

# Message 1: Christ as the Great Light, the One Who Has Authority, the Physician, the Bridegroom, the Unfulled Cloth, and the New Wine

2024 JST 1c



Hymns: 1302, 893

- I. **Christ is the great light shining on those sitting in darkness and rising on those sitting in the region and shadow of death—**  
Matt. 4:16; John 1:4-5; 12:36; Eph. 5:8; Col. 1:12-13; 2 Cor. 4:6-7; Acts 26:18:
- A. “Because of the merciful compassions of our God, in which the rising sun will visit us from on high, to shine upon those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace”—Luke 1:78-79; 6:36; Lam. 3:22-23.
  - B. “Unto you who fear My name will the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings, and you will go forth and leap about like well-fed calves”—Mal. 4:2; Psa. 84:11; 86:11.
  - C. Psalm 22 is “according to the hind of the dawn”—title.
  - D. “May those who love Him be like the sun / When it rises in its might”—Judg. 5:31b; Isa. 60:1, 5a.
  - E. “The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, / Which shines brighter and brighter until the full day”—Prov. 4:18; Phil. 2:15-16a.
  - F. “Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father”—Matt. 13:43a.
- II. **The centurion saw that the Lord was One who had authority because the Lord was a man under authority—**Matt. 8:5-13:
- A. The centurion recognized that the Lord was a man under authority when he said, “I also am a man under authority”; since the centurion was a man under authority, he had the authority to command those under him—Matt. 8:9a:
    - As the God-man in His humanity on the earth, the Lord Jesus was absolutely under the ruling of the divine life of the Father—John 5:19; 4:34; 17:4; 14:10, 24; 5:30; 7:18.
    - As a man, He rejected His natural humanity and lived a human life under the restriction of the divine life of the heavenly Father.
    - By practically being under the ruling of the divine life of the Father, He was reigning in life—Phil. 2:8-11.
    - Because He was a man under the Father’s authority, He had the authority of the Father.
    - When we have a clear sky like awesome crystal (a good and pure conscience), with nothing between us and the Lord, we are filled with the heavenly situation, atmosphere, and condition of the Lord’s ruling presence to reign in life by grace reigning in us—Ezek. 1:22, 26; Rev. 22:1; Rom. 5:17, 21; Heb. 4:16; cf. Col. 1:13.
  - B. The centurion recognized the authority of the Lord Jesus—Matt. 8:9:
    - Regarding the Lord, His authority is exercised mainly in His word—Matt. 8:8.
    - Regarding us, the Lord’s authority is exercised through faith infused into us by Him—Matt. 8:10, 13; Heb. 12:2.
  - C. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He taught as One having authority—Matt. 7:28-29; Mark 1:22:
    - The self-appointed scribes, teaching vain knowledge by themselves, had no authority and no power—cf. 2 Cor. 3:6, 8.
    - The Lord Jesus, as the God-authorized Teacher, teaching realities by God, had not only spiritual power to subdue people but also divine authority to subject them to the divine ruling—Isa. 30:20-21; Matt. 23:8, 10.

### III. **In calling people to follow Him for the kingdom, the Lord Jesus as the King of the heavenly kingdom ministered as a Physician**—Matt. 9:9-13:

- A. A judge's judgment is according to righteousness, whereas a physician's healing is according to mercy and grace.
- B. If the Lord had visited us pitiful people as a Judge, we all would have been condemned and rejected, and none of us would have been qualified, selected, and called to be the people of His heavenly kingdom—Matt. 8:2-16, 28-32; 9:2-11; Psa. 103:1-4; 107:17-22.
- C. However, He came to minister as a Physician, to heal, recover, enliven, and save us that we might be reconstituted to be His new and heavenly citizens, with whom He could establish His heavenly kingdom on this corrupted earth.
- D. "There is none righteous, not even one"; all the "righteous" are self-righteous, as were the Pharisees; the kingly Savior did not come to call these but sinners—Rom. 3:10; Luke 18:9.
- E. As our Physician, the Lord heals us mainly in our spirit and our soul, healing us of our spiritual sicknesses; the tax collectors and sinners were not physically sick but spiritually sick—Matt. 9:10, 13; Prov. 4:20-23.
- C. As we experience the crucified Christ and live a crucified life, the resurrected Christ becomes our healing power, and the Lord becomes our Healer—Exo. 15:22-27.

### IV. **Christ is our Bridegroom**—Matt. 9:14-15:

- A. Both a physician and a bridegroom are pleasant persons; the kingly Savior first healed His followers and then made them sons of the bridechamber; eventually, He will make them His bride.
- B. We need to lay hold of Him not only as our Physician, that our life might be recovered, but also as our Bridegroom, that we may have the enjoyment of living in His presence—Phil. 3:12-13.
- C. The Spirit has been sent on an errand by the Father to beautify us with the riches of Christ to be Christ's bride—Gen. 24; Eph. 5:25-27.

