

The Lamb shall overcome (Quality: Good, incomplete)

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[0 : 00] As the Lord should be pleased to help me, I will ask your attention to the subject in the book of the Revelation, chapter 17, and the 14th verse.

The book of the Revelation, chapter 17, verse 14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful.

It may seem, in the first thought about it, that there is somewhat of a disconnection between the passage we read in the prophecy of Habakkuk and the text which comes so much later in the word of God.

And perhaps I shall need to try to open the thoughts of my own heart and the fears of my own mind which have brought these two passages of the word of God together.

And when we come to the text, we shall find too that we have several viewpoints of it to consider.

[1 : 40] We shall need to look just a little at the wonder that we have a divine revelation which came in so marked a way, so much so that it is, although not unique in the word of God, it is something which is unique in so far that the command was given that it was to be written.

That we were to have the privilege to know something of the things that have taken place in heaven itself, and of the decrees of God, and of the revelations that were not in the sense of prophecy by one upon the earth, but were revealed, as it were, directly from heaven itself into the heart of John with the command, write these things in a book.

And then, we shall need to look too at the implication of the three things that are put before us.

The three things are these. First, there shall be war made with the Lamb. The second is this, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is King of kings and Lord of lords.

And then, thirdly, something which seems to us to be worthy of our wonder and our consideration.

[3 : 30] For those that are with him, and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful.

Three things. Three viewpoints. Many times lately, especially in our national life, I have been very concerned and very burdened.

I've had to look upon those things taking place, which seem to me to be so much the evidence of Antichrist in the nation. And, no doubt, you have felt the same.

You have looked upon them. They have been a burden to your heart. And, there has been some wonder as to the outcome, some fear, perhaps, as to that which Habakkuk feared, the judgment of God against us as a nation.

Some thoughts, perhaps, too, that have spread into the world at large, and we have seen in some places that there is, without any doubt, a war against the Lamb.

[4 : 43] In some of those countries in the Middle East, largely hushed up, so much persecution of the people that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then, those things which take place among the nations, where we see such a departure from even the decrees of God, whether or not a profession of his name has been made.

Things which in past times were not, although they were often, were not so blatantly and brazenly overturned.

And, as we look, and sometimes it seems to us that things go from bad to worse, that we begin to fear, lest the forces of evil shall overcome the things which are of God.

Yes, and perhaps some of us are, in a sense, more than a little relieved that because of nature and because of the passage of years that we know that for several of us, the time that is left upon the face of the earth cannot be very long.

[6 : 06] But, we have too those concerns which appertain to those that are ours, we think, the children, the grandchildren who have to live in the seemingly increasingly wicked age in which we live.

It is something that, no doubt, has been a burden to your hearts as it has been a burden to mine. And, it has been the reason for many cries and sorrows and groans, many fears, many concerns.

And yet, there is sometimes a question that comes into my heart. Should there be? Should there be these fears? Should there be these concerns?

Should there be these questionings? Should there be these things? And then, again, I find that it is something which is evidenced in the word of God.

The Lord's people have been subject to them from the beginning. I do not doubt that Noah was subject to them. And, especially as he, too, was made to understand, as Habakkuk in a national sense was made to understand the judgment of God.

[7 : 31] Noah, to see it against the known world at that time, indeed, against the whole of the globe. But, so far as the population was concerned, for the most part, it was centered around the Middle East.

And, for Noah, no doubt, there was a very great concern in his heart, although the way of deliverance was made known to him.

And, we could follow this through the word of God. We follow it in the Psalms. Oh, how often do you read the Psalms and do you feel that the psalmist was the subject of a fear, of a concern, of a burden, of circumstance, for the most part.

Yes, sometimes brought into the spiritual sense, but, many times we see it to be, of a temporal nature, and, to lay the matter before the Lord.

And, to plead, even as Habakkuk pleaded, Oh Lord, how long shall I cry and thou wilt not hear? And then, to be brought.

[8 : 41] One reason why I love the Psalms, they are so wonderfully experimental and opens his soul. And, sometimes we are able to see, he first approaches unto God and he makes his complaint and he goes on his way with praise.

He feels that having laid his burden before the Lord, he has, in some measure, found a relief from it, at least a share, a shared burden, and, then, he can go on his way, resting in the purposes of God and in the grace of the God to whom he has approached.

