

## God Establishing Christ as His King to Inaugurate the Kingdom of God on the Earth

- 1 Lord, Thou art God's Anointed;  
Thou art of kings the King!  
Here in full adoration  
Our song to Thee we bring!  
Thy kingdom is forever;  
Established is Thy throne!  
Thy reign with love and justice  
In glory stands alone!
- 2 Upon the hill of Zion  
Hath God established Thee,  
And all the nations given  
Thy heritage to be.  
To Thee hath God committed  
His full authority  
To rule with might the nations  
Unto eternity.
- 3 Before the time of fullness,  
While darkness still prevails,  
Ten thousands daily render  
To Thee their loyal hails!  
From shore to shore Thy people  
To Thee their praises sing;  
They worship, love, and serve Thee  
As their dear Savior-King!
- 4 When in the time appointed,  
With glory Thou wilt come;  
The earth with all its nations  
Thy kingdom will become.  
In majesty and splendor  
Wilt Thou be served as King,  
All kindreds and all peoples  
To Thee their praise shall ring! (*Hymns*, #147)

Inspiring hymns that are enlightening, insightful, and biblically accurate often elicit powerful and intense impressions that supply healthy nourishment for the soul and beget obedient actions of faith in those who are exercised by them. Other hymns may not leave much immediate impression; however, through repeated musing, contemplating, and meditating upon them, they yield an increasing abundance of the riches of knowledge and understanding in spiritual truth and life.

Many believers during times of worship have diligently followed small snatches of light in a hymn to open up brilliant vistas in the fruitful fields of the inexhaustible riches of Christ, or they have discovered rich veins of truth from

which they have diligently mined the deeper treasures that at first had appeared to be a small nugget of truth.

### God's Established King Must Subdue All under His Authority

The above hymn contains such hidden, deep, and productive riches accessible to those who pursue. The hymn trumpets the exaltation of the Lord Jesus as the Christ of God who has been established as King of kings to rule over the nations. This thoughtful hymn, written by Witness Lee, contains several layers of mystery within its cryptic utterances. It is, initially, a worshipful portrayal of God's seating of His glorious Christ upon His throne on Mount Zion in the heavens, the place of God's dwelling (Rev. 14:1; Heb. 12:22). Lying beneath, there is a joyful proclamation of the eternal kingship of the Christ of God, of the establishment of His unlimited and all-powerful throne, and of the glory of His unchallenged reign of love and justice. There is, however, the implication that the nations, which are His inheritance, still resist His rule and authority.

The challenge to His authority implied in the hymn is somewhat obscure, but an understanding of this conflict is the key to the impact of the hymn. The underlying theme can be discovered by reading carefully stanzas 2 through 4. Stanza 2 speaks of His ruling the nations with might, implying that the use of power is a necessity in order to enforce the absolute authority that has been given to Him; as we consider the words *with might* in the context of the entire hymn, we are easily reminded of the word in Psalm 2:8-9: "I will give the nations as Your inheritance / And the limits of the earth as Your possession. / You will break them with an iron rod."

Stanza 3 discloses that the time of fullness has not yet come and that darkness is still prevailing. In contrast with that prevailing darkness are tens of thousands of loyal believers who are hailing the reign of Christ, their Savior-King. Finally, stanza 4 declares that at the appointed time, Christ will come in glory, and the nations will become His kingdom, indicating that His kingship, although clearly established for eternity in the heavens, is not yet manifested in time and space on the earth. The Bible reveals that for the manifestation of His kingship in the millennial kingdom, there will be the need for Christ and His overcomers to shepherd the nations with a rod of iron, a clear indication that there will still be

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a spirit of rebellion in some of the inhabitants of the nations present on earth in the millennium.

