

Message Five
The Tree of Life

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:7-9; Rev. 2:4-5, 7; 22:2, 14; 2 Cor. 4:5; 5:14-15

Gen. 2:7-9—Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. ⁸And Jehovah God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Rev. 2:4-5—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

Rev. 22:2—And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev. 22:14—Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

2 Cor. 4:5—For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

2 Cor. 5:14-15—For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

I. Christ as life is the reality of the tree of life, which is the center of the universe; life is the goal of God's creation (Gen. 1:26-28, 31; 2:7-9) and the goal of God's complete salvation (John 19:34; Rom. 5:10; Rev. 22:1-2, 14, 19):

Gen. 1:26-28—And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. ²⁷And God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸And God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

Gen. 1:31—And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Gen. 2:7-9—Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. ⁸And Jehovah God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

John 19:34—But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water.

Rom. 5:10—For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

Rev. 22:1-2—And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. ²And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev. 22:14—Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

Rev. 22:19—And if anyone takes away from the words of the scroll of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and out of the holy city, which are written in this scroll.

A. In the Bible the tree of life always signifies Christ as the embodiment of all the riches of God for our food; God's placing man in front of the tree of life indicates that God wanted man to receive Him as man's life by eating Him organically and by assimilating Him metabolically, that God might become the very constituent of man's being—Col. 2:9; Gen. 2:9; John 1:4; 10:10; 14:6; 15:1; 6:35, 57, 63; 1 Cor. 15:45b.

Col. 2:9—For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

Gen. 2:9—And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

John 1:4—In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 10:10—The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

John 14:6—Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 15:1—I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

John 6:35—Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.

John 6:57—As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 6:63—It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

B. In Revelation 2:7 the tree of life signifies the crucified (implied in the tree as a piece of wood—1 Pet. 2:24) and resurrected (implied in the life of God—John

11:25) Christ, who today is in the church, the consummation of which is the New Jerusalem, in which the crucified and resurrected Christ will be the tree of life for the nourishment of all God's redeemed people for eternity (Rev. 22:2, 14).

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

1 Pet. 2:24—Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.

John 11:25—Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

Rev. 22:2—And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev. 22:14—Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

II. We need to see the obstacles that God's life encounters in man:

A. The first problem that God's life encounters in us is that we do not realize the darkness of our human concepts:

1. We need to see that the only thing that matters in the Christian life is how we take care of the living Christ in us—Gal. 1:16; 2:20; 4:19; Phil. 1:19-21; Eph. 4:13; 2 Cor. 3:18.

Gal. 1:16—To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood,

Gal. 2:20—I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Gal. 4:19—My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

Phil. 1:19-21—For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, ²⁰According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death. ²¹For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Eph. 4:13—Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

2 Cor. 3:18—But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

2. Being a Christian means not taking anything other than Christ as our aim; many people have difficulty in their spiritual life after they are saved

because they do not know the pathway of life, and they do not take Christ as their life.

- B. The second problem that life encounters in us is hypocrisy—Matt. 6:2, 5; 7:5; 23:13-29:

Matt. 6:2—Therefore when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.

Matt. 6:5—And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.

Matt. 7:5—Hypocrite, first remove the beam from your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye.

Matt. 23:13-29—But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you close off the kingdom of the heavens in the face of men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to enter. ¹⁴But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour the widows' houses, even while for a pretense you make long prayers. For this reason you shall receive greater judgment. ¹⁵Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you go about the sea and the dry land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes *one*, you make him twice as much a son of Gehenna as yourselves. ¹⁶Woe to you, blind guides, who say, Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound. ¹⁷Fools and blind men, which is greater, the gold or the temple which sanctifies the gold? ¹⁸And, Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift which is upon it, he is bound. ¹⁹Blind men, which is greater, the gift or the altar which sanctifies the gift? ²⁰Therefore he who swears by the altar swears by it and by all the things upon it; ²¹And he who swears by the temple swears by it and by Him who dwells in it; ²²And he who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it. ²³Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you give a tenth of the mint and the anise and the cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law—justice and mercy and faithfulness. But these you should have done and not neglected the others. ²⁴Blind guides, who strain out the gnat but swallow the camel! ²⁵Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but inwardly they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. ²⁶Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and the dish so that their outside also may become clean. ²⁷Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you resemble whitewashed graves, which outwardly appear beautiful but inwardly are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. ²⁹Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build up the graves of the prophets and adorn the tombs of the righteous,

1. A person's spirituality is not determined by outward appearance but by how he takes care of the indwelling Christ.
2. Our natural goodness is false spirituality and is actually a great hindrance to life; the expression of life involves the rejection of our natural disposition and preference, and simply allowing Christ to operate in us and break us.