And, I believe that Habakkuk came into just such a place as this. And, this is what made me feel the need to come into such a part as this.

for Habakkuk looked upon the things which were against God. He saw them in his nation and he, too, saw the hand of God against his nation.

And, we might have to think of whether some things have come into the lives of the Lord's people as chastening. It is something that we have to consider.

- [10 : 05] We have to see it as a possibility. And, we have to see the evidence and example of it many times in the word of God. But, we do find that when these thoughts had been in the mind of Habakkuk, he came to this, I will stand upon my watch, I will take watch, I will look, I will wait, there shall be in my heart a, I will set me on the tower that is the watch tower, and will watch to see what he will say to me.

And, the Lord said, write the vision, make it plain upon tables that is tablets, something that could be easily read, that he may run that readeth it, for the vision is yet for an appointed time.

The vision is yet for an appointed time. Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. The just shall live by his faith.

there perhaps is the background of the reason for the subject. And now let us look at the background of the text. The setting of the subject, as perhaps my father would have said.

These shall make war with the Lamb. Now we have some of those things preceding it, which are to be seen as prophetic utterances.

- [11 : 45] We are not permitted to see them in their particular manner. We cannot say it is this and that and the other as we look upon the face of the earth, or even as we look upon history.

We may see some of the trends, and yet it is something which is continuous in the purposes of God, from the beginning to the end of time, that there has been, and that there will be, this propensity of the evil hearts of man to make war against the Lamb.

Oh, when we look at it so often, we see it, yes, we see it in the world, we see it, we fear, often, in our nation.

We have to come a little closer, we see it, in the church. I use the word in the wide sense of it, especially in the national church, where it seems that no longer the word of God is the matter that is preeminent, but the word of men.

And what is this? It is nothing less than war against the Lamb. And then, we have to come a little closer still. We see it, yes, in our own hearts.

- [13 : 22] We are conscious of it within us. How much need we have of the grace of God, and of the mercy of God, that our own hearts are kept subject to the will of God, and effectually subject to the Lamb of God, to the King of Kings.

Now, don't you know, as I know what it is to have a heart which is by nature rebellious, a heart which, left to itself, is an awful thought, but the word of God gives it to me, the natural heart is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, and neither indeed can be.

Oh, then, do we not see that there is so much truth in this, and yet we have a hope that we are able to see too, that if we follow on in the text, as we will in the moment, we can see that the land shall overcome, shall overcome.

But then, when this was written, it was that we should have one thing in our hearts, that we should look upon all the evidences without, and within, and we should see all of them to be subject, in their extent, and in their length, to the will of God.

The will of God in and through Jesus Christ. Christ. Let's look at the illustrations I have used in the opposite sense.

- [15 : 23] Begin with your own heart, and my own heart, acknowledging its natural propensities, or how good it is to look upon the time when the grace of God, in Christ Jesus, brought our hearts, our souls, into subjection to him.

And we came into such a place as this, the lamb shall overcome them. Well, my friends, do you know something about it?

I'm sure you do, many of you. When you felt and knew something of the infinite grace and love of your Savior, who brought your heart into subjection to him, I tried to preach once from that lovely text to bring every thought into captivity of his will.

Perhaps not quite properly quoted, but the sense is right. And I defined how far short I came from it, of it.

It was something that I had to say, it is high, I cannot attain to it. And yet, I have a hope there are those times when by the grace of God and by the work of the Spirit within me, that at least I understand the desire and sometimes in a little measure the power of God to bring every thought into captivity unto him.

[17 : 06] God do you not see as I have to see how utterly dependent we are in this for the power which comes in and through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God and we may perhaps build a little upon it and just look at it for a moment and then we will approach the subject from a little different manner.

But do we not see that even although we have to look upon so much in the national church and in the nation and in the denominations which are so contrary to the word of God yet we may believe that according to his will and in his own time that the power of God in and through Jesus Christ will overcome so that all who are the subjects of his grace will be brought into the true knowledge of the truth.

