

Outline of the Messages for the Thanksgiving Conference

November 28—December 1, 2013

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE MENDING MINISTRY OF JOHN

Message Six

Eight Aspects of the Church as the Testimony of Jesus

Scripture Reading: Rev. 19:10; 1:1-2, 10-13; 19:7-9, 14-19; 20:4-6; 21:9, 3, 22

- Rev 19:10 And I fell before his feet to worship him. And he said to me, Do not do this. I am your fellow slave and a fellow slave of your brothers who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of the prophecy.
- Rev 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to Him to show to His slaves the things that must quickly take place; and He made it known by signs, sending it by His angel to His slave John,
- Rev 1:2 Who testified the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, even all that he saw.
- Rev 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,
- Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.
- Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,
- Rev 1:13 And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
- Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
- Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.
- Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
- Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
- Rev 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come here; gather yourselves to the great dinner of God,
- Rev 19:18 That you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of generals and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and slave and small and great.
- Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with Him who sits on the horse and with His army.
- Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and of those who had not worshipped the beast nor his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.
- Rev 20:5 The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.
- Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.
- Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
- Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

I. The testimony of Jesus (Rev. 19:10) is the seven golden lampstands—divine in nature, shining in darkness, and identical with one another (1:1-2, 10-13; 2:1):

- Rev 19:10 And I fell before his feet to worship him. And he said to me, Do not do this. I am your fellow slave and a fellow slave of your brothers who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of the prophecy.
- Rev 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to Him to show to His slaves the things that must quickly take place; and He made it known by signs, sending it by His angel to His slave John,
- Rev 1:2 Who testified the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, even all that he saw.
- Rev 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,
- Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.
- Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,
- Rev 1:13 And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.
- Rev 2:1 To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:
- A. The golden lampstand symbolizes the Triune God—the Father as the substance is embodied in the Son, the Son as the embodiment is expressed through the Spirit, the Spirit is fully realized and expressed as the churches, and the churches are the testimony of Jesus—Exo. 25:31-40; Zech. 4:2-10; Rev. 1:10-12.
- Exo 25:31 And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand with its base and its shaft shall be made of beaten work; its cups, its calyxes, and its blossom buds shall be of one piece with it.
- Exo 25:32 And there shall be six branches going out of its sides; three branches of the lampstand out of one of its sides, and three branches of the lampstand out of its other side;
- Exo 25:33 Three cups made like almond blossoms in one branch, a calyx and a blossom bud; and three cups made like almond blossoms in the other branch, a calyx and a blossom bud—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand.
- Exo 25:34 And there shall be on the lampstand four cups made like almond blossoms, its calyxes and its blossom buds;
- Exo 25:35 And a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, and a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, for the six branches going out of the lampstand.
- Exo 25:36 Their calyxes and their branches shall be of one piece with it; all of it one beaten work of pure gold.
- Exo 25:37 And you shall make its lamps, seven; and set up its lamps to give light to the area in front of it.
- Exo 25:38 And its tongs and its firepans shall be of pure gold.
- Exo 25:39 It shall be made of a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils.
- Exo 25:40 And see that you make them according to their pattern, which was shown to you in the mountain.
- Zech 4:2 And he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see that there is a lampstand all of gold, with its bowl on top of it and its seven lamps upon it, with seven pipes for each of the lamps on top of it;
- Zech 4:3 And there are two olive trees beside it, one to the right of the bowl and one to the left.
- Zech 4:4 And I answered and spoke to the angel who spoke with me, saying, What are these, sir?
- Zech 4:5 And the angel who spoke with me answered and said to me, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, sir.
- Zech 4:6 And he answered and spoke to me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of hosts.
- Zech 4:7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain, and he

- will bring forth the topstone with shouts of Grace, grace to it.
- Zech 4:8 Moreover the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,
- Zech 4:9 The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it; and you will know that Jehovah of hosts has sent Me to you.
- Zech 4:10 For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice when they see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel; they are the eyes of Jehovah running to and fro on the whole earth.
- Rev 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,
- Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.
- Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,
- B. In the divine thought the golden lampstand is actually a living and growing tree with calyxes and almond blossoms; thus, the lampstand portrays the Triune God embodied in Christ as a living, golden tree of resurrection—growing, branching, budding, and blossoming in us, with us, by us, and out of us as the fruit of the light, which is good in nature, righteous in procedure, and real in expression, so that God may be expressed as reality in our daily walk—Exo. 25:31, 35; Eph. 5:8-9.
- Exo 25:31 And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand with its base and its shaft shall be made of beaten work; its cups, its calyxes, and its blossom buds shall be of one piece with it.
- Exo 25:35 And a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, and a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, and a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, for the six branches going out of the lampstand.
- Eph 5:8 For you were once darkness but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light
- Eph 5:9 (For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth),
- C. To experience the golden lampstands as the testimony of Jesus, the corporate expression of Jesus (Acts 9:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12), we must be filled with the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7) by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus continually (1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 10:12-13; Lam. 3:55-56) to bear the brands of Jesus (Gal. 6:17) as brothers and fellow partakers in the tribulation, kingdom, and endurance in Jesus (Rev. 1:9-10).
- Acts 9:4 And he fell on the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?
- Acts 9:5 And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute.
- 1 Cor 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.
- Acts 16:7 And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.
- 1 Cor 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking in the Spirit of God says, Jesus is accursed; and no one can say, Jesus is Lord! except in the Holy Spirit.
- Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all and rich to all who call upon Him;
- Rom 10:13 For "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."
- Lam 3:55 I called upon Your name, O Jehovah, / From the lowest pit.
- Lam 3:56 You have heard my voice; do not hide / Your ear at my breathing, at my cry.
- Gal 6:17 Henceforth let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the brands of Jesus.
- Rev 1:9 I John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and endurance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
- Rev 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,