This hymn, which ostensibly lauds the complete victory that God's Anointed accomplished through His earthly ministry, actually infers the more complex fact that He must still in time exercise His power and authority in order to subdue the rebellious nations. Christ has accomplished God's full salvation and initiated God's kingdom on the earth through His church; He has entered into glory and has been inaugurated into His eternal kingly and heavenly reign; and He is seated in the heavens to rest until His enemies are put under His feet. All of this has been achieved through His earthly ministry, but in His heavenly ministry as the Head of the church, He is very active to subdue His enemies on the earth under His feet.

This hymn reveres Christ as God's Anointed in ascension. Prior to His death, resurrection, and ascension, Christ came through His incarnation to be the life and light of the world (cf. John 1:1-4, 14). Through His death on the cross He terminated the entire corrupted old creation, and in His all-powerful resurrection He raised up His own elect for them to become the new creation through redemption, regeneration, sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation and glorification.

The new creation is the initiation of the kingdom of the heavens on the earth today. When this hymn triumphantly exalts Christ concerning His accomplishments as God's anointed One, it is referring to the reality of the kingdom today with a view to its millennial manifestation to come.

### The Hidden Background of Resistance

The first two stanzas portray Christ's complete accomplishment of God's intention on the earth: "Lord, Thou art God's Anointed; / Thou art of kings the King!" These stanzas also acknowledge that all the nations, having been given to Him as His heritage, have not freely submitted to His rule over them. On the contrary, the world rejects Christ and often refuses to even acknowledge the existence of God. Even many of those who call themselves Christians do not match the teaching of the Lord Himself or of His disciples as found in the writings of the New Testament. Signs of disobedience are everywhere. Thus, we who enjoy His redeeming grace must learn to submit to His eternal rule in our daily life. In contrast to this new-creation living, the old creation persists as an amalgamation of rebellious nations that dictate the culture, living, and government of the world in a fleshly display of the characteristics of the satanic nature. These nations, who shamelessly accuse, resist, compete with, and war against one another continuously, come together for one common purpose—a determination to throw off God's rule. These nations must be subdued by Christ in His ascended kingship through His church on the earth.

### The Characteristics of Christ's Reign

Every word in the hymn's description of Christ's reign is meaningful. The keywords are *glory, stands alone, love, and justice*. A simple and accurate definition of *glory* is "God expressed." The glory that is described in the Scriptures and reflected in this hymn is not just an awesome dignity and pageantry. Rather, it is Christ, who bears a genuine simplicity that is full of the power, majesty, dignity, and authority that the unique God of the universe embodied of Himself in Christ. As God manifested in the flesh, Christ displays the glory of God and even is the glory of God.

Christ's glory in His reign stands alone; nothing and no one can rival it or equal it. The glory of Christ's reign is unique because there is only one God as the source of all and only one Christ as the Administrator and Heir of all. His person is His reign, which displays the majesty and glory that have been tested and proved. There can be no competition to His throne. Christ's reign is not a political system of government, nor is it a military machine; it is simply the genuine, real, and pure ruling of the One who is the unique embodiment of all absolute and righteous authority and power.

The two other outstanding characteristics of the glorious reign of Christ that are proclaimed in this hymn are love and justice. In his first Epistle the apostle John declares that God is love. John further states that those who love God also love one another. This love, which is God Himself, is transmittable: "We love because He first loved us" (4:19). How marvelous it is to remain under Christ's divine ruling in love and to grow continually in our capacity to love others!

Justice indicates righteousness with judgment. Christ is not the weak Savior imagined by unbelievers; He is the righteous God. His love does not cancel out His righteousness and justice. In Psalm 89:14 the psalmist extols the throne of God, proclaiming that it is founded, or based upon, a firm foundation of righteousness and justice and that it bears the twin attributes of lovingkindness and truth. Christ's reign is awesome in its love; it is also fearsome in its righteousness and justice.

The Lord Jesus is the King of kings in the heavens. One day soon, this will become a fact on the earth. Today, with our hope fixed on His coming to reign over the whole earth, we worship, love, and serve Him. We must never forget that God has established His King on the throne. He is our King now in reality; He will be manifested as the King of all in His millennial kingdom and for eternity.

