

LIVING UNDER THE UNIQUE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST AND IN THE UNIQUE DIVINE FELLOWSHIP

(Friday—Evening Session)

Message Three

Subjecting Ourselves to Christ’s Headship to Be under His Throne

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 1:22, 26-28; Heb. 4:16; Rom. 5:17, 21; Rev. 3:21; 4:1-2; 22:1-2

- 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.
- Ezek 1:27 Then I saw something like the sight of electrum, like the appearance of fire encased all around, from the appearance of His loins and upward; and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw something like the appearance of fire. And there was brightness all around Him.
- Ezek 1:28 Like the appearance of the rainbow that is in the cloud on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and I heard the voice of someone speaking.
- Heb 4:16 Let us therefore ^acome forward with boldness to the ¹throne of grace that we may receive ^{2b}mercy and find ^cgrace for timely help.
- Rom 5:17 For if by the offense of the one death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the ¹abundance of grace and of the gift of ²righteousness will ³reign in ⁴life through the One, Jesus Christ.
- Rom 5:21 In order that just as ^{1a}sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through ²righteousness unto ^beternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Rev 3:21 He who ^{1a}overcomes, to him I will give to ²sit with Me on My ^bthrone, as I also ^covercame and ^dsat ^ewith My Father on His throne.
- Rev 4:1 After these things I saw, and behold, a ^adoor ^{1b}opened in heaven, and the first ^{2c}voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, ^dCome up here, and I will show you the things that must take place after these ^ethings.
- Rev 4:2 Immediately I was in ^{1a}spirit; and behold, there was a ^{2b}throne set in heaven, and upon the throne *there was* ^cOne sitting;
- Rev 22:1 And ¹he ^ashowed me a ^{2b}river of ^{3c}water of life, bright as ^{4d}crystal, ^eproceeding out of the ^{5f}throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its ^{6g}street.
- Rev 22:2 And on this ^aside and on that side of the river was the ^{1b}tree of life, producing twelve ^{2c}fruits, yielding its fruit ³each ⁴month; and the ^{5d}leaves of the tree are for the ^ehealing of the ^fnations.

I. “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. And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life”—Rev. 22:1-2a:

- A. The One sitting on the throne is the Lamb-God, our redeeming God, from whose throne proceeds the river of water of life for our supply and satisfaction:
1. This depicts how the Triune God—God, the Lamb, and the Spirit, who is symbolized by the water of life—dispenses Himself into us under His throne, His headship—v. 1; cf. John 4:14b.
Rev 22:1 And ¹he ^ashowed me a ^{2b}river of ^{3c}water of life, bright as ^{4d}crystal, ^eproceeding out of the ^{5f}throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its ^{6g}street.
John 4:14b ... but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water gushing up into ^{1c}eternal life.
 2. The street of the holy city is pure gold, symbolizing the divine nature; that the river of water of life proceeds “in the middle of its street” signifies that the divine life flows in the divine nature as the unique way for the daily life of God’s redeemed people—Rev. 21:21; 22:1.
Rev 21:21 And the ^atwelve gates were twelve ^{1b}pearls; each ²one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the ³street of the city was pure ^cgold, like ⁴transparent glass.

Rev 22:1 And ¹he ^ashowed me a ^{2b}river of ^{3c}water of life, bright as ^{4d}crystal, ^eproceeding out of the ^{5f}throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its ^{6g}street.

3. Furthermore, Christ as the tree of life is the life supply available along the flow of the Spirit as the water of life; where the Spirit flows, there the life supply of Christ is found—v. 2a.

Rev 22:2a And on this ^aside and on that side of the river was the ^{1b}tree of life, ...

- B. The throne of the Lamb-God is for God's household administration, His eternal economy; God was the One who purposed, He became the Lamb who redeemed, and finally He became the life-giving, flowing Spirit—John 1:14, 29; 1 Cor. 15:45b:

John 1:14 And the ¹Word became ^{2a}flesh and ^{3b}tabernacled among us (and ^{4c}we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten ⁵from the Father), full of ^{6d}grace and ^ereality.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the ^{1a}Lamb of God, who takes away the ^bsin of the ²world!

