

HWMR: EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (4) (Week 8)

The Man-child, the War in Heaven, and the Overcoming Saints

Scripture Reading: *Rev. 12:5, 7-11*

- Rev. 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.
- Rev. 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.
- Rev. 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.
- Rev. 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
- Rev. 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev. 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.

Day 1

- Rev. 12:5 - And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.*
- Rev. 2:26-27 - And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; ...as I also have received from My Father.*

- I. “She **brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne**”—Rev. 12:5:
- A. *Brought forth* here signifies **resurrection**, as in Acts 13:33-34:
1. The **man-child** is composed of the **overcoming saints who have died and been resurrected**.
 2. This is proved by the words *unto death* in Revelation 12:11.
- B. In the Bible, **woman** signifies the **weaker** one and **man** the **stronger** one—1 Pet. 3:7:
1. The man-child in Revelation 12 signifies the **stronger part** of God’s people.
 2. That the man-child is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod indicates that the man-child **consists of the overcomers**, as mentioned in 2:26-27.
- C. To be caught up is to be **raptured**:
1. The rapture of the man-child differs from that of the majority of the believers, which is mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
 2. There, the **majority of the believers are raptured to the air**, and at the last trumpet (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thes. 4:16), which is the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:15).

3. Here, the man-child is **raptured to the throne of God**, and before the one thousand two hundred and sixty days, which is the time of the great tribulation of three and a half years (forty-two months, 12:14; 13:5; 11:2), beginning from the sixth seal, before the fifth trumpet (9:1).

We may be assured that **by eating the Lord Jesus we will be overcomers**. According to my age, I may be a grandfather, but I am younger than many young people. They are not as living as I am. I am younger than they, not by myself but by Jesus. Jesus is so living! In my speaking some may think that I am “crazy,” but in my private room I am more “crazy” with Jesus, because my Jesus is enjoyable. I cannot help myself; I have to be crazy. My Jesus is the living Jesus, not a doctrinal Jesus. My power, my message, and my impact is my enjoyment of Jesus.

We can never return to the old Christianity because our Jesus is too enjoyable. Simply by eating Jesus we will be the overcomers. **We will overcome the world, the degraded situation of Christianity, and all the teachings**. We will declare, “We do not care for teachings; we only care for our Jesus!” Yes, I read the Bible, but I do not read it for knowledge; I read it for **enjoyment**. I may pray-read the beginning of Matthew 1: “Abraham begot Isaac. Amen! Isaac begot Jacob. Amen!” I may not know all about Abraham and Isaac, but oh, the enjoyment I have! The Bible is no more a book of knowledge to me. It is no more a tree of knowledge; it is the tree of life, a book of life, a book of the living Jesus.

By enjoying Jesus in this way, we become the overcomers. Then to be sure, we will try our best to find where there are other Christians like us. We will be anxious to have fellowship with them. **This produces the church life, and eventually out of this comes the man-child**. By the Lord’s mercy, the overcomers are the man-child. We know that the man-child in Revelation 12 is the overcomers because verse 5 says that the man-child will shepherd all the nations with an iron rod. This is similar to 2:26 and 27, which says, “He who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he will shepherd them with an iron rod.” The overcomers are the man-child, and the man-child is the overcomers.

(Enjoying the Riches of Christ for the Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ, Chapter 17)

Day 2

Rev. 12:7-9 - *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels. And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth...*