3. If we always do things according to our disposition and natural being, the outcome will always be hypocrisy.
- C. The third problem that life encounters in us is rebellion:
1. Christ operates and moves in us in order to make us clear about His will and requirements for us and about His leading and dealing with us.
 2. However, if we do not obey but go against the feeling within, not accepting His leading or paying the price, this unwillingness and opposition are rebellion.
 3. The sin that we commit the most frequently and most severely is not outward and visible; rather, it is the sin of disobeying the sense of Christ in us; Christ is living in us, and He is constantly giving us an inward sense of life—Rom. 8:6; 1 John 2:27.
Rom. 8:6—For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
1 John 2:27—And as for you, the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, abide in Him.
- D. The fourth problem that life encounters in us is our natural capability:
1. Many brothers and sisters truly love the Lord, are zealous for the Lord, and are very godly; nevertheless, their greatest problem is the strength and greatness of their capabilities and abilities; consequently, Christ has no ground or way in them.
 2. We may be capable and talented, but we do not consider these things as sin or filthiness; instead of despising our natural capabilities, we treasure them; if they remain unbroken in us, they will become a problem to Christ's life.
- E. There is one solution to all these obstacles in us—we must pass through the cross and let the cross break us; if we want Christ's life to be unhindered in us, we must experience the breaking of the cross and allow these obstacles to be dealt with and removed—Matt. 16:24-25.
Matt. 16:24-25—Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it.

III. In order for us to eat Christ as the tree of life, we must give Him the first place in all things, which is to love Him with the first love, being constrained by His love to regard and take Him as everything in our life—Rev. 2:4-5; Col. 1:18b; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Mark 12:30; Psa. 73:25-26; 80:17-19:

Rev. 2:4-5—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Col. 1:18—And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

2 Cor. 5:14-15—For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

Mark 12:30—And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength.”

Psa. 73:25-26—Whom do I have in heaven *but You?* And besides You there is nothing I desire on earth. ²⁶My flesh and my heart fail, *But* God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever.

Psa. 80:17-19—Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You have strengthened for Yourself; ¹⁸Then we will not turn back from You. Revive us, and we will call upon Your name. ¹⁹O Jehovah God of hosts, restore us; Cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

A. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to eat Him as the tree of life; eating Christ as the tree of life, that is, enjoying Christ as our life supply, should be the primary matter in the church life—Rev. 2:7; John 6:57, 63.

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

John 6:57—As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 6:63—It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

B. The content of the church life depends on the enjoyment of Christ; the more we enjoy Him, the richer the content will be; but to eat Christ as the tree of life, to enjoy Him as our life supply, requires us to love Him with the first love—Rev. 2:4-5.

Rev. 2:4-5—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

C. On the one hand, strictly speaking, to eat of the tree of life in the Paradise of God in Revelation 2:7 refers to the particular enjoyment of Christ as our life supply in the New Jerusalem in the coming millennial kingdom.

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

D. On the other hand, we are enjoying the crucified and resurrected Christ as the tree of life, the food supply in our spirit, as a foretaste today in the church; every local church is a paradise of God, where Christ is the tree of life for us to enjoy.

E. When we give the Lord the first place in everything and maintain our eating of the crucified and resurrected Christ as the tree of life throughout the day, the church, no matter what its condition may be, becomes paradise to us; thus, our feeling and our attitude toward the church depend upon our situation.

- F. “If we do not enjoy Christ as the tree of life in the church life today, surely we will not participate in the tree of life in the kingdom age. According to my experience, today the church in Anaheim is a paradise to me”—*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 5, “The Vital Groups,” p. 157.
- G. The intrinsic reason for the desolation and degradation of the church is that Christ is not exalted by God’s people; they do not give Him the preeminence, the first place, in everything; whenever God’s people exalt Christ, giving Him the preeminence in every aspect of their living, there is restoration and revival—Psa. 80:17-19.

Psa. 80:17-19—Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You have strengthened for Yourself; ¹⁸Then we will not turn back from You. Revive us, and we will call upon Your name. ¹⁹O Jehovah God of hosts, restore us; Cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

- H. Christ must have the first place not only in our living but also in all our messages; “we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus’ sake”—2 Cor. 4:5; cf. Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 12:2; Psa. 80:1, 17-19; 110:1-7:

2 Cor. 4:5—For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus’ sake.

cf. Heb. 1:3—Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

cf. Heb. 8:1—Now in the things which are being said the chief point *is this*: We have such a High Priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

cf. Heb. 12:2—Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

cf. Psa. 80:1—O Shepherd of Israel, give ear, You who lead Joseph like a flock; You who are enthroned *between* the cherubim, shine forth.

cf. Psa. 80:17-19—Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You have strengthened for Yourself; ¹⁸Then we will not turn back from You. Revive us, and we will call upon Your name. ¹⁹O Jehovah God of hosts, restore us; Cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

cf. Psa. 110:1-7—Jehovah declares to my Lord, Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies Your footstool. ²Jehovah will send forth The scepter of Your strength from Zion: Rule in the midst of Your enemies. ³Your people will offer themselves willingly In the day of Your warfare, In the splendor of *their* consecration. Your young men will be to You Like the dew from the womb of the dawn. ⁴Jehovah has sworn, And He will not change: You are a Priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek. ⁵The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His anger. ⁶He will execute judgment among the nations; He will fill *the place* with corpses; He will shatter the head Over a great land. ⁷He will drink from the brook by the way; Therefore He will lift up *His* head.