II. The testimony of Jesus is the great multitude serving God in the temple, the whole Body of God's redeemed, who have been raptured to the heavens to enjoy God's care and the Lamb's shepherding with all the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies and in Christ that can be enjoyed today—7:9-17; Eph. 1:3;

Gal. 3:14; Gen. 12:2; cf. Rev. 21:3-4; 22:3-5; Isa. 49:10:

- Rev 7:9 After these things I saw, and behold, there was a great multitude which no one could number, out of every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches in their hands.
- Rev 7:10 And they cry with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb.
- Rev 7:11 And all the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God,
- Rev 7:12 Saying, Amen. The blessing and the glory and the wisdom and the thanks and the honor and the power and the strength be to our God forever and ever. Amen.
- Rev 7:13 And one of the elders answered, saying to me, These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?
- Rev 7:14 And I said to him, My lord, you know. And he said to me, These are those who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
- Rev 7:15 Because of this they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits upon the throne will tabernacle over them.
- Rev 7:16 They will not hunger anymore, neither will they thirst anymore, neither will the sun beat upon them, nor any heat;
- Rev 7:17 For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.
- Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,
- Gal 3:14 In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.
- Gen 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, / And I will bless you / And make your name great; / And you shall be a blessing.
- Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
- Rev 21:4 And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death will be no more, nor will there be sorrow or crying or pain anymore; for the former things have passed away.
- Rev 22:3 And there will no longer be a curse. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him;
- Rev 22:4 And they will see His face, and His name will be on their forehead.
- Rev 22:5 And night will be no more; and they have no need of the light of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for the Lord God will shine upon them; and they will reign forever and ever.
- Isa 49:10 They will not hunger or thirst; / Neither the scorching heat nor the sun will strike them; / For He who has compassion on them will lead them / And will guide them beside the springs of water;

A. The great multitude consists of those who have been purchased by the blood of the Lamb from every nation, tribe, people, and tongue to be the constituents of the church—Rev. 7:9a; 5:9; Rom. 11:25; Acts 15:14, 19; 1 Cor. 6:19-20.

- Rev 7:9a After these things I saw, and behold, there was a great multitude which no one could number, out of every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, ...
- Rev 5:9 And they sing a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain and have purchased for God by Your blood men out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
- Rom 11:25 For I do not want you, brothers, to be ignorant of this mystery (lest you be wise in yourselves), that hardness has come upon Israel in part, until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in;
- Acts 15:14 Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles to take out from them a people for His name.
- Acts 15:19 Therefore I judge that we do not harass those from the Gentiles who are turning to God,
- 1 Cor 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?
- 1 Cor 6:20 For you have been bought with a price. So then glorify God in your body.

B. The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd us and guide us to springs of waters of life—Rev. 7:17a:

Rev 7:17a For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; ...

1. Shepherding includes feeding; under the shepherding of Christ, “I will lack nothing”
Psa. 23:1.

Psa 23:1 Jehovah is my Shepherd; I will lack nothing.

2. We can never improve ourselves, and we need a shepherd to feed us all the time; He feeds the lambs with His experience as the Lamb of God, who is on the throne of God in and for the house of God—vv. 2-6; Rev. 22:1.

Psa 23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; / He leads me beside waters of rest.

Psa 23:3 He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness / For His name's sake.

Psa 23:4 Even though I walk / Through the valley of the shadow of death, / I do not fear evil, / For You are with me; / Your rod and Your staff, / They comfort me.

Psa 23:5 You spread a table before me / In the presence of my adversaries; / You anoint my head with oil; / My cup runs over.

Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me / All the days of my life, / And I will dwell in the house of Jehovah / For the length of my days.

Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

III. The testimony of Jesus is the bright woman, representing the whole Body of God’s redeemed, with her man-child, representing the overcomers as the stronger part of God’s people—12:1-17:

Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;

Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring forth.

Rev 12:3