Day 3

John 12:31 - *Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.*

Rev. 12:10 - *And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.*

II. “There was war in heaven”—12:7a:

- A. Immediately after the man-child is raptured to heaven, Michael and his angels begin to war against Satan:
 - 1. This indicates that the man-child, the stronger part of God’s people, is always engaged in fighting God’s enemy, Satan.
 - 2. They have been fighting Satan continually on earth.
 - 3. Heaven is waiting for them to arrive that a war may be waged to cast Satan out of heaven.
 - 4. The Bible reveals the names of two angels—Michael and Gabriel.
 - 5. Gabriel is a reporter bringing news to God’s people (Dan. 8:16; 9:21-22; Luke 1:19, 26), whereas Michael is a fighter contending for God’s people (Dan. 10:13, 21; 11:1; 12:1; Jude 9).
- B. “The dragon warred and his angels” (Rev. 12:7b); these angels must be the fallen angels, who follow Satan to rebel against God (Matt. 25:41).
- C. Satan, the enemy of God, was judged by the Lord Jesus on the cross—John 12:31; 16:11:
 - 1. After that, the overcoming believers are needed for the carrying out of that judgment, for the executing of that sentence.
 - 2. The war waged by the overcoming believers against Satan is actually the executing of the Lord’s judgment upon him.
 - 3. Eventually, through their fighting, he is cast out of heaven—Rev. 12:7-9.

Immediately after the man-child is caught up, there is war in heaven. In other words, the cause of the war in heaven is the rapture of the man-child. From this we see that the rapture of the man-child is not just a matter of some individuals being caught up, but more than that, it is to bring to an end the warfare which has been going on for ages and generations. The old serpent, the enemy of God, has been fighting against God for several thousand years. When this warfare takes place in heaven, Michael and his angels fight against the dragon, who is the old serpent. Formerly he was a serpent, but now he has changed in form to a dragon. He has steadily increased his power. However, once the man-child is caught up, not only is the dragon unable to be enlarged any further, but he is cast down from heaven. The rapture of the man-child is a transaction which causes Satan to have no more position in heaven.

What is the result of the fight between Michael and his angels and the dragon and his angels? Verses 8 and 9 say, "And they [the dragon and his angels] did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him." The dragon’s defeat is the outcome of this battle. There was no place for him in heaven; he and his angels were all cast down to the earth. (*The Glorious Church*, Chapter 4)

Day 4

Rev. 12:11 - And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.

1 John 1:7 - ...The blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.

III. “Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night. And they **overcame him** [the devil] because of the **blood of the Lamb** and because of the **word of their testimony**, and they **loved not their soul-life even unto death**”—vv. 10-11:

A. They overcame him because of the **blood of the Lamb**:

1. Satan may accuse us, but we can answer that the **blood of Jesus Christ**, God’s Son, **cleanses us from every sin**—1 John 1:7.
2. Any apparent condemnation that does not stop after we have confessed and applied the blood is not God’s enlightenment but **Satan’s accusation**—v. 9.
3. We must not only reject the accusations which are without cause, but we must also **reject all the accusations** which have cause.
4. When we commit sin, we do not glorify God, but when we do not trust the precious blood, we dishonor Him all the more—Matt. 26:28; cf. Heb. 10:29.
5. We must always apply the blood, telling the devil that although we are not perfect, **we are under the precious blood**—1 Pet. 1:18-19; Acts 20:28.

Day 5

Rev. 12:11 - And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony...

1 John 3:8 - ...For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

B. They overcame him because of the **word of their testimony**:

1. “Testimony” means to **tell others what there is in Christ**, and the word of testimony is something which must be spoken forth.
2. The **overcomers must frequently proclaim the victory of Christ**, testifying that the devil has been judged by the Lord—1 John 3:8; Heb. 2:14.
3. Satan does not fear when we try to reason with him, but **he does fear when we proclaim the spiritual facts of Christ’s victory**—cf. 2 Chron. 20:20-22:
 - a. That the **name of Jesus is above every name is a spiritual fact** which **we must declare in faith**, not only to men but also to Satan—Phil. 2:9-11; 1 Cor. 12:3b.
 - b. We **must proclaim to Satan** and his demons that **Jesus is Lord**, that the **Lord is victorious**, and that **Satan has been crushed under His feet**—Gen. 3:15; John 14:30b; Rom. 16:20.

Day 6

Rev. 12:11 - And they overcame him because...they loved not their soul-life even unto death.