- V. Christ is the unfulled cloth and our new garment**—Matt. 9:16; Luke 5:36:
- A. The word *unfulled* means “uncarded, unsteamed and unwashed, unfinished, untreated.”
  - B. The unfulled cloth signifies Christ from His incarnation to His crucifixion, as a piece of new cloth, untreated, unfinished, whereas the new garment in Luke 5:36 signifies Christ as a new robe after He was “treated” in His crucifixion.
  - C. Christ first was the unfulled cloth for making a new garment, and then through His death and resurrection He was made a new garment to cover us as our righteousness before God that we might be justified by God and be acceptable to Him—Luke 15:22; Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 1:30; Psa. 45:13-14; Rev. 19:8; Jer. 2:32.
  - D. A patch of unfulled cloth sewn on an old garment pulls away from the garment because of the strength of its shrinking, thus making the tear worse; to sew a patch of unfulled cloth on an old garment means that people try to imitate what Christ did in His human life on earth without believing in the crucified Jesus as their Redeemer or in the resurrected Christ as their righteousness that they may be justified by God and acceptable to Him.
  - E. Their imitation of Christ’s human living “pulls away” from their “old garment,” their behavior produced by their old natural life.
  - F. The kingdom people would not do this; they take the crucified and resurrected Christ as their new garment to cover them as their righteousness before God.
- VI. Christ is our new wine to be put into fresh wineskins**—Matt. 9:17:
- A. The Greek word for *new* means “new in time, recent, newly possessed”:
    - The new wine signifies Christ as the new, cheering life with cheering strength that strengthens us, energizes us, and makes us very happy—Judg. 9:12-13.
    - All religions are old wineskins; new wine put into old wineskins bursts the wineskins by the power of its fermenting; to put new wine into old wineskins is to put Christ as the exciting life into any kind of religion—Matt. 9:14-15.
    - To be religious means to worship God, serve God, and do things to please God yet apart from and without Christ as the Spirit—cf. Gal. 1:14-16a.
  - B. The Greek word for *fresh* means “new in nature, quality, or form; unaccustomed, unused”:
    - The fresh wineskins signify the church life in the local churches as the container of the new wine, which is Christ Himself as the exciting life.
    - The individual Christ is the new wine, the inward exciting life, and the corporate Christ is the fresh wineskin, the outward container that holds the new wine; the corporate Christ, the church, is the new wineskin to contain the individual Christ as the wine:
      - The church as the enlargement of Christ is filled with Christ and is constituted with Christ.
      - The members composed together are the one Body, and this Body is the Christ; Christ is the Head of the Body and the Body of the Head—1 Cor. 12:12; Acts 9:5.
      - Christ is not divided; the Christ in you is one with the Christ in me, and the Christ in us is one with the Christ in all other Christians—1 Cor. 1:10, 13a.
      - Therefore, Christ is the Body composed of many members who are filled with Him; this is the new wineskin, which is the church life to contain Christ as the new wine.
    - Among the church people the new garment, the new wine, and the new wineskin have all been recovered; we have Christ in a corporate way as our church life, and the church, the wineskin, is God’s ultimate goal.

## Message 1: Christ as the Great Light, the One Who Has Authority, the Physician, the Bridegroom, the Unfulled Cloth, and the New Wine

