

570 “He that overcometh”

Sadly the first few days of this New Year have quickly dispelled the recent Christmas festivities, for the world is clearly in a parlous state. We are now facing frequent “wild weather events” and other “natural disasters”; the provocations of Russia, China, North Korea and Iran; the Qur’anic-taught Islamic hatred of Israel and the Jews; mass migration into “the West”; “A.I” and “deep fake”; an awesome array of weaponry, notably “cheap” drones; social problems wherever we look; and numerous key elections scheduled for 2024, set in a context of angry political divisions and deep voter apathy. The world is not a happy place.

Scripturally, and of great comfort, we know that Almighty God is in total control. Nothing is happening without His permission or direction, and all is happening in line with His “last times” teachings - times in which we can assume we are now living, for, against all human probability, the Jews are back as a nation at the heart of global affairs, hatred of the Jews is greater than ever, as is Man’s unprecedented ability for self-destruction. Things surely cannot go on like this for much longer!

Thus, as a brief reminder without the references this time, we know what the main way-points involve along the route towards God’s promised “journey’s end”: the removal of the believing Church; a dreadful 7-year tribulation with Satan and antichrist doing their worst; the return of the Messiah in glory; judgment of the sheep and goat nations; the millennial reign of Christ on earth; the great white throne; then the “eternal state”. The future for all Christ-believers is glorious, but meanwhile we must not be surprised that our being Bible-believing Christians in our day is becoming tougher, yet more necessary than ever (eg., I Peter 1.3-9).

But the Lord is good. “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth ... And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (from Revelation 21.1-2, KJV). Beautiful truths follow: “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ...” - no more death, sorrow, crying or pain – “for the former things are passed away” (from v.4). Then, “Write: for these words are true and faithful ... it is done ... he that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (from vv.5-7).

So – what does this “overcoming” mean in practice? The answer is easily found (capitals added): “For whatsoever is BORN OF GOD overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world,

[even] our FAITH. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that BELIEVETH THAT JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD?" (I John 5.4-5). Praise God and by His grace in Christ, we "overcome the world" by the new birth granted to us (eg., John 3.3-8); and by the faith given to us (eg., Romans 12.3b), enabling us to believe in the divine Lordship of Jesus Christ (eg., Philippians 2.5-11). (We must solemnly note in passing that many will be not "overcomers", who will thus experience "the second death" rather than the heavenly blessings (Revelation 20.14-15; 21.8).

Then in Jesus' messages to the seven churches in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3 we learn more about the overcomers. Regarding "he -" or "him - that overcometh: (1st, to Ephesus, Revelation 2.7) "will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" / 2nd, to Smyrna, 2.11) "shall not be hurt by the second death" (Revelation 20.6; 21.8); (3rd, to Pergamos, 2.17) "will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and ... a new name written ..." / (4th, to Thyatira, from 2.26-28) "and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations ... And I will give him the morning star" "/ (5th, to Sardis, from 3.5) "shall be clothed in white raiment ... I will not blot his name out of the book of life ... I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" / (6th, to Philadelphia, from 3.12) "will I make a pillar in the temple of my God ..." / (7th, to Laodicea, from 3.21) "will I grant to sit with me on my throne". What a list of promised blessings!

All overcomers, simply defined as those "born of God" with belief and faith in "Jesus Christ as Lord", have all these blessings and joys to come. Such prospects spur us on down here in the difficult times, such as now. Come what may, in Christ we have ample reason to "rejoice in the Lord alway" (from Philippians 4.4), to pray without ceasing, and to labour in the harvest fields "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (from Romans 11.25). For, as that old chorus puts it – "God is still on the throne, and He will remember is own; His promise is true, He will not forget you - God is still on the throne!"

© January 2024 Faithful Sheep Ministries - www.fsmins.org