1. In our work we should continually draw people back to the center and let them see that “Christ is Lord”; we must give the Lord Jesus His place on the throne—cf. S. S. 1:1-4; Isa. 6:1, 3; John 12:41.

cf. S. S. 1:1-4—The Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s. ²Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine. ³Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; Your name is like ointment poured forth; Therefore the virgins love you. ⁴Draw me; we will run after you— The king has brought me into his chambers—We will be glad and rejoice in you; We will extol your love more than wine. Rightly do they love you.

cf. Isa. 6:1—In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

cf. Isa. 6:3—And one called to the other, saying: Holy, holy, holy, Jehovah of hosts; The whole earth is filled with His glory.

cf. John 12:41—These things said Isaiah because he saw His glory and spoke concerning Him.

2. In order to give such a message, we ourselves must be broken by God and allow Christ to have the first place in us; our message is just our person— 2 Cor. 4:10-13; John 12:24-26; cf. Luke 12:49-50.

2 Cor. 4:10-13—Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. ¹¹For we who are alive are always being delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹²So then death operates in us, but life in you. ¹³And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, “I believed, therefore I spoke,” we also believe, therefore we also speak,

John 12:24-26—Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵He who loves his soul-life loses it; and he who hates his soul-life in this world shall keep it unto eternal life. ²⁶If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also My servant will be. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

cf. Luke 12:49-50—I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled! ⁵⁰But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it is accomplished!

3. The Lord’s “well done” surpasses all the praises of the world; the smiling face of heaven surpasses all the angry faces of the earth; the comfort of heaven surpasses all the tears of the earth—Matt. 25:21, 23; Jer. 1:7-9, 18-19; Dan. 4:26.

Matt. 25:21—His master said to him, Well *done*, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.

Matt. 25:23—His master said to him, Well *done*, good and faithful slave. You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.

Jer. 1:7-9—But Jehovah said to me, Do not say, I am a youth; For everywhere I send you, you shall go; And everything I command you, you shall speak. ⁸Do not be afraid of their faces, For I am with you to deliver you, declares Jehovah. ⁹Then Jehovah stretched out His hand and touched my mouth; and Jehovah said to me, Now I have put My words in your mouth.

Jer. 1:18-19—And I am now making you today into a fortified city and into an iron pillar and into bronze walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against its princes, against its priests, and against the people of the land. ¹⁹And they will fight against you, but they will not prevail against you; for I am with you, declares Jehovah, to deliver you.

Dan. 4:26—And in that it was commanded that the stump of roots of the tree be left, your kingdom will be assured to you after you have come to know that the heavens do rule.

- I. In order to give Christ the first place in all things, we must have an affectionate love for Him as our King; then our tongue will be the pen of a ready writer, ready to write our love for Him and our praise to Him with our experience and enjoyment of Him according to all that He is—Psa. 45:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6.

Psa. 45:1-2—My heart overflows with a good matter; I speak what I have composed concerning the King. My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. ²You are fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured upon Your lips; Therefore God has blessed You forever.

2 Cor. 3:3—Since you are being manifested that you are a letter of Christ ministered by us, inscribed not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tablets of stone but in tablets of hearts of flesh.

2 Cor. 3:6—Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

- J. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to take Him as our centrality—our holding center—and our universality—our everything; we need to take Him as the center, content, and circumference of our personal universe—Col. 1:17b, 18b.

Col. 1:17—And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;

Col. 1:18—And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

- K. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to behold His beauty and to ask for the counsel of Jehovah in every detail of our Christian life and work—Psa. 27:4; Josh. 9:14; Phil. 4:6-7.

Psa. 27:4—One thing I have asked from Jehovah; That do I seek: To dwell in the house of Jehovah All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of Jehovah, And to inquire in His temple.

Josh. 9:14—And the men took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.

Phil. 4:6-7—In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷And the peace of God, which

surpasses every *man's* understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

- L. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to be dominated, governed, directed, led, and moved by our mingled spirit, caring for the rest in our spirit by being His captives and by praying, “Lord, conquer me. Make me Your captive. Never let me win. Defeat me all the time”—2 Cor. 2:13-14.

2 Cor. 2:13-14—I had no rest in my spirit, for I did not find Titus my brother; but taking leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia. ¹⁴But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in the Christ and manifests the savor of the knowledge of Him through us in every place.