I had a little insight of this some years ago. I had the reason to enter into a house where there was a man not much older than myself two or three years older than myself and this was some years ago who was dying and he was a Catholic and I felt it to be very much of a burden to talk to him because I knew that the Catholics they rest not upon the things of the word of God but on the things of the church but I felt that the conversation would go that way the man was ill and I was only there to do some work in his house something to make it a little easier for those that were caring for him and as I went about the work and I was on very friendly terms with the man we began to talk and he said it's he was a very well educated man a marine officer he said something about it was very difficult to look upon an enemy that you had no hope of defeating and so he gave me a start and we talked about the inevitability of death but not only in him but in each one of us and I said that then of course if there is in our spirits the preparation then we do not need to fear death and he was quiet for a minute he said the more the days go by the more thankful

I am for the blood of the land oh I said to him I am glad to hear you say that he said all the church is meant to do is to bring us to the blood of the land and I thought I believe that yes the grace of God had overcome the system that there had been the victory of the land even in the midst of a system a religious system you cannot call it a faith which would have wanted to put the faith or the trust in other things and yet in the heart of this man in the realization of the necessity there had been given to him the direction of that in which he could trust and I believe he did trust and our conversation carried on for a few minutes in this line and we rejoiced together that the

[21 : 15] Lord Jesus shed his blood and I believe we looked upon something like this and the lamb shall overcome yes even the things which seem to our hearts to be so wrong within and so wrong as we look into the denominations or the so called faiths yet the lamb is able to overcome and I felt glad that we could look at such a word and say he is able to do abundantly above all that we can ask or think and yet do not think for a moment it excuses the errors or makes them to be of no consequence ones no but we see that in and of himself the lamb is able to subdue he is able to triumph able to overcome but no

I want to look at it just a little differently the thought of the preeminence of the lamb is something which is given to us again and again in many parts of the word of God I could not begin to put all of them before you but I do need to put just a few you must know the way in which we are made to feel by the word of God of the all powerful nature which is of the purposes of God in the Lord Jesus Christ take his own word first just think of it in a very simple sense all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth now whenever the Lord Jesus spoke

I'll say with reverence do not think for a moment I am evaluating his words but every word was carefully weighed because it was a word that came from heaven itself it was a word that had been eternal in the heart of the father and of the son and of the holy spirit and the eternity that the Lord Jesus had come from the eternal son of God and every word was not only carefully weighed but it came with particular weight and when we see such a declaration that comes with the authority of God we have to take it as such all power is given unto me the son of God to be that one in whom all the power of God is invested the power of

God to fulfill all things according to his own will who does not have to seek the guidance of any other but in infinite wisdom and in infinite power and through that means by which it is pleasing unto God that we should know his power his only begotten and eternally beloved son we are able to see that power in exercise it is not something that we can lightly look upon yet we know if we are taught anything by the spirit of God that one of those revelations of the spirit of God to our souls concerning Jesus Christ will be his power he is able and oh what a blessing is the thought what a blessing is the thought that although there is so much in our hearts and in the world again

I do not need to reiterate but already I have said yet the lamb has power to overcome and the word says in due time he shall overcome we shall have to think about the overcoming in a while but just for a moment look upon the power and then as Paul was writing those lovely words regarding the resurrection of the dead in the last chapter the next to the last chapter of the first epistle to the corinthians he said then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the father when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet and we find too that there is something here which as yet although complete in the purposes of

[26 : 59] God was not complete in the outworking of those purposes till he hath put all his enemies under his feet and Paul brings this out again when he writes to the Hebrews and as he wrote to them he quoted to them that psalm one of the early psalms in which there is the evidence of the preeminence of man and it would seemingly be in the psalm that it is man because it follows in that sense what is man that they were mindful of him and the son of man that they visit him and then Paul in the Hebrews applies it to the Lord Jesus and he says thou has put all things in subjection under his feet for in that he put all in subjection under him he left nothing that is not put under him but now we see not yet all things put under him but we see

Jesus crowned with glory and honour that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man and we see just another little illustration and again Paul in the wisdom that was given to him by the spirit seeing the underlying meaning that was given to the psalmist something like a thousand years before so that although we can never see ordinary men having all the creation of God subject to them not since the Adam fall yet we can see that all things shall be subject to one who assumed and became part of our humanity and only one it is only unto him that all things shall be in subjection but oh what a blessed thought it is not only only unto him but unto him all things shall be in subjection does the thought ever come to you that every knee shall bow before the