1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam *became* a ^clife-giving Spirit.

1. Whenever we subject ourselves to Christ's headship and are under His throne, we immediately sense something full of God's riches flowing within us.
2. Every morning after rising up, we need to say, "Lord, thank You for a new day for me to take You as my Lord. I subject myself under Your headship for the whole day. Lord, set up Your throne in my life. Set up Your throne in the center of my being. Lord, bring my whole day with my daily life under Your throne."
3. If we offer such a prayer to the Triune God every morning, from that moment we will have the living water flowing in us for us to drink; furthermore, we will enjoy the divine nature as our holy street, our unique way, and we will eat the tree of life for our life supply—Rev. 22:14, 17.

Rev 22:14 ^{1a}Blessed are those who ^{2b}wash their ^crobes that ³they may have ^{4d}right to the ^etree of life and may ^fenter ⁵by the ^ggates into the city.

Rev 22:17 And the ^{1a}Spirit and the ^bbride say, ^{2c}Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is ^dthirsty ^{3e}come; let ⁴him who wills take the ^fwater of life freely.

4. When we feel that we do not have the inner flow of living water, this is because we do not accept or recognize the lordship, the headship, and the authority of the Triune God in the center of our being.
5. In the place where the Triune God flows, we serve Him, we see His face, and we reign with Him—vv. 3-5.

Rev 22:3 And there will no longer be ^{1a}a ^{2a}curse. And the ³throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His ^bslaves will ^{4c}serve ⁵Him;

Rev 22:4 And they will ^{1a}see His ^bface, and His ^cname will be on their foreheads.

Rev 22:5 And ^{1a}night will be ^bno more; and they have no need of the ²light of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for the ³Lord God will shine upon them; and they will ^{4c}reign forever and ever.

- C. The throne of God and of the Lamb is the throne of grace in our spirit (which is the real Bethel, God's habitation); whenever we turn to our spirit, we enter the gate of heaven and touch the throne of grace in heaven through Christ as the heavenly ladder—Heb. 4:16; Rom. 5:17, 21; Rev. 4:1-2; 22:1; Rom. 8:34, 10; Eph. 2:22; Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:51.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore ^acome forward with boldness to the ¹throne of grace that we may receive ^{2b}mercy and find ^cgrace for timely help.

Rom 5:17 For if by the offense of the one death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the ¹abundance of grace and of the gift of ²righteousness will ³reign in ⁴life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Rom 5:21 In order that just as ^{1a}sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through ²righteousness unto ^beternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rev 4:1 After these things I saw, and behold, a ^adoor ^{1b}opened in heaven, and the first ^{2c}voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, ^dCome up here, and I will show you the things that must take place after these ^ethings.

Rev 4:2 Immediately I was in ^{1a}spirit; and behold, there was a ^{2b}throne set in heaven, and upon the throne *there was* ^cOne sitting;

Rev 22:1 And ¹he ^ashowed me a ^{2b}river of ^{3c}water of life, bright as ^{4d}crystal, ^eproceeding out of the ^{5f}throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its ^{6g}street.

Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? ¹It is Christ Jesus who ^adied and, rather, who ^bwas raised, who is also ^{2c}at the right hand of God, who also ^{3d}intercedes for us.

Rom 8:10 But if ^{1a}Christ is ²in you, though the ³body is ⁴dead because of sin, the ⁵spirit is ⁶life because of ⁷righteousness.

Eph 2:22 In whom ¹you ²also are being built together into a ^{3a}dwelling place of God ^bin ⁴spirit.

Gen 28:12 And he dreamed: There was a ladder set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

Gen 28:13 And there was Jehovah, standing above it; and He said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, I will give to you and to your seed.

Gen 28:14 And your seed will be as the dust of the earth, and you will spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and in your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed.

Gen 28:15 And, behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will cause you to return to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.

Gen 28:16 And Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, Surely Jehovah is in this place, and I did not know it.

Gen 28:17 And he was afraid and said, How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

John 1:51 And He said to him, ¹Truly, truly, I say to you, You shall see ^{2a}heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the ³Son of Man.