- M. To love the Lord with the first love, to give Him the first place in all things, is to have a clear sky like awesome crystal with God’s sapphire throne above it; this means that there is nothing between us and the Lord and that we are filled with the heavenly atmosphere, condition, and situation of His ruling presence—taking Him as our King and allowing Him to rule and reign within us—Ezek. 1:22, 26.

Ezek. 1:22—And over the heads of the living creature there was the likeness of an expanse, like the sight of awesome crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.

Ezek. 1:26—And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.

- N. Only Christ the King reigning on the earth with the overcomers as His helpers in the kingship can solve the problems of today’s world (Isa. 42:1-4); Christ’s name will be remembered in all generations and praised by the nations through His overcoming and co-reigning saints (Psa. 45:16-17; Rev. 2:26).

Isa. 42:1-4—Here is My Servant, whom I uphold, My chosen One *in whom* My soul delights; I have put My Spirit upon Him, And He will bring forth justice to the nations. ²He will not cry out, nor lift up *His voice*, Nor make His voice heard in the street. ³A bruised reed He will not break; And a dimly burning flax He will not extinguish; He will bring forth justice in truth. ⁴He will not faint, nor will He be discouraged, Until He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands will wait for His instruction.

Psa. 45:16-17—In the place of Your fathers will be Your sons; You will make them princes in all the earth. ¹⁷I will cause Your name to be remembered in all generations; Therefore the peoples will praise You forever and ever.

Rev. 2:26—And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;

- O. The overcomers, who are typified by Zion, are the beachhead through which the Lord will return to possess the whole earth—Psa. 48:2; Dan. 2:34-35.

Psa. 48:2—Beautiful in elevation, The joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, The city of the great King.

Dan. 2:34-35—You were watching until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the image at its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the

bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed all at once, and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

P. “Lift up your heads, O gates; / And be lifted up, O long enduring doors; / And the King of glory will come in. / Who is the King of glory? / Jehovah strong and mighty! / Jehovah mighty in battle!... / Who is this King of glory? / Jehovah of hosts— / He is the King of glory!”—Psa. 24:7-8, 10:

1. The gates are of the cities of the nations; the doors are of the houses of the people, and Christ is the Desire of all the nations (Hag. 2:7); all the nations, in a general way, are expecting Christ to come, but Christ will not come quickly according to our human concept (2 Pet. 3:8-9); thus, we need to lift up our heads and await and expect His coming with long endurance.

Hag. 2:7—And I will shake all the nations, and the Desire of all the nations will come; and I will fill this house with glory, says Jehovah of hosts.

2 Pet. 3:8-9—But do not let this one thing escape you, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. ⁹The Lord does not delay regarding the promise, as some count delay, but is long-suffering toward you, not intending that any perish but that all advance to repentance.

2. The King of glory is Jehovah of hosts (that is, of armies), the consummated Triune God embodied in the victorious and overcoming Christ (Luke 21:27; Matt. 25:31); Jehovah is Jesus, and Jesus is the incarnated, crucified, and resurrected Triune God, who is strong in fighting and is victorious (1:21; Rev. 5:5).

Luke 21:27—And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

Matt. 25:31—But when the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the angels with Him, at that time He will sit on the throne of His glory.

Matt. 1:21—And she will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for *it is He who* will save His people from their sins.

Rev. 5:5—And one of the elders said to me, Do not weep; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so that He may open the scroll and its seven seals.

3. He is the One who will come back in resurrection with His overcomers to possess the entire earth as His kingdom—Dan. 2:34-35; 7:13-14; Joel 3:11; Rev. 11:15; 19:13-14.

Dan. 2:34-35—You were watching until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the image at its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed all at once, and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Dan. 7:13-14—I watched in the night visions, And there with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming; And He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴And to Him was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations, and languages might serve Him. His dominion is an eternal dominion, which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.

Joel 3:11—Hurry and come, All you surrounding nations, And be gathered. There cause Your mighty ones to descend, O Jehovah!

Rev. 11:15—And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the *kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

Rev. 19:13-14—And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white *and* clean.

- Q. Christ as the One on the throne of God has the appearance of sardius (its red color signifying redemption) and jasper (its dark green color signifying life in its richness); thus, when we submit ourselves to Christ's headship and are under His throne, we are the beneficiaries of all that He is in His judicial redemption and His organic salvation so that we may bear the same appearance of the God of glory in His rich life—4:3; 21:10-11a; Rom. 5:10.

Rev. 4:3—And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and *there was* a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.

Rev. 21:10-11—And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rom. 5:10—For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

- R. Those who wash their robes in the redeeming blood of Christ have the right to enjoy the tree of life as their eternal portion in the holy city, the Paradise of God, in eternity—Rev. 22:14; 2:7.

Rev. 22:14—Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.