The first two stanzas of this hymn appear to be based upon the foundation of the description in the second Psalm, which highlights God's rule with His Anointed and the heathen governments' vain efforts to throw off the bonds that restrict them under His sovereign rule. The struggles of the nations

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and their rulers are met by a swift rebuke and an inflexible avowal from God that He has installed His King on Mount Zion, referring to Zion in the heavens (cf. Rev. 14:1).

**B**ased on the second Psalm, this hymn presents not only God's inauguration of His Anointed on the throne in Zion and His appointment of Him as King of kings to rule over the nations, but it also implies the ongoing vanity of the thought and nature that the rebel, Satan, injected into humanity to challenge the almighty God regarding His right to administer His government on the earth. Two wills—the will of God and the will of Satan, the initiator of the rebellion in fallen humans—are in opposition to each other; the ensuing clash within mankind is seen in the third stanza.

*Before the Time of Fullness,  
While Darkness  
Still Prevails*

The time of fullness in the third stanza refers to the age of the millennium. In His divine economy God has arranged various ages (cf. Eph. 1:9-10), such as the age of sin with Adam, the age of the law with Moses, the age of grace in which we currently live, and the millennial age in which Christ will return to the earth and institute His kingdom of a thousand years visibly on earth. Before that time, however, we are witnessing an epic struggle between the authority of darkness and the kingdom of God, between the prevailing darkness and the tens of thousands who shout their Savior's praises. Their shouts of praise are like the shout of the children of Israel at the walls of Jericho. Those praises bring down the strongholds of the nations, the opposers of God's Anointed, and complete Christ's victory over the nations.

Fallen man does not want a Savior. Darkened in his mind and alienated from the life of God, full of ignorance and hardness of heart, man seeks vindication for being an independent person exercising his own right. In his fallen concept, he thinks that he has no need for a Savior. The nature of fallen humanity is both sinful and rebellious. The natural man hates to be ruled by anyone; even more offensive and unacceptable to the sinful man, however, is the ruling of God's Anointed, because His qualifications of righteousness, goodness, perfectness, and lovingkindness thoroughly expose man's sinfulness and fallen nature. Man needs not only a Savior to rescue him from perdition; he also needs a King to restrict and govern him in his living in order to subdue the intractable rebelliousness within him.

To reiterate, the third stanza portrays the stark juxtaposition

between the darkness, which "still prevails," and the "ten thousands" who daily shout out their loyal acclaims to their reigning Savior and King of glory—they worship, love, and serve Him "as their dear Savior-King." Two groups of people are on the earth today. One group persists in seeking to live independently from God and His Christ, even to the extent of denying the existence of Deity, loving darkness instead of light, and hating the light. The other group perseveres with shouts of praises and loving service to "their dear Savior-King." What a resolute divergence of determination exists between these two groups of people!

In the context of the entire Bible, those who loyally acclaim their dear Savior-King do not include the totality of all the believers in Christ; rather, they are a remnant, the overcoming saints from among all the believers. Revelation 2:26-27 confirms this thought: "He who overcomes and he

who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father."

**B**elieving into Christ is sufficient for receiving eternal redemption and rescue

from perdition, but at the judgment seat of Christ, whether we receive a reward or punishment will depend on how we lived as believers: "We must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done through the body according to what he has practiced, whether good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10; cf. 1 Cor. 3:10-15). The overcomers will be identified at the judgment seat of Christ in the air before He comes to set up His kingdom on the earth. As we consider the daily life of many believers, even our own, we must conclude that many of us are failing to live an overcoming life and will be disqualified from receiving a millennial reward. Overcoming does not come from our own strength or capacity. It is the result of learning to abide in Christ and relying on His overcoming life in us; our cooperation with Christ is absolutely essential to overcoming.