Lord Jesus Christ of things in heaven and things all wherever they can be found every one oh I hope that because in the mercy of God we have been brought to bow before him in spirit that when we bow before him in that awful day of judgment it will be in a place of thankfulness and of worship because of that infinite blessing that he has given to us the favour of God in and through himself the mercy of God you'll say yes but we're departing a bit from the subject but are we to be brought into that subjection is to be brought to be the vessels of mercy the vessels of grace those who know and feel of the power of the grace of

God I do not need to remind you you know something of the points which we call the five points of Calvinism we know that lovely phrase irresistible grace and it is by irresistible grace that many not all many of the conquests of the land are brought to pass but let's come a little further the land shall overcome them we have to stop there just a moment shall overcome them and there is a solemn thought here there shall be those who are overcome by the grace of God or are we among them are we among those that have been overcome by that grace the first time that I ever had to speak a few words as a deacon not as a minister in our chapel

I was conducting a prayer meeting and it seemed to me that it was necessary to make some little enlargement upon the reading that was before me and just a verse of a hymn came and all I did was to turn aside for a moment and quote the verse of the hymn and you know that normally I'm not very good at quoting them but this one came into my mind into my spirit and I quoted it and it has two lines in it that came like this the wicked tremble saints rejoice one fears the other loves his voice and as I made the quotation I felt my own heart responding to it and yes it was at a time of blessing it was at a time when the Lord had been gracious to me and I felt my heart warmed with love and I felt an infinite thankfulness that we were given the privilege by the word and by the spirit of hearing the voice of the

[33 : 26] Son of God and hearing it to be able to realize the response of our own hearts to it and now I could look into my heart and I could remember what it was to tremble at the word to fear the word and to be almost terrified of the word and then I could at that moment and I have a hope I can now from time to time enter into the joy of the voice in it because it is the word of grace and the word of mercy and the overcoming of the Lamb has been by the infinite grace of his word unto my soul overcome and then we have to look at the other outcome to be overcome by judgment there's some awful things written about all nations that forget

God it is not popular in many places nowadays to preach what is called hellfire but I do find that the Lord Jesus preached it and I do find that it is it occupies quite a bit of the New Testament and some of the revelation and as we think of what it is for the awful and yet necessary victory of judgment when he shall put all enemies under his feet oh my friends is it not something that yes we find our hearts moved in several ways about it and the way should be this oh that many more might yet be brought by the grace of God into the knowledge of that grace that they might be delivered from the awful prospect of an eternal separation from God for this is indeed the essence of hell a place of no hope of no expectation of no joy of separation eternally from all that is good and oh my friends to think of the awfulness of it shouldn't it stimulate our souls into a desire that more and more might know of the grace of

God and oh may this be fulfilled and the lamb shall overcome them by his grace and by the work of his spirit so that there shall be preeminence in the worship of the lamb because of that great number not known on earth but of whom the revelation speaks and it speaks of them in those numbers which are infinite ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands we're not meant to mathematically compute that lot because it is impossible but that great number that God in infinite mercy has chosen and has chosen to his eternal glory and to their eternal good yes

I think that every time that we come into such a meditation as this our hearts should reach out yes we have our own needs but should reach out for the needs of others and I believe that the last part of the text brings us into that for he is lord of lords and king of kings we cannot stop there it is one of those beautiful titles of the son of God and in the revelation it is given to us several times we perhaps see it to be something that is a little out of our reach we are neither lords nor kings but oh we believe too that he is a king with those subjects that reach down to our status wherever we might be however humble we may be the subject of this king of kings and lord of lords and then the word continues and they that are with him and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful we never need to have any misunderstanding in our minds that to fulfill the purposes of

God God needs no help from man but in the purposes of God he has decreed that he will use his people in the fulfillment of his own purposes God he has to have to have to have the need to use his disciples yet when he multiplied the food he gave it to the disciples that they should give it to the people he that had the power to multiply it had the power to transport it and it could have been brought to pass in front of the people had it been in accordance with the purposes of the Lord Jesus and the purposes of God through him but no it pleased

