

CHAPTER SIX

THE OVERCOMERS AND GOD'S DISPENSATIONAL MOVES

Scripture Reading: Rev. 12

According to the Bible, the seed of the woman will bruise the head of the enemy. The seed of the woman in Genesis 3 primarily refers to the Lord Jesus, but the overcomers also have a part in this seed. The seed of the woman includes the church, especially the overcomers. Even though the Lord bruised Satan's head, he is still at work. The fulfillment of the seed of the woman bruising Satan can be seen in the man-child in Revelation 12. The only Overcomer includes all the overcomers (vv. 10-11).

GOD DISPENSATIONAL MOVE—"NOW" (VERSE 10)

When God changes His attitude towards a certain matter, He makes a dispensational move. Every dispensational move brings in God's new way. His most important dispensational move is in Revelation 12. He wants to end this age and bring in the age of the kingdom. His purpose is not general and ordinary. How can He bring this age to a close and bring in another? He must have His dispensational instrument. This is what God wants to do today.

THE NEED OF THE MAN-CHILD

The rapture of the man-child brings an end to the church age and introduces the kingdom age. The man-child enables God to move. If there is not a man-child and a rapture, God cannot make a dispensational move. We should never forget that God can be limited. He waits for man in all of His moves. God's binding in heaven is based on our binding on earth; God's loosing in heaven is based on our loosing on earth. Everything depends on the church.

It is God's desire that created beings would deal with fallen created beings. According to His purpose, the whole church should deal with Satan; however, the church has failed. Therefore, there is the need for the overcomers to rise up. God's purpose is fulfilled in the overcomers because they work with Him. We can see the principle of the overcomers throughout the Word of God. God always lays hold of a group of overcomers to make a dispensational move.

DISPENSATIONAL MOVES IN THE WORD OF GOD

After creation, life went on in a very ordinary way. Then God began with Abraham. God laid hold of Abraham and Sarah. He wanted a nation, but He began with just two people. God worked on these two, choosing them from out of all the other nations to produce a kingdom of priests. Abraham left his kindred and country. Abraham was greater than Abel, Enoch, and Noah because of God's choosing. It was as if these earlier men were quite ordinary. They had no dispensational value to God, but Abraham did. Then God said that his seed would go into Egypt and remain there for four hundred years. This was God's next move.

God laid hold of Joseph, not his brothers, and took him to Egypt. Joseph ruled in Egypt. God's actions were meant for good. Joseph was an overcomer in Egypt. He showed forth his power in the kingdom and showed forth his knowledge of God through dreams. God had made a dispensational move. He put an overcomer in Egypt; He did not put someone who could be defeated there. This is a principle of God's working.

After four hundred years, it was time for them to come out. At that point God laid hold of Moses. Without the events in the first few chapters of Exodus, there never would have been an exodus from Egypt. Moses came out of the water. He had an exodus from water. Then he had an exodus from Egypt. Moses was triumphant over death. God chose him to deal with Israel. Moses dwelt in the palace, which was the Egypt of Egypt. Not only did his spirit leave Egypt, but his body left Egypt as well; therefore, God chose him. Those who can only say, "Go," but not "Come," will have no effect. All of God's dispensational moves are based on one man. This is a principle of the overcomers.

When the nation of Israel wanted a king, the people chose Saul. He was a head taller than all the other men, but all of his ability was in his head. However, God chose His own king—David. Even when he was in the wilderness caring for the sheep, he was a king. He did not run when a lion came but went against it in the name of the Lord. Fear is not a kingly attitude, but when Goliath came, Saul was fearful. In contrast, David trusted in the Lord and went to fight against Goliath. Whoever is truly a king can be a king in any place. Later, David became a servant of Saul. When Saul became his enemy, David even had an opportunity to kill him, but he did not. Whoever cannot control himself is not worthy to be a king. There was no king of Israel greater than David. Only he was called King David, because he had dispensational value to God.

When Israel was taken into captivity for seventy years, God still had a dispensational move for Israel because of Nehemiah; he was a true overcomer. Even as he was serving a foreign king, he was preparing to go back to Jerusalem. He was not touched by Shushan and the affairs of the palace. Because God gained Nehemiah, He could make a dispensational move.

At the beginning of the New Testament, a group of special people were waiting in Jerusalem for the Lord Jesus. Anna, Simeon, and all those (Luke 2:38) were waiting for redemption in Israel. Their waiting brought in the fullness of the time, the Lord Jesus. God will not do things automatically; He will wait for His children to work with Him.

The Lord has two works on earth: redemption and building the church. The church is built on "this rock" (Matt. 16:18). The apostles were the first to stand on this rock. Even though they were weak in the flesh, their spirits were not weak. Because of this the twelve apostles have a special position—not even Paul is reckoned with them; they were a dispensational instrument. Paul said that he was less than the least of the apostles. The apostles and disciples waited for ten days, praying in Jerusalem. They might have said, "We have a great work to do after these days; we should rest now." Instead, they prayed. There were one hundred and twenty, but where were the others who had followed the Lord? Clearly, not everyone will work with God. These one hundred and twenty were overcomers.

DISPENSATIONAL MOVES IN CHURCH HISTORY

In church history the first special move was the Reformation. God used Luther in this dispensational move. The Brethren were also used. Darby, Groves, and Grant were His instruments. After the Welsh revival, a new move of God began. Both Evan Roberts and Mrs. Penn-Lewis knew about spiritual warfare; they knew how to deal with Satan. The truth of the kingdom began to be known in 1924. When Evan Roberts was seen after an absence of ten years, he said, "I have been praying kingdom prayers." Every time God wants to make a dispensational move, He must obtain His instrument.

Are we at the end of the age? If we are, the kingdom will soon begin. If a dispensational move is near, then God needs an instrument. General work is no longer adequate. The children of God lack a vision; they do not see the seriousness and intensity of the situation. Now is a matter of dispensation. Just being a good servant of the Lord is no longer good enough; this is not of great use to God. Please note that we are not saying that it is of no use. What are we doing to close this dispensation? What are we doing to bring in the next age? This is a special time, so there is the need of special Christians to do a special work.

Today God is waiting for the man-child. Only the rapture can precipitate the events in Revelation 12:10. God has an order, and He works according to that order. His eyes have left the church; they are now on the kingdom. An overcomer works according to the principle of the Body. The principle of the Body annuls sectarianism and individualism.

After the rapture the woman will be persecuted three and a half years. Many other of her children will go through the tribulation, but God will keep them. Being an overcomer is not primarily for escaping the tribulation. We need to see of what value the rapture is to the Lord, not to ourselves.

Of all the dispensational moves, the man-child is the greatest because it removes man's power and the devil's power, and it brings in the kingdom. We live in the most privileged time; we can do the most for God. Light will show us the way, but strength and power will enable us to walk the road. A great price must be paid in order to be used now.