

The Tabernacle

The Pre-eminence Of Christ As Seen In The Candlestick - Part 3

Readings (continued from December - Part 2)

Colossians 1:16

Administration

The subject of divine arrangement is a theme developed throughout the Scriptures and ultimately leads to the gathering together of “all things in Christ” (Eph. 1:10) and all being handed back to God that He may be “all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28). The first step in the future for the fulfilling of those ultimates is the headship of Christ. With that in view, we read that He is the “Head” (Col. 2:10, 19; Eph. 4:15); “the Head of every man” (1 Cor. 11:3); “the Head of the church” (Eph. 5:23); “the Head of the body” (Col. 1:18); and “the Head of all principality and power” (Col. 2:10).

When speaking of the headship of Christ, Charles Rolls states the various Headships as: the Headship of his appointment (Mk. 12:10–11); Headship by agreement (Col. 2:9); Headship by arrangement (Eph. 5:23); Headship by assignment (Eph. 1:21–23); Headship by attainment (Col. 2:10); Headship by atonement (Col. 1:18–20); and Headship by announcement (1 Cor. 11:3).

A second avenue of His administration is His Kingship which is presented under ten contexts. He is presented as the King (Isa. 33:17); “the King of the Jews” (Matt. 2:2); “the King of Israel” (Jn. 1:49); “the King of saints” (Rev. 15:3); “the King of righteousness, and King of peace” (Heb. 7:1-3); “the King of heaven” (Dan. 4:37); “the King of glory” (Psa. 24:7); and “the King of Kings” (Rev. 19:16).

- a) Artaxerxes is called “king of kings” once (Ezra. 7:12); Nebuchadnezzar is called “king of kings” twice (Ezek. 26:7; Dan. 2:37) but Christ is called “King of kings” three times (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16). Furthermore, neither of the other two are ever called “The King of kings” as the Lord is in (1 Tim. 6:15), and neither of the others are also called “Lord of lords”.

Authority

If most saints were asked to give a verse where the authority of the Lord is spoken of as preeminent, the first verse which would possibly come to mind would be: “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18). However, that is not the only sphere of authority Christ has for:

- a) He is seen as supreme in authority when it comes to judicial matters, not only in giving the judgment but in executing it (Jn. 5:22, 27).
- b) He is also supreme in authority when it comes to the church because he is spoken of as: “the head of the church, which is his body” (Col. 1:18).
- c) He is the head of every governmental position there is in heaven, that is celestial (1 Pet. 3:22).
- d) He shall reign supreme as King “over all the earth” (Zech. 14:9).
- e) He is “the Lord of the harvest” (Matt. 9:38)
- f) He is the director of all spheres of service (1 Cor. 12:5).
 - i) This is evident when it is made clear that it is He who will give a commission to Peter to feed his sheep (Jn. 21:15–17), and when Peter asks about John concerning what he should do, the Lord makes it very plain that the plans of the Lord for him are not Peter’s concern. It is the Lord who will determine that which John will do (Jn. 21:21–22).
- g) The Lord also showed his authority over disease (Matt. 8:2-3); demons (devils, Matt. 8:16); deformity (Matt. 12:8-10); death (Lk. 7:11-15); and the decay of the human body (Jn. 11:39-44).

Resurrection

It's very easy to think of the Lord's resurrection as simply a bodily resurrection, and thank God it was, but it was much more. There are at least six recorded resurrections of individuals in the scriptures, who died again. There were three in the Old Testament (1 Kgs. 17:17-24; 2 Kgs. 4:35; 13:21) and another three when the Lord raised people, as well as those in the Acts (Acts 9:36-42; 20:9-12; and possibly Paul ch. 14:19-20). However, all these

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people died a second time, and while this seems to be a contradiction of that which we read: “And it is appointed unto men once to die” (Heb. 9:27), it is certainly not a contradiction when one gets to know the context. The Lord not only was the first to rise from the dead never to die again, but now lives in the power of an endless or indissoluble life (Heb. 7:16).

Having risen, He states emphatically: “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore” (Rev. 1:18). In raising Himself from the dead He did something no other individual had ever done nor will ever do. He defeated the power of death breaking it’s bonds, and in so doing, defeated him who had the power of death, that is the devil (Heb. 2:14). Therefore, His resurrection was not only a physical accomplishment but also a victory in the spirit sphere. Paul wrote concerning such; He “spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it” (Col. 2:14–15). Furthermore, in His resurrection He assured the judgment of all men (Acts 17:31); fulfilled the scriptures (Acts 13:23, 33); became the foundation for our justification (Rom. 4:25); and is the “first fruits of them that slept” (1 Cor. 15:20).

Exultation

In the opera “The Mikado” by Gilbert and Sullivan, there is a point where a single singer begins to sing, then that individual is joined by several others and they increase by a semitone, then more join in until the whole chorus has joined together in a tremendous song of rejoicing. In Revelation chapter five the same thing happens, but on a much higher plane. There is first of all the four (beasts) living creatures and the 24 elders who all begin to say: “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:9). But that is not the end because John then writes: “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels”, so it’s no longer just the few singing but many angels who were about the throne who join with the living creatures, and the elders, and we get a number for he writes: “and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing,” and then it rose up another level; “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever”. That which we hear is the exultant presence of heaven when the Lord takes the book and was about to open it. There have been great praises in glorious songs and prayers sung in great numbers, but there has never been, neither will there ever be, a song which exalts an individual on par with this.