- D. The One on the throne is the Lamb-God, with the Lamb being the lamp and with God being the light within the lamp; when we enthrone Christ in every part of our being and in all our living and work, we experience Him as the redeeming One, the shining One, and the reigning One to enjoy Him as the supply of life and the way of life in the fellowship of life—Rev. 21:23; 22:1-2; 21:21b.

Rev 21:23 And the city has ^{1a}no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the ^bglory of God illumined it, and its ^{2c}lamp is the Lamb.

Rev 22:1 And ¹he ^ashowed me a ^{2b}river of ^{3c}water of life, bright as ^{4d}crystal, ^eproceeding out of the ^{5f}throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its ^{6g}street.

Rev 22:2 And on this ^aside and on that side of the river was the ^{1b}tree of life, producing twelve ^{2c}fruits, yielding its fruit ³each ⁴month; and the ^{5d}leaves of the tree are for the ^ehealing of the ^fnations.

Rev 21:21b ... And the ³street of the city was pure ^cgold, like ⁴transparent glass.

- E. The One on the throne 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 organic salvation so that we may bear the same appearance of the God of glory in His rich life—4:3; 21:11.

Rev 4:3 And He who was sitting was like a ^{1a}jasper stone and a ^{2b}sardius in appearance, and *there was* a ^{3c}rainbow around the throne like an ^{4d}emerald in appearance.

Rev 21:11 Having the ^{1a}glory of God. Her ^{2b}light was like a most ^{3c}precious stone, like a ^{4d}jasper stone, as clear as ^ecrystal.

II. Ezekiel 1 presents a picture of God's throne above the clear sky—vv. 22, 26:

Ezek 1 be omitted.

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.

- A. We should have a clear spiritual sky (a clear conscience) like the sight of awesome crystal, which means that there is nothing between us and the Lord and nothing between us and one another—Acts 24:16; 1 Tim. 1:5; 3:9; 2 Tim. 1:3.

Acts 24:16 Because of this I also ^aexercise myself to always have a ^{1b}conscience without offense toward God and men.

1 Tim 1:5 But the end of the ¹charge is ^{2a}love out of a ^{3b}pure heart and *out of* a good ^cconscience and *out of* unfeigned ^dfaith;

1 Tim 3:9 ^aHolding the ^{1b}mystery of the ^cfaith in a ^{2d}pure conscience.

2 Tim 1:3 I thank God, whom I ^{1a}serve ²from *my* ^bforefathers in a ^{3c}pure conscience, while unceasingly I have remembrance concerning you in my petitions ^dnight and day,

- B. The sapphire throne above the crystal clear expanse indicates that whenever we have a “clear sky” in our Christian life and in our church life, we will be under the ruling of the throne of grace and have the heavenly situation, atmosphere, and condition of the Lord’s ruling presence—Ezek. 1:26; Heb. 4:16; Rom. 5:17, 21.

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.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore ^acome forward with boldness to the ¹throne of grace that we may receive ^{2b}mercy and find ^cgrace for timely help.

Rom 5:17 For if by the offense of the one death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the ¹abundance of grace and of the gift of ²righteousness will ³reign in ⁴life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Rom 5:21 In order that just as ^{1a}sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through ²righteousness unto ^beternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- C. The highest point in our spiritual experience is having a clear sky with a throne above it; to reach this point means that in everything we allow God to have the preeminence and are completely submissive to His authority and administration.

- D. If we have the throne in our spiritual life, God will not only rule over us but will also fulfill His purpose in us, with us, and through us—Col. 1:18b; Ezek. 1:5, cf. v. 26.

Col 1:18b ... He is the ^cbeginning, the ^{1d}Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

Ezek 1:5 And from the midst of it there came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: They had the likeness of a man.

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.

- E. The One sitting on the throne is Jesus Christ, the Man-God, the mingling of God and man—v. 26; John 6:62; Acts 7:56; cf. Phil. 2:9-11; Rom. 10:12-13:

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.

John 6:62 Then what if you saw the Son of Man ^{1a}ascending to where He was before?

