**Book of Revelation Sermon VI**

**They Overcame By the Blood of the Lamb**

Theme of Revelation: Peel back the layers of history and even the terrible persecutions and what do we find? **The lamb is on the throne and God is in control.**

Structure of Rev 6-20:

Seven seals Ch 6-7

Seven trumpets Ch 8-9

Seven symbolic creatures Ch 10-15

Seven bowls Ch 16-17

All God’s enemies destroyed. Ch 18-20

**Revelation 6: Opening of the 7 seals.**

Rev 6:1 The sound of hoof-beats. The action begins. Get the picture.

6:2 First seal opened. A warrior on a white horse with a golden crown and a bow = Parthian warrior/king who will defeat Rome.

6:3-4 Next: A red horse. This horse represents war which will come to Rome.

6:5-6 The third seal. A black horse. Famine.

6:7-8 The fourth seal. A pale (yellow-green) horse. Death Message: Judgment is coming on Rome

6:9-11 The fifth seal. Reveals the souls of those killed because of the word of God and their testimony. v. 10 How long…. Before God judges.

6:12-17 The sixth seal. Earthquake, sun turns black, moon turns red, stars fall from the sky, Judgment is coming. God’s enemies are hiding in the rocks.

Rev 6:17 Rhetorical Question: Who can stand under this terrible tribulation?

**Rev Chapter 7**

Rev 6 and the 7 seals are scary. But….

God’s people, 144,000 are sealed (sealed = protected from the coming wrath.)

The seal is the Holy Spirit Ephesians 1:13-14.

A: They are the “Great multitude that no one could count.”—all the redeemed,

v. 9 White robes–purity palm branches A symbol of joy

A third worship service breaks out.

What are we loudly proclaiming? Salvation belongs to our God and to the lamb.

God spreads his tabernacle over us. We are in his tent. He will dwell with us.

Rev 8-9 The seven trumpets. More judgment on Rome. 1/3 (rather than ¼) destroyed. The imagery of these judgments directly from the 10 plagues in Egypt.

Crazy locust-soldiers

Unfortunately (Rev 9:20-21) the people still did not repent.

**Revelation 11** Rome is persecuting the church and judgement is coming on God’s enemies.

Rev 11:1-6

v. 1 God measures the Temple. God will protect his people (who are the temple, by the way. 1 Cor 3:16-17, Eph 2:21) Measured = protected. Zech 2:1-5 very similar. “I myself will be a wall of fire around [Jerusalem], declares the Lord.

So, hard times are coming on the church, but God will protect the church.

v. 2 But the outer court—the court of the Gentiles (Herod’s temple) will not be measured (ie the Gentiles will persecute the church—will trample on her v. 2--but God will protect the heart of the church, which will be protected from the coming wrath).

There will be casualties in the church. This has been the case with Covid.

v. 2-3 The outer courts will be trampled for 42 months (3-1/2 years, 1260 days). There will be a limited period of judgment (as described in the rest of Revelation) but the Church will be protected from that judgment and will not be destroyed.

42 months = 1260 days = time, times and half a time

1. The period the church will be persecuted Rev 11:2

2. The period during which the two witnesses testify Rev 11:3

3. The period over which the Woman is nourished in the wilderness Rev 12:6,14

4. The period of the Beast’s authority Rev 13:5

5. The period the little horn persecutes the saints Daniel 7:25

6. The period of the abomination of desolation by Antiochus Ephiphanes Dan 12:11 (1290 days for some reason)

11:3-6 The two witnesses. These represent the Christian witness which will still shine during the time of great trial. (“The witnesses represent the militant spirit of true Christians and their testimony” Summers) Two Olive trees = the priestly and the kingly power (Zech 4:12-14 These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth ie Zerubbabel (civil, royal) and Joshua (priestly) Two lampstands = Church. By the power of the Holy Spirit (Zech 4:4-6), disciples—priests of the living God—will testify about God in troubled times.

Why two witnesses? To represent their power.

v. 5-6 And they (we!) are powerful!! Fire from mouth (not bad breath), shut up heavens (like Elijah James 5 3-1/2 yrs), Turn water to blood (Moses). We have a powerful testimony!!!

11:7-12 The Roman persecutor (the beast… the first of the seven mystical creatures) will attack the witnesses—the Church.