Glorification

- 1) There is a stark contrast between the resurrection and glorification of the Lord. No one saw the Lord rise from the dead. That was not needed because He was seen multiple times after it. He was seen of Mary (Jn. 20:16); Stephen (Acts 7:56); Saul (Paul) (1 Cor. 15:8); Peter also known as /Cephas/Simon (Matt. 16:16; Jn. 1:42; Lk. 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5) ; John (Rev. 1:13-18); the eleven (Mk. 16:14); above five hundred (1 Cor. 15:6); and the two on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:15-31).
- 2) It is my understanding that only two men, while still on earth, saw the Lord glorified, Stephen (Acts 7:56) and John (Rev. 5:5-6). Some might suggest that Saul saw the Lord on the Damascus Road but all it says is: “there shined round about him a light from heaven” (Acts 9:3), and he “heard a voice” (Acts 9:4). It does not say he saw the Lord. We, and as I understand it, all other saints of this dispensation, have never seen the Lord glorified. Therefore, “How do we know He is?” The proof that the Lord is glorified is by the coming of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 7:39).
- 3) The first steps in that glorification was His ascension to Heaven, concerning which several words and expressions are used to inform us about it.
 - a) He was “taken up” (Acts 1:9). The Greek word is “epairo” and it meant to go on the journey. It is different from the word in verse 11.

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- b) He “went up” (Acts 1:10). The Greek word is “poreuomai” and it meant to travel as on a journey to depart and go on one's way.
 - c) He was “taken up” (Acts 1:11). The Greek word is “analambano” and it indicated that which was under him, that is to be supported by the cloud. Cp if this is the same word as 1 Tim. 3:16.
 - d) He was “carried up” (Lk. 24:51). The Greek word is “anaphero” and means to convey or lead up or to be brought on one's way.
 - e) He “ascended up” (Eph. 4:8, 10). The Greek word is “anabaino” and it means to “be borne up”.
 - f) He was “caught up” (Rev. 12:5). The Greek word is “harpazo” which means to snatch away.
- 4) When these words are considered it will be discovered that not one of them is the result of the Lord's own activity. They all indicate that which another did or cause to be done to Him.
- a) Peter, by the power of the Holy Spirit, preached: “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour” (Acts 5:31).
 - b) It is again the truth of that which Paul wrote when he penned the words: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:9), and with this the writer to the Hebrews concurs when he wrote concerning the Lord: “Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (Heb. 1:4).
 - c) Paul also wrote to the Ephesians: “(God) raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:20–24).
- 5) In his glorification it is evident he went up with power (Matt. 28:18); with blessing (Lk. 24:50); in glory (1 Tim. 3:16); entering the holiest as our Forerunner (Heb. 6:20); and by virtue of His own blood (Heb. 9:12). How high did He go in exaltation?
- a) He has gone into heaven (Acts 1:11; Heb. 9:24; 1 Pet. 3:22)
 - b) He has passed into the heavens (“passed into” is the word “dierchomai” which means to pass through) (Heb. 4:14)
 - c) He has gone higher than the heavens (Heb. 7:26)
 - d) He has gone far above all heavens (Eph. 4:10)

Consequently:

- a) All principalities and powers are subject to Him (1 Pet. 3:22)
- b) God has put all in subjection under Him (1 Cor. 15:27)
- c) And looking at the man Jesus, God “set Him at His own right hand” (Eph. 1:20) and said: “Sit thou on my right hand” (Psa. 110:1). What an exaltation!

He is Preeminent by Divine:

Salutation

- a) Hebrews records that Christ was “called of God” (Heb. 5:10), and the word “called” indicates a formal ascription which carries the thought of a saluting. This is God’s acknowledgment of the perpetual perfection of the qualifications and character of Christ, and so calls Him “an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec (Heb. 5:10).

Proclamation

- a) The present position of the Lord is not the end of the story. When Joseph made himself known to his brethren, he said: “Tell my father of all my glory” but he did not stop there, for he went on to say: “In Egypt” (Gen. 45:13). It was in the place of his rejection and humiliation that Joseph was glorified. It is befitting then that not only in Heaven will the Lord be glorified, it is not only by each individual, for every knee shall bow to Him (Phil. 2:10), but on this earth at the place of the Lord’s rejection and humiliation He will be glorified. God has given the proclamation:

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- i) "I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth" (Psa. 89:27)
 - ii) "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Psa. 72:8)
 - iii) Until "the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isa. 6:3)
 - iv) Then he shall be manifested as "KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. 19:16)
 - v) He shall "judge among the nations" (Isa. 2:4)
- b) "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." (Isa. 9:7)
- c) For He will be a "Leader and Commander to the people" (Isa. 55:4). God has decreed it and nothing can toward the purposes or proclamations of God: "In all things He might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18).

May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13

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