Acts 7:56 And he said, Behold, I see the ¹heavens ^aopened up and the ^bSon of Man standing at the right hand of God.

Phil 2:9 Therefore also God highly ^{1a}exalted Him and ²bestowed on Him the ³name which is ^babove every name,

Phil 2:10 That ¹in the name of Jesus ^aevery knee should ²bow, of those who are ³in ^bheaven and ⁴on earth and ⁵under the earth,

Phil 2:11 And every tongue should ¹openly confess that Jesus Christ is ^{2a}Lord ³to the ^bglory of God the Father.

Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between ^aJew and Greek, for the same ^bLord *is Lord* of all *and* ^{1c}rich to all who ^dcall upon Him;

Rom 10:13 For ^a“whoever ¹calls upon the name of the Lord shall be ^{2b}saved.”

1. The man on the throne has the appearance of electrum and fire—electrum from His loins upward and fire from His loins downward—Ezek. 1:27-28.

Ezek 1:27 Then I saw something like the sight of electrum, like the appearance of fire encased all around, from the appearance of His loins and upward; and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw something like the appearance of fire. And there was brightness all around Him.

Ezek 1:28 Like the appearance of the rainbow that is in the cloud on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and I heard the voice of someone speaking.

2. The upper part of a man, from his loins to his head, is the part of feeling, of sensation, signifying his nature and disposition; according to His nature and disposition the Lord Jesus on the throne has the appearance of electrum, the radiant expression of the redeeming God.
3. The lower part of a man's body is for moving; the appearance of fire from His loins downward signifies the Lord's appearance in His move with His burning and sanctifying power—cf. v. 4.

Ezek 1:4 And I looked, and there came a storm wind from the north, a great cloud and a fire flashing incessantly; and there was a brightness around it, and from the midst of it there was something like the sight of electrum, from the midst of the fire.

F. God's intention is to work on man in order that man will be on the throne—"he who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne"—Rev. 3:21.

G. As the Pioneer, the Lord Jesus cut the way to enter into glory and to sit on the throne, and we, His many brothers, are now following Him—Heb. 2:6-11; Rev. 22:5.

Heb 2:6 But one has solemnly testified somewhere, saying, ^{1a}What is man, that You bring him to mind? Or the son of man, that You care for him?

Heb 2:7 You have made Him ^{1a}a little inferior to the angels; You have crowned Him with glory and honor and have set Him ^aover the works of Your hands;

Heb 2:8 You have ^asubjected all things under His feet." For in subjecting all things to Him, He left nothing unsubject to Him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to Him,

Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little ¹inferior to the angels because of the suffering of ^adeath, ^bcrowned with ^{2c}glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death on behalf of ^{3d}everything.

Heb 2:10 For it was fitting ^afor ¹Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading ^{2b}many sons into ^{3c}glory, to make the ^{4d}Author of their ^esalvation ^{5f}perfect through sufferings.

Heb 2:11 For both ¹He who ^asanctifies and those who are being ^bsanctified are all ²of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them ^cbrothers,

Rev 22:5 And ^{1a}night will be ^bno more; and they have no need of the ²light of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for the ³Lord God will shine upon them; and they will ^{4c}reign forever and ever.

H. God desires to bring us to the throne because of the rebellion of Satan against God's throne—Isa. 14:12-14:

Isa 14:12 How you have fallen from heaven, O Daystar, son of the dawn! How you have been hewn down to earth, You who made nations fall prostrate!

Isa 14:13 But you, you said in your heart: I will ascend to heaven; Above the stars of God I will exalt my throne. And I will sit upon the mount of assembly In the uttermost parts of the north.

Isa 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.

1. Satan's throne is the world, which is constituted of ambition, self-exaltation, and opinions with concepts; when these three things result in division, the world becomes "the evil"—Rev. 2:12-13a; John 17:15.

Rev 2:12 And to the messenger of the church in ¹Pergamos write: These things says He who has the ^asharp two-edged sword:

Rev 2:13a I know where you dwell, where ^{1a}Satan's throne is; ...