- I. **Christ is the great light shining on those sitting in darkness and rising on those sitting in the region and shadow of death**
  - "Because of the merciful compassions of our God, Christ the great light, the rising Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings, will shine upon those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death from on high, to guide our feet into the way of peace; the righteous people who love Him will shine forth like the sun, brighter and brighter until the full day, in the kingdom of their Father. [Matt. 4:16] The people sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those sitting in the region and shadow of death, to them light has risen." [Psa. 84:11] For Jehovah God is a sun and a shield; / Jehovah gives grace and glory; / He does not withhold anything good / From those who walk uprightly.
- II. **The centurion saw that the Lord was One who had authority because the Lord was a man under authority**
  - The centurion recognized that the Lord was a man under authority since he himself was also a man under authority and had the authority to command those under him. While on earth, Christ as the God-man in His humanity rejected His natural humanity and was absolutely under the restriction and ruling of the divine life of the heavenly Father, He was reigning in life and had the authority of the Father. Likewise, when we have a good and pure conscience with nothing between us and the Lord, we are filled with the Lord's ruling presence to reign in life by grace reigning in us. The Lord's authority is exercised mainly in His word and is exercised through faith infused into us by Him. The Lord Jesus, as the God-authorized Teacher, teaching realities by God, had not only spiritual power to subdue people but also divine authority to subject them to the divine ruling. [Matt. 8:8-10] But the centurion answered and said...but only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me...Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who followed, Truly I say to you, With no one in Israel have I found such great faith.
- III. **In calling people to follow Him for the kingdom, the Lord Jesus as the King of the heavenly kingdom ministered as a Physician**
  - Instead of visiting us pitiful people as a Judge according to righteousness, the Lord came to minister as a Physician according to mercy and grace, to heal, recover, enliven, and save us that we might be reconstituted to be His new and heavenly citizens, with whom He could establish His heavenly kingdom on this corrupted earth. The kingly Savior came not to call the 'self-righteous' but sinners. As our Physician, the Lord heals not our physically sickness but our spiritual sicknesses in our spirit and our soul. As we experience the crucified Christ and live a crucified life, the resurrected Christ becomes our healing power, and the Lord becomes our Healer. [Matt. 9:11-13] And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners? ... He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill. But go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.
- IV. **Christ is our Bridegroom**
  - Christ first healed His followers and then made them sons of the bridechamber; eventually, He will make them His bride. We need to lay hold of Him as our Physician and also as our Bridegroom, that we may have the enjoyment of living in His presence. The Spirit has been sent by the Father to beautify us with the riches of Christ to be Christ's bride. [Matt. 9:15] And Jesus said to them, The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.
- V. **Christ is the unfulled cloth and our new garment**
  - The unfulled cloth signifies Christ from His incarnation to His crucifixion, as a piece of new cloth, untreated, unfinished, whereas the new garment signifies Christ as a new robe after He was "treated" in His crucifixion. Christ first was the unfulled cloth for making a new garment, and then through His death and resurrection He was made a new garment to cover us as our righteousness before God that we, the kingdom people, might be justified by God and be acceptable to Him. To sew a patch of unfulled cloth on an old garment means that people try to imitate what Christ did in His human life on earth without believing in the crucified and resurrected Christ as their righteousness. Their imitation would "pull away" from their "old garment," their behavior produced by their old natural life. [Matt. 9:16] No one puts a patch of unfulled cloth on an old garment, for that which fills it up pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. [Luke 5:36] .. No one tears a patch from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise, he will tear the new garment, and also the patch from the new will not match the old.
- VI. **Christ is our new wine to be put into fresh wineskins**
  - The new (recent, newly possessed) wine signifies Christ as the new, cheering life with cheering strength that strengthens, energizes, and makes us very happy. All religions are old wineskins; to put new wine into old wineskins is to put Christ as the exciting life into any kind of religion where worshipping and serving God are done apart from and without Christ as the Spirit. The fresh (new in nature, quality, form; unaccustomed) wineskins signify the church life in the local churches as the container of the new wine, which is Christ Himself as the exciting life. The individual Christ is the new wine, the inward exciting life, and the corporate Christ is the fresh wineskin, the outward container that holds the new wine; the corporate Christ, the church, is the new wineskin to contain the individual Christ as the wine. The church is: ①the enlargement of Christ filled and constituted with Christ; ②with its members composed together are the one Body with Christ as the Head of the Body and the Body of the Head; ③not divided; the Christ in us is one with the Christ in all other Christians; ④ composed of many members who are filled with Him. This is the new wineskin, which is the church life to contain Christ as the new wine. Among the church people the new garment, the new wine, and the new wineskin have all been recovered; we have Christ in a corporate way as our church life, and the church, the wineskin, is God's ultimate goal. [Matt. 9:17] Neither do they put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out, and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved. [1 Cor. 12:12] For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.

This heavenly King is our Physician with healing authority. His healing is not simply a matter of power; it is a matter of authority. To heal us there is no need for Him to touch us directly. He needs only to speak a word, and His authority will come with His word... He simply needs to say, "Illness, go away." This is authority. With this same authority He is also fully able to command mental illnesses to flee. Thus, He heals us with authority.

If we have this vision, we shall have faith in Him and trust Him whenever we are sick physically, spiritually, or mentally. We need to trust Him as our Physician.

*<Excerpts from "Life-study of Matthew", Message 27, "The Continuation Of The King's Ministry (3)">*

In the last days the Lord is recovering not only the new garment—this He recovered through Martin Luther in the matter of justification by faith. Neither is the Lord only recovering the inner life—this He recovered through ones such as Madame Guyon, William Law, Andrew Murray, and Jessie Penn-Lewis...However, at the end of this age the Lord is recovering the last and ultimate item, the church life. Those who enjoy the church life are the church people. Among the church people the new garment, the new wine, and the new wineskin have all been recovered. We have Christ in a corporate way as our church life...The church is God's ultimate goal. When we arrive at the church, we are in the ultimate consummation of God's purpose.

*<Excerpts from "Life-study of Matthew", Message 28, "The Continuation Of The King's Ministry (4)">*