[40 : 04] God that he would use his people in the fulfillment of his will and in the illustration before us we have the thought of war the thought of that which is to be in the army of the lamb and what thought it is that yes perhaps we might say but this is something mystic this is something which has some relationship to the things of heaven where somewhere else we read that they that were with him were those that had been kept and they continually followed the lamb yes I believe that is so but I believe too we have to see that this war which is against the lamb has been for all time and will be for all time I think already I have said so but just follow it again just think of how many in the word of

God we might see as examples of those who were warriors of the lamb oh yes they might have preceded the coming of the Lord Jesus but they never preceded his spiritual sacrifice to them which was before that the world was for them which was before the world was when he was slain as from before the foundation of the world the purposes of God knew of that sacrifice and it was in and through that sacrifice that all the Old Testament saints went to heaven yet we can look upon them we can see those who were eminent warriors of the lamb oh do you sometimes look at Daniel could you look at Elijah at Moses even at Abraham many ways the warriors of the lamb were you can look at some of them that would probably have never lifted a sword in their lives yet they were warriors of the lamb think of

Jeremiah oh what a warrior he was and sometimes to him like to Habakkuk how hopeless the battle seemed and yet we do not find that he gave up no he was upheld I have loved thee with an everlasting love was first directly to Jeremiah and then through him it was the hope of so many afterwards and look through the whole of the Old Testament and you will see many of them you could think of Isaiah and yet you will find in history if not in the word of God that he came to a martyr's death and oh so many more come into the New Testament and we find the Lord Jesus using the apostles using those that followed them as we think of

Stephen and Philip the deacon and we look at them we see them all in their place in their rank all of them subject to the orders that came into their hearts by the spirit of God the spirit we find caught away Stephen caught away Philip and he was found in Azotus after he had finished the work to which he was sent to do with the eunuch yes we look in many places and what do we see the Lord in his wisdom and grace uses his people for the fulfillment of his will and then we have to see that yes how many not named were those who were used of God in the purposes of his grace and how many in the ages since and

I think as I remember in my childhood some of the ancient ministers and do you not find in your own hearts that when you were very young sometimes the men seemed to be very grave and yet almost holy and they seemed to be able to speak with such authority that as we listened to them it seemed that they were almost direct messengers of God and we felt in a sense they were with him as the word shows to us those that are with him but how essential it is that if we are in this army that the Lord is pleased to use that we should be in that place with him I do not need to remind you of the parable of the Lord Jesus when he showed of the bringing forth the fruit of the vine different illustration same thing only when it was the branch in the vine if it was not in the vine it could bring forth no fruit it could win no victories for the captain they that were with him oh when we think of it are we able sometimes to feel that nearness to him

[45 : 55] I know that often we have to plead with the hymn writer's language oh for a closer walk and it is right that we should and yet on those times of the Lord's appearing those times of refreshment oh how blessed is the thought that in infinite mercy he has brought us into that place where we receive as it were our strength our guidance our hope our help all from him that he becomes more than our captain many of you perhaps have had something to do with the logistics of war and you know that very few are in the front line but all those that are behind are equally essential I was an airman and I know that there had to be thirty men on the ground of every one in the air and all were essential and yes the

Lord's work is like that just look at a little illustration I need to be brief the time has nearly run out but just think of a revival that took place in the Isle of Lewis some few years ago know but it was a time of great blessing and it could be seen in its beginning with a few godly women that met for prayer because they had such a burden of the need of the spirit of God to appear for them in that little island yes it may be big comparatively but in population it was small and the Lord was pleased to hear the prayers now perhaps not one of us would have looked upon those women in nature and have even likened them to warriors but what warriors they were they were prayer warriors indicted indicted that we shall be faithful oh now just look at those three words called now

I do not read Greek but a little book I have that separates the words one from the other so this is effectual calling and we have to see it they were called of God now I believe that every one of us that has been brought into the blessing of being enabled to not only make an outward profession but witness a profession we attend a place of worship we have a hope in God only because we are called to that hope to that profession to that witness it yes one line of a hymn election known by calling to have heard the voice of God to put it very simply to have received by faith the word of

God it is to be called and a lovely expression which used to be used so much more than it is nowadays perhaps it was experienced more in those days called by grace yes brought into the knowledge of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and made to be a partaker of it and the evidence is this chosen chosen in eternity certainly as for you