*The Turbulent Battle between Darkness and Light*

On the earth today, there is a turbulent battle between the forces of darkness and the adherents of light: "While darkness still prevails, / Ten thousands daily render / To Thee their loyal hails!" These worshippers are not merely rendering thankful worship to the Lord for His redemptive grace; they are triumphantly proclaiming that He is the Lord of all! He is their glorious Savior; He is their triumphant King! The rendering of the loyal hails of His tens of

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thousands to the King is an essential part of the process of bringing His kingdom to the earth.

### *Coming with Glory at the Appointed Time*

In the Scriptures “the appointed time” generally is a time of judgment. Psalm 75:2 speaks of the appointed time in which God will judge with equity, and Acts 17:31 says, “Because He has set a day in which He is to judge the world in righteousness by the man whom He has designated, having furnished proof to all by raising Him from the dead.” The time of Christ’s coming again in glory will be the appointed time of the judgment of the kings of the earth. Footnote 2 on Daniel 2:34 by Witness Lee in the *Recovery Version of the Bible* speaks of this judgment:

At His appearing as the God-cut stone, Christ with His overcomers—the corporate Christ—will strike the ten kings with Antichrist (Rev. 19:11-21), thereby crushing the great image from the toes to the head (v. 35). This will be Christ’s universal judgment on the aggregate of human government from Antichrist back to Nimrod, thus ending the age of man’s government on earth in the old creation and initiating the age of God’s dominion over the entire earth in the millennium and in the new heaven and new earth for eternity.

In his vision Daniel foresaw the judgment of all human governments and the establishment of Christ’s millennial kingdom. The apostle John saw a similar vision of God’s judgment over the nations and the rule of His government:

The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever. And the twenty-four elders who sit before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshipped God, saying, We thank You, Lord God the Almighty, He who is and who was, because You have taken Your great power and have reigned. And the nations became angry, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give the reward to Your slaves the prophets and to

the saints and to those who fear Your name, to the small and to the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth. (Rev. 11:15-18)

The overarching theme of this hymn is that of the completed victory accomplished by God’s Anointed, the Lord Jesus Christ. To speak of victory presumes that there is conflict, battle, warfare, dispute, and intense contesting. It is a battle that was fully won through Christ’s death on Calvary. Through His death He destroyed the devil, Satan, who has through the ages opposed God and His kingdom rule. However, the hymn is not focused on Satan; it is focused on the conflict with the nations, including all kindreds and peoples. Christ is not only the Savior of those who believe but also the King over both the believers and the unbelievers. This conflict has been present in each age. Although His kingdom is fully established in the heavens, it is not yet manifested on the earth.

To enter into the manifestation of the kingdom in the millennium, we must do the will of the Father in the present age. Those who do so will become the overcomers who come with Christ to fight Antichrist and his armies (the nations banded together for the war at Armageddon). All the rebels will be eliminated in this immense conflict. The nations will be smitten by the sword; all the active rebellious ones will be terminated. The remainder, who will all be unregenerated, will be dealt with strongly by the rod of iron during the millennial reign. Christ with His overcomers will reign during these one thousand years. Finally, all the remaining rebellious people of the nations will be manifested at the end of the millennium and will be terminated by fire coming forth out of heaven. God’s purpose will be accomplished, and Christ will reign eternally.

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### **Work Cited**

Lee, Witness. Footnotes. *Recovery Version of the Bible*, Living Stream Ministry, 2003.

## **Christ’s Twofold Administration in Ascension**

When Christ was ready to ascend to the heavens, He met with His disciples on a mountain and said to them, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:16-19). The Lord’s charge to the disciples to preach the gospel was a reflection of the authority He had been given both in heaven and on earth...

His ministry...is twofold. On the one hand, He is administering the whole world as Ruler of the kings of the earth in order that His gospel may be spread and God’s chosen people may be gathered together. On the other hand, as the Head of the Body, He is ministering to edify, equip, and qualify His members so that they in turn may perfect others.

From *The Heavenly Ministry of Christ* by Witness Lee, pp. 17-18, 28