John 17:15 I do not ask that You would take them ¹out of the world, but that You would ^akeep them out of *the hands of the* ^{2b}evil one.

2. The way to be saved from the world and the authority of Satan is for us to move out of ourselves into the Triune God so that we can live under Christ's headship.

3. If we continually touch the Word and allow the Spirit to touch us day by day, we shall be sanctified; that is, we shall move out of ourselves, our old lodging place, and into the Triune God, our new lodging place—vv. 17, 21; cf. Rev. 2:17.

John 17:17 ^{1a}Sanctify them ²in the truth; Your ³word is truth.

John 17:21 That they all may be ^{1a}one; even as You, Father, are ^bin Me and I ^cin You, that they also may be ^din Us; that the ^eworld may believe that You have ^fsent Me.

Rev 2:17 He who has an ^aear, let him hear what the ^bSpirit says to the churches. To him who ^{1c}overcomes, to him I will give of the ^{2d}hidden ^emanna, and to him I will give a white ^{3f}stone, and upon the stone a ^{4g}new name written, which ^hno one knows except him who receives *it*.

4. Thus, the Lord will make His home in our heart, being enthroned in our heart and ruling over us in everything to make us transparent, bright, fresh, and living under His headship for the full and corporate expression of Christ in glory—Eph. 3:16-19; Rev. 22:1; 21:11.

Eph 3:16 ¹That He would grant you, according to the ^{2a}riches of His glory, to be ^{3b}strengthened with ^{4c}power through His ⁵Spirit ⁶ⁱinto the ^dinner man,

Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His ^ahome in your ¹hearts through ²faith, that you, being ^{3b}rooted and grounded in ^{4c}love,

Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to ¹apprehend with ^{2a}all the saints what the ³breadth and length and height and depth are

Eph 3:19 And to know the ¹knowledge-surpassing ^alove of Christ, that you may be ^bfilled ²unto all the ^{3c}fullness of ⁴God.

Rev 22:1 And ¹he ^ashowed me a ^{2b}river of ^{3c}water of life, bright as ^{4d}crystal, ^eproceeding out of the ^{5f}throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its ^{6g}street.

Rev 21:11 Having the ^{1a}glory of God. Her ^{2b}light was like a most ^{3c}precious stone, like a ^{4d}jasper stone, as clear as ^ecrystal.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

A CLEAR SKY AND THE THRONE

Whenever we have such a clear sky in our Christian life and in our church life, we will also have the throne, which is above the clear sky (Ezek. 1:26). The throne is the center of the universe, and it is where the Lord is. We often talk about the Lord's presence, but we need to realize that the Lord's presence is always with the throne. Where the Lord is, there His throne is. His presence can never be separated from His throne. The Lord's throne is in the third heaven, but His throne is also in our spirit. Hence, the Lord's throne is with us all the time.

As Christians and as local churches, we all should be under a crystal clear and expansive sky. Above this clear, expansive sky is the throne of the Lord. By having such a clear sky, we are spontaneously under the government of the Lord's throne. Now we are under the ruling and reigning of the throne.

We should always be under the ruling of the Lord's throne. Because we are under the throne, we do not need policemen and law courts to rule over us. If we need to be ruled by the police and by the courts, this means that we are not under the throne.

We should be under the throne of the Lord all the time. Perhaps we want to say a certain thing, but the ruling of the throne does not allow us to speak a word. As we begin to speak, the throne exercises its ruling, and we are forced to swallow our words. At other times, we may become angry and may be close to losing our temper, but we realize that we are under the ruling of the throne, and we are subdued. Who is ruling over us? We are ruled not merely by the teachings of the Bible but by the throne.

In our Christian life and in our church life, if the sky is clear, the throne will be there. But if our sky is cloudy and darkened, we will not see the throne. When we do not see the throne, we can be loose and do many things according to our taste and convenience. Today many believers are careless in their daily Christian life because they do not have a clear sky with the throne above it. Whenever believers are in darkness and thus are not under the throne, they can be quite loose, speaking what they want to speak, expressing what they want to express, and going where they want to go. But a person who is under the throne has no liberty to behave in such a way.