Some will even die (their bodies will lie in the street of the Great City = Babylon = Sodom = Egypt = Rome—a city ruled by Satan Rev 13:7).

v. 9 The world will gloat over the persecuted church. This tiny little Bakersfield Church of Christ. What can they do? Revive campus ministry in the middle of Covid? Psssst!

v. 11 But God will raise them up (both *temporally*, as the Church will survive the persecution and grow even more and *spiritually*, as the martyrs will be raised from the dead). The intense persecution will only last 3-1/2 DAYS (not years).

The difficult times of Covid will be temporary. The defeat of the church will be temporary.

Q: Do you feel like you “torment” non-Christians some times? (11:10).

v. 11 They will come back (breath will enter them, Cross-reference Ezekiel 37. The Valley of Dry Bones.

Rev 11:15-19 The seventh trumpet. Another worship—a fourth one—breaks out in heaven. (4:8-11, 5:9-14, 7:10-17 and 11:15-18).

This is the end of Act 1 Act 2 is about to start.

**Revelation Part II Ch 12-22**

Rev 1-11 What is going on up front—on the earth.

Rev 12-22 What is going on behind the scenes. The heavenly battle which underlies the outward battle.

Rev 11:19 Then God’s temple in heaven was opened. Rev 12:1 A great sign appeared in heaven.

**Revelation 12 The Woman and the Beast.**

Rev 12:1-6

Rev 12:1 A great and wondrous sign ***in heaven***: The woman is Israel, who is about to give birth to a son (Jesus). This part is a flashback.

The woman in Rev 12:

She has twelve stars, so she represents God’s people.

She is Israel

She is Mary

She is the Church

She is God’s kingdom in any of its aspects.

12:3 Another great and wondrous sign: an enormous red dragon. Satan

7 heads (great wisdom)

10 horns (very powerful)

7 crowns (great authority (on the earth at least))

A seven-headed beast [not dragon] will, in another context (Rev 17, Rev 13), be Rome.

12:4 apocalyptic imagery. Satan tries to prevent the birth.

…or kill the baby when he is born (Herod tries to kill Jesus, but fails)

1/3 of stars cast down.

12:5 The woman gives birth to a Son.

But Jesus (who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter) is born, despite his efforts. God takes him to his side (Jesus ascends) where Satan cannot get him.

12:6 The imagery changes. After Jesus’ ministry the true Israel is the church, so now the woman who goes out into the desert is the church. Either way, whether Israel or the church, the true Israel is the Kingdom.

Goes out into the desert. Israel/The church is being persecuted, but protected by God for an unspecified limited time of persecution. Imagery being taken from Elijah and the 3-1/2 year drought during which he was taken care of (1 Kings 17:2-6, James 5:17)

Rev 12:7-12 The scene shifts to heaven. War in heaven.

v. 7-9 Try to imagine what this “war” is like.

v. 9 Satan is defeated and cast down. What, exactly, does this mean? Is he now less powerful? Probably not.

Satan is a 3-time loser. He lost his battle to kill the child. He pursued the “child” to heaven and was soundly defeated. He then went after the children of the woman (the Church) and was defeated in that as well.

Implication for the church: You will undergo some vicious persecutions for a time! But the final result is assured.

Satan the deceiver (12:9) and Satan the accuser (12:10)

Which means is Satan most likely to use on you? Are you the accused or the deceived type?

How do we defeat the Dragon: his lies and accusations? 12:11

1. By the blood of Jesus

2. By our testimony (remember the two witnesses in Rev 11). Sharing our faith is essential to overcoming the lies and the accusations.

3. By our willingness to sacrifice our lives rather than do the bidding of the dragon. Can you say this to God? They “loved not their lives” What about you? Galatians 2:20

12:12 Bad news for us. Satan is ticked of and he is coming after us!

Rev 12:13-17

12:14-15 The woman taken care of for a time, times and half a time.

12:15 Satan thinks he can use water to keep God’s people in his possession. He fails again, like he did with the Red Sea. Like Israel and Egypt. The earth swallow up the water and God’s people go free.

12:16-17 Satan goes after the Christians “her offspring.” Who are her offspring?
“Those who obey God’s commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus (in the face of the upcoming persecution)”

Satan is thrice defeated! This is the message of Revelation. But…. Tribulation still awaits.

Summary:

The life of God’s people is not one long series of triumphs. Life in the Kingdom of God is a battle.

But God will protect his people (measure the temple courts)

And we have a powerful testimony (the two witnesses)

There is a spiritual battle going on, because Satan has been defeated in heaven.

But we will overcome by the blood of Jesus and by the word of our testimony.

Conclusion: Do not love your lives so much as to shrink from death.

We will triumph of the Devil.