

THE OVERCOMERS

This is an important key towards understanding the plan of God for His people- taught throughout the Bible from Genesis (3:15) to Revelation (21:7).

There will be always be hostility- enmity- conflict & warfare between Satan and the seed of the woman (Christ & the Overcomers, Gen.3:15 & Rom.16:20). In the Book of Exodus, when a deliverer was to be born in Egypt, Pharaoh had all the male children killed. When Christ was born in Bethlehem, King Herod had all the young male children killed.

This conflict will come to its fullness in the Last Days. Revelation 12:1-5 tells us about a woman giving birth, while the dragon (Satan) sought to devour the child, but failed. Then Revelation 12: 9-11 tells us Satan was cast down, and the Overcomers are victorious!

Revelation 12:12 goes on to proclaim, "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and those who dwell (tabernacle) in them." This is just before the Second Coming- the overcoming saints abiding in heavenly places with Christ will be rejoicing, and victorious over Satan! In the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, which was at the end of their year, God's people were to go outside their homes and camp out in booths or tabernacles. This is prophetic of the end of the Church Age, when Christians- and the Body of Christ- are to come to full maturity, and become Overcomers who abide (or *tabernacle*) in heavenly places with Christ, above the power of Satan!

Ephesians 1:20-23 tells us that all the body of Christ, the Church, *should* be seated in heavenly places above all the principalities & powers of Satan, with Satan under our feet. But the realistic fact is, that many Christians are carnal and earthbound- and the lowest (most carnal) part of the body of Christ will be attacked by Satan, just as the serpent would strike the heel of the woman's seed.

Revelation 12:12 goes on to say, "But woe to those on the earth! The Devil has come down to the earth, having great anger, because he knows that he has only a short time." Satan will be desperate! His time will be short! This will be his last opportunity to win!

In Revelation 13:4-7 in the last days, the forces of Satan will seek to control the world- and they will temporarily overcome the saints dwelling on the earth! (Satan will not control the overcomers abiding in the heavenlies, but he will overcome the carnal, earthbound Christians in the Last Days.) WE MUST OVERCOME SIN & SATAN- OR BE OVERCOME!

WHY DIDN'T GOD DESTROY SATAN JUST AFTER HE SINNED?

Why has God allowed Satan to repeatedly attack the saints, and cause so much suffering?

- 1) Satan attacked Adam & Eve, Gen.3:1-6.
- 2) Satan attacked Job, Job 1:8-12 & 2:4-7.
- 3) Satan attacked David, 1 Chron. 21:1
- 4) Satan attacked Peter, Luke 22:31-32.
- 5) Satan attacks the Last Days Church, Revelation chapters 12 & 13.
- 6) Satan will attack the multitudes near the end of the Millennium, Revelation 20:7-8.

THE WONDERFUL RESULTS OF OUR OVERCOMING SIN & SATAN

When looking at all of world history, God has evaluated that all the sufferings of the world for thousands of years- wars, sickness, poverty, persecution, all evil- even the death of the Son

of God- all these cannot be compared with the positive results that will be gained for all eternity! Is.55:8-9, Rom.8:18.

GLORIOUS RESULT #1) Christ will have a spotless bride, Rev.19:6-9.

GLORIOUS RESULT #2) God the Father will gain many sons, Heb.2:10. Adopted and matured sons! Ready to rule & reign over his kingdom! (Like partners in a family business)

GLORIOUS RESULT #3) We will partake of God's glory and will rule with Christ- live forever in a kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy, Eph.2:7, Rom.14:7, Is.9:7. We will have forever to explore more of God & His wisdom!

NOW IS THE TIME TO PREPARE

Now, during our lifetime, our challenge is to overcome the world, the flesh & the devil – to become prepared for God's great future plans!

At the end of the world, Satan will be permanently removed and punished, Rev.20:10-12. Then in the new heavens & earth, all the overcomers will enter a new age- a new dispensation- a new working of God! Rev. 21:4-7. No Sin! No Satan! No suffering! No death!! Everything will be good! Everything perfect! Everything will be pure & wonderful!

THINGS IT WILL BE TOO LATE TO PREPARE FOR IN THE NEW HEAVENS & EARTH:

LOST OPPORTUNITY # 1) NO MORE OPPORTUNITY TO CARRY OUR CROSS AND PREPARE FOR A GREATER ETERNAL GLORY! 2 Cor.4:17. We must prepare now- or it will be too late!

LOST OPPORTUNITY # 2) NO MORE OPPORTUNITY TO PREPARE TO RULE AND REIGN WITH CHRIST, Rev.20:4-6, Mt.19:28, 2 Tim.2:12, Lk.22:28-30.

LOST OPPORTUNITY # 3) NO MORE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME MORE LIKE CHRIST, THE "MAN OF WAR," Ex.15:3. In the New Heavens & Earth, there will be no opportunities to become more like Christ, the "Man of War" who overcame Satan, Sin, Hell & the Grave. The condition of our fallen adamic nature is broken & weak. We need the nature of Christ to be built up in our life that we can become more than conquerors in Christ, Joel 3:10, Eph.6:10, 1 Jn.2:14.

God wants to make us more than conquerors in Christ! Nothing can separate us from the love of God! All things work together for good!

LOST OPPORTUNITY # 4) NO OBTAINING MORE OF THE "FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS," Phil.3:10. Precious eternal fellowship with Christ and His valiant overcomers! Jesus was a "Man of Sorrows" (Is.53:3) and He has always appreciated those who will be close to Him in His sufferings. Peter James & John were invited to be close to him in the Garden of Gethsemane. The 12 Apostles will eat and drink next to Christ in the Millennium, because of sharing His sufferings, Lk.22:28-30.

In the new Heavens & Earth, everything will be new! Redeemed! But be we will no longer have any opportunities to prepare for a better resurrection, Heb.11:35. We will no longer have any opportunities to prepare for more eternal glory!

So let us seek to gain an increased vision of the overcomers- those who will rule & reign with Christ in glory for the ages to come, Eph. 2:7, Rev.21:7, Hab.2:2. A vision, not written on tables of stone, like Moses, but written on our hearts, 2 Cor.3:3!