In a sense, because we have been saved, we are liberated, but in another sense we are under the throne and have no liberty at all. I can testify that sometimes I wanted to go to a certain place, but because of the throne I did not have the liberty to go there. Praise the Lord for the clear sky and for the throne! Above our heads is the firmament, and above the firmament is the throne.

THE HIGHEST SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE— HAVING THE THRONE IN OUR FIRMAMENT

The highest step in the spiritual experience of a Christian is to have the throne in our firmament, in our clear sky. To have the throne, or to arrive at the throne, is to allow God to have the highest and most prominent position in our Christian life. For God to have the throne in us means that He has the position to reign in us. Therefore, to reach the throne in our spiritual experience means that in everything we are completely submissive to God's authority and administration. Then we are no longer a person without the throne, without authority, without government.

A believer who does not have a clear sky with a throne above it can easily be loose and careless in his daily living. On the contrary, a believer who has a sky that is crystal clear has the sense of being under divine government and restraint; therefore, he cannot be loose or careless in anything he says or does. A believer who has a clear sky above him is under an authority which restricts and restrains him in things such as speaking or a display of anger. This authority is a matter of the throne.

The clearer our firmament is, the more we are under the throne. The more we have clear fellowship with the Lord, the more we will be under His authority. We need to ask ourselves if there is a throne in our Christian life. If we have the throne above the clear sky, we are greatly blessed, and we should worship God for this blessing.

A certain young sister came from a wealthy family. After she was saved, she received the blessing of learning to live under the throne and to accept the restrictions of the throne in everything. Things that others could do she could not do, and things that others could use she could not use. Although her parents loved her very much, they could not understand her way of living. One day she testified to them, saying, "I do not do certain things because others tell me not to do them. There is One in me who is reigning and restricting me from doing these things." After that conversation, her father, a perceptive person, realized that she was a genuine Christian. He esteemed her highly and gave her absolute freedom.

I want to emphasize the fact that the highest point in our spiritual experience is having a clear sky with a throne above it. Have you reached this stage? Have you come to the point where you sense that there is an authority restricting you? Have you come to that state in your spiritual life where you are regulated in all things by the throne? I would urge you to consider this matter before the Lord in your fellowship with Him.

THE THRONE AND GOD'S PURPOSE

The throne is not only for God to reign over us but also for God to accomplish His eternal purpose. If we have a throne in our spiritual life, God will not only rule over us but will also fulfill His purpose in us, with us, and through us. Those who do not have the throne in their Christian life will not allow God to obtain His purpose with them. I hope that the Holy Spirit will deeply impress you with this matter. If you want God's purpose and plan to be carried out in you and with you, you must be a person who submits to the throne. You must be a person under the reign of God. Only then can God carry out His purpose in relation to you.

THE THRONE TRANSMITTED TO THE EARTH THROUGH THE LIVING CREATURES

The living creatures are still on earth, moving or standing, but above their heads there is a clear heaven with the throne. From what is portrayed here we can see that the throne in the heavens is transmitted to the earth through and with the living creatures. With them and through them the heavens with the throne are opened up to the earth. In this way the throne in the heavens becomes one with the earth, for the throne is transmitted to the earth.

This transmission can be compared to the transmission of electricity. Electricity is in the generator at the power plant far away from our homes, but electricity is transmitted to us through the electrical lines. By means of this transmission, the electricity which is in the generator is also with us in our homes. We may say that the living creatures in Ezekiel 1 are the heavenly electrical lines. It is through them, by them, and with them that the heavenly throne is transmitted to the earth. Wherever they are, there is the throne. Wherever they go, the throne follows them.

Sometimes we may contact a dear brother who is gentle, mild, and meek, yet in his presence we have the sense that something weighty and powerful is present ruling over the situation. We may be a loose and careless person, but when we come into the presence of such a brother, we realize that something is ruling over us. This is the throne, or we may say that this is the Lord's presence. Whether we call it the throne or the Lord's presence, it is the transmission of the heavenly throne to the earth through this dear brother.

We may have the same kind of experience in visiting the churches. We may visit a particular local church where the saints are gentle, nice, and happy, yet we sense that there is something

weighty and powerful, something of authority, something that is ruling over everything and everyone in that church. This is the throne.

