

“SONGS IN HEAVEN – 3.) VICTORY OVER SATAN”

Revelation 12:10-12

On the Tuesday after Superbowl XLIV, the New Orleans Saints football team was given a victory parade. Tens of thousands cheering fans shouted and cheered as the team rode through their midst in a stretch limousine. Someone inside the limousine was holding the Superbowl trophy through the sunroof.

At the end of World War I and at the end of World War II there were victory parades all over the country. The service men and women who returned from the Korean conflict and from the Vietnam War and now the Iraq war have pointed out that there were no parades for them. It has touched me to hear about private organizations in Atlanta, Dallas, and in Maine that meet the service members returning from Iran and Afghanistan at the airport, thank them, and give them token gifts.

There is a victory parade described by Paul in Second Corinthians:

Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

(2 Corinthians 2:14-15 NKJV)

Paul uses the image of a Roman general returning in triumph to describe how God is always leading us in triumph in Christ. The Roman general led a victory parade through his own city or the capital city. His own troops marched with their swords, spears, and shields. Behind them came the captives from the defeated armies and conquered cities. The citizens scattered fragrant flowers in their path. For the victorious soldiers the fragrance of the flowers were the savor of victory. For the captives the fragrance signaled their impending doom. The general was leading his soldiers to their rewards and his captives to judgment.

1.) Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

(Revelation 12:10 NKJV)

Jesus referred to this event both in parable form and in declaration.

"But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. "But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. (Luke 11:20-22 NKJV)

And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. (Luke 10:18 NKJV)

"Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out."

(John 12:31 NKJV)

With many of the events of the Revelation, it is not possible to relate them to events on earth – though there is no lack of trying to do so.

But this event is clearly attached to the earthly death and resurrection of Jesus Christ –

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

(Colossians 2:13-15 NKJV)

Satan is the "accuser of the brethren". We see him in this capacity in the first two chapters of Job as he accuses Job. He appears in this role also in the prophecy of Zechariah:

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?" (Zechariah 3:1-2 NKJV)

Principalities and powers are categories of evil spirits who serve him.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Ephesians 6:12-13 NKJV)

2.) "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death." (Revelation 12:11 NKJV)

The saints in heaven were accused by Satan who had mountains of evidence against them. Just as he had accused Job, so he accused the first of those whom Jesus brought to heaven. How did the overcome him? By the blood of the Lamb-

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (Ephesians 2:13 NKJV)

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:19-22 NKJV)

elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. (1 Peter 1:2 NKJV)

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7 NKJV)

There are Christians who are offended by talk of the shedding of Christ's blood and think the hymn "Are You Washed In The Blood?" is barbaric. The Bible says plainly "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."

"they overcame him...by the word of their testimony..." If you don't have a testimony, you aren't a Christian. When the Session examines a person for church membership they don't ask how much money the person has or what their standing is in the community, but the Session is required to determine if they have "a credible testimony of faith in Jesus Christ."

"...and they did not love their lives to the death." Jesus said,

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it." (Matthew 16:24-25 NKJV)

3.) "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time." (Revelation 12:12 NKJV)

Satan told Jesus that all the kingdoms of the earth and their glory belong to him and he tried to trade them for Jesus' worship of him:

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." (Luke 4:5-7 NKJV)

Since all the kingdoms of the world and their authority belong to Satan in this present time, Christians are living in hostile territory. This is more obvious in countries like Iran and Ethiopia and Malaysia where Christians are openly persecuted for their faith. Satan has authority in other countries. He works more subtly but his wrath against Christians is just as great. Every nonbeliever is his servant to do his dirty work.

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, (Ephesians 2:1-2 NKJV)

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. (1 Peter 5:8-9 NKJV)

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7 NKJV)

Jesus told His disciples to be prepared for persecution in this world:

"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33 NKJV)

When we leave this life, we go to a place where Satan cannot come. He has been cast out of heaven. In this present time he walks about on the earth like a proud lion, roaring boastfully. When Jesus comes back to reign upon the earth, He will cast Satan and his demons into the burning, fiery pit of Hell! The Christians on earth will rejoice as the saints in heaven now rejoice.