Matt. 16:24 - Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.

C. They loved not their soul-life even unto death:

1. Due to Adam's fall, Satan joined himself to man's soul-life—man's self; to overcome him **we must not love our soul-life**; rather, **we must hate it and deny it**—Matt. 16:23-24; Luke 14:26; 9:23:
 - a. Satan wants us to **act in our own strength** and **move in ourselves** with the power of our soul, our **natural ability**.
 - b. Natural ability is the ability which we originally had and which has never been dealt with by the operation of the cross.
 - c. The failure of the church is due to **man's bringing in his natural ability**.
 - d. The purpose of the cross is to **deal with our natural strength and ability** so that **we will not dare to move by ourselves**, as seen in the cases of Moses and Peter—Acts 7:23-30; Luke 22:32-34; 1 Pet. 5:5-6.
 - e. We should have the attitude that **we will not live by our self** in any way; **we will not value our own ability** or have any self-confidence—1 Cor. 2:2-4; Phil. 3:3; cf. Isa. 11:2b.
2. We must be **self-sacrificing persons**, a drink offering, **allowing Christ** as the heavenly wine **to fill us and cause us to become wine to God**—Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6; Judg. 9:13:
 - a. The **drink offering typifies Christ** as the **One poured out as the real wine** before God for His satisfaction—Exo. 29:40-41.
 - b. The apostle Paul became a drink offering that was poured out upon the sacrifice and service of the saints' faith—Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6.
 - c. The drink offering typifies not only Christ Himself, but also **Christ who saturates us** with Himself as the heavenly wine **until He and we become one to be poured out** for God's enjoyment and satisfaction and for God's building—Matt. 9:17; Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6.

These overcomers overcome the enemy by the following things:

1. The Blood of the Lamb

First, the blood of Christ is poured out, signifying that the life of the flesh is poured out. Through this, Satan will not be able to do anything to us. The **food of Satan is dust; he can only work within a life of the flesh**. Second, **the blood of Christ deals with the attack of Satan**. We are protected under the blood of Christ from the attack of Satan, in the same way that the Israelites were protected under the blood of the Passover. The blood satisfies God's righteousness; it signifies death. Therefore, Satan cannot attack us. Third, **the blood of Christ answers Satan's accusations**.

2. The Word of Testimony

All the works of Satan in the church are to overthrow the testimony. **The church is the lampstand, and the lampstand is a testimony**. Satan wants to overthrow the church in order to overthrow the testimony. The testimony spoken of here refers especially to the testimony against Satan. When the Lord was tempted, He said three sentences which were testimonies directed at Satan. We also should declare a testimony against Satan. Satan may say to us, "You are weak." But we should say to him that the power of the Lord is perfected in weakness. We should exercise the victory of Christ by applying God's Word. **The blood speaks of the victory of Christ**. A testimony is an **application of the victory of Christ with the Word of God**.

3. *Not Loving One's Life*

We should sacrifice our body and our life and have no pity on ourselves. We should "consider my life of no account as if precious to myself" (Acts 20:24). By the blood and the word of our testimony, we should not fear death but should fight until we overcome. Such men will fulfill the pronouncement of Genesis 3:15.

The dragon wants to devour the man-child which is about to be delivered. This is the reason we have persecutions and sufferings. These persecutions and sufferings force us to become the man-child, and cause us to be among the first to be raptured—the first rapture. The first rapture is not only a blessing but a responsibility. Whoever has a place for the dragon in his heart will be persecuted by the dragon; he will go through the tribulation. Whoever does not have a place for the dragon in his heart will step on the head of the dragon. The serpent corrupted the woman. This is why there is the need for the seed of the woman to bruise him. God will not defeat the serpent by Himself. God needs the overcomers to defeat him. May we be part of the overcomers. (*Collected Works of Watchman Nee, The (Set 1) Vol. 11: The Present Testimony (4)*, Chapter 11)