THE AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH NOT BEING HUMAN AND NATURAL BUT BEING THE THRONE ABOVE THE CLEAR SKY

We should not talk about authority in a human, natural way. In the church there is no human authority. The authority in the church is the throne above the clear sky.

Suppose the leading brothers or the elders in a local church are not under a clear sky, yet they exercise authority based on their position. This kind of exercise of authority does not work because it has no weight and no ruling; there is no throne in a clear sky. However, suppose the leading ones and the elders are continually under a clear sky, having a conscience that is pure and void of offense. If this is their situation, they will be under the heavenly throne, and with them there will be something weighty and something of authority. Thus, there will be no need for them to claim authority over the saints.

To claim authority over the saints indicates that one does not have any authority. As long as we are under a clear sky with a throne above it, there is no need for us to claim to have authority—the authority is simply there. We should never try to bring others under our authority. Such a thing is a hierarchy; it is something of organization. We should not try to rule over the saints. Instead, we should humble ourselves and remain under the throne in the clear sky.

It is shameful for anyone to claim to be the authority in a local church. There is no such thing! In the church there is no human authority. The Lord Jesus said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great exercise authority over them. It shall not be 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 your slave” (Matt. 20:25-27). In Matthew 23:11 He said, “The greatest among you shall be your servant.” This is the way to have authority. The authority is not mine nor yours nor others’. The only authority is the throne above a clear sky.

I can assure you that if we are under a clear sky with the throne above it, the genuine authority will be with us. No opposition or persecution will be able to defeat us or shake us because heaven and the throne are with us. If the sky above us is clear and the throne is with us, we will have the authority and the weight.

The weight of a person before God is equal to the degree of that person’s subjection to God’s authority. A particular brother may be quite proper in his speaking and behavior, but he is light as a feather, altogether lacking in spiritual weight. This indicates that he is not subject to the throne. However, the situation with another brother may be very different. When you contact him, you sense that he is weighty and you respect him. This brother is weighty because he has learned to subject Himself to God’s authority. The more we submit to the throne, the weightier we will be.

Let me tell you about the experience of a female missionary in China. As one who preached strongly concerning regeneration, she was under God’s authority and thereby was a person with authority and weight in the Lord. One day a boat on which she was traveling was seized by pirates, who retained control of the vessel for several days. As they searched her room for money and jewels, she sat there calmly, without any fear. She told the leader of the pirates that it was too hot to confine the passengers to their rooms. She also told him that he should be responsible for cleaning the boat. The leader of the pirates obeyed her and told his men to clean the boat. A ferocious pirate leader came under the authority of this missionary because she herself was under the throne. She subjected herself to God’s authority; therefore, God’s authority was with her.

We need to realize that the amount of weight we have depends on our subjection to the throne. The words out of one brother’s mouth may have weight and power, but the same words out of another brother’s mouth may have nothing. The reason is that one brother is under a clear sky with the throne, but the other is under a dark, cloudy sky without the throne. It is easy to learn to repeat

or quote others' words. But whether the words that issue out of our mouth have weight or amount to nothing depends on whether or not we are under a clear sky with the throne. The proper Christian life and the proper church life is a life under the throne that is above a clear sky.

I would remind all the dear ones who bear responsibility in the local churches never to exercise their authority. We need to realize that none of us has any authority. The authority is the throne. Consider the situation with Moses in the book of Numbers. When the people of Israel rebelled against him, he did not exercise his authority. Instead, Moses and Aaron bowed down and called upon the highest authority. Then the Lord came in to vindicate (Num. 14:5; 16:1-4, 22; 20:2-6). It is a serious mistake to exercise authority over others in the church. Nothing is more shameful than this. To exercise authority over the saints is not glorious—it is shameful. None of us is the authority. The authority is the man on the throne. We must have the man on the throne in our clear sky. In the church life we need a clear sky with a heavenly throne.

The Lord needs such a church today. He needs a group of coordinated living creatures. While they are standing or walking on earth, the heavens are opened to the earth. Through them the heavenly throne is transmitted to earth. This is the church life.

