; 3:22; 14:13; 22:17), the Spirit who gives us the divine life (v. 6; John 6:63) and frees us from the bondage of the law.