Do not take the natural, human way to exercise any kind of authority. Even if others come to you trying to recognize you as an authority, you must refuse it. You need to tell these ones that you are not the authority. This is not what authority is. Proper authority is a matter of a throne above the clear sky. It is absolutely not a human matter of organization and hierarchy. We need to have a clear sky with a throne.

It is shameful to have power among the saints, to be the authority among the saints, or to intend that the saints should listen to us. We always consider Paul a great apostle. But his name means "little," and he regarded himself as less than the least of the saints (Eph. 3:8). Paul might say, "You give me too great a title. I am not worthy of that."

THE CLEAR SKY AND THE THRONE VINDICATING

Whether the brothers and sisters listen to you or not, depends on where you are and on what you are. Are you under a clear sky? If you are under a clear sky, there is no need for you to argue, and there is no need for you to claim anything or even say anything. The clear sky and the throne above the sky will vindicate.

All the local churches need this revelation of the throne above the clear sky. In the church life we do not have any organization or any kind of hierarchy. We do not have a mission board or any other board; we have no headquarters and no organization of any kind. We have only a clear sky with a throne above the sky.

I can testify that I am afraid only of one thing—that I would lose the presence of my Lord. Many times when I have been alone in my own room, I have declared to the whole universe and to myself that the only thing I fear is losing the Lord's presence. As long as I have the presence of the Lord, I am afraid of nothing. I care only for His presence, not for anything else. In other words, I care only for the clear sky with the throne above it. I have the full assurance that as I am speaking these words, the throne is with me. Praise the Lord that this is sufficient! We all need to learn this.

We are so little, and we are unworthy, yet the Lord has visited us. I must confess that, in the past, sometimes I told the Lord that I did not like doing this job, and I asked Him why He has taken hold of me. At such times the Lord gave me a serious warning about speaking in this way. Then I said, "Lord, forgive me. Do whatever You like. I am willing to lose everything, but I do not want to lose the clear sky and the throne." Under the Lord's covering, I testify that I really mean this.

In your local church you should not care for anything except having a clear sky with the throne above it. As long as we have the clear sky and the throne, opposition and criticism mean nothing. The only thing we need to care for is the clear sky with the throne above it.

THE THRONE BEING IN THE LIKENESS OF A SAPPHIRE STONE

Ezekiel 1:26 speaks of “the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone.” Here we see that the throne has the appearance of a sapphire stone. Exodus 24:10 is helpful in understanding the significance of the sapphire stone in Ezekiel 1. This verse says, “They saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.” A sapphire stone signifies a kind of heavenly condition which exists when God is present in a particular situation. According to Exodus 24:10 when Moses, Aaron, and the chief men of Israel saw God, they saw under His feet the appearance of a sapphire stone. This gave the people an insight into the appearance of the Lord’s presence. A sapphire stone is blue in color, and blue is a heavenly color indicating the situation and condition of God’s presence. This verse also says that at that time the heavens were exceedingly clear. God was present in that kind of situation and atmosphere. Therefore, the sapphire stone signifies the situation or the condition of the heavens with God’s presence in it. The throne being in the likeness of a sapphire stone shows the presence of God in a heavenly situation.

Whenever we have the throne of God in a clear heaven, the situation will be heavenly. There will not be anything earthly or anything gloomy or impure. Rather, everything will be heavenly, clear, clean, and absolutely transparent. This portrays the kind of situation we should have in the presence of God. Whenever we have a clear sky with God’s throne in it, we are in a heavenly situation having the appearance of a sapphire stone.

I would ask you to look once again at the picture in Ezekiel 1. The Lord is upon the throne above the firmament in the heavens, and the living creatures are walking or standing on earth. Through them the Lord in the heavens becomes one with the earth, and in this way the heavens are connected to the earth. This means that the heavens have been brought down to the earth and that the heavens are now moving on earth through, by, and with the living creatures. This needs to be the situation among the local churches today, the situation among the overcomers, and the situation and condition of our daily Christian life. (*Life-study of Ezekiel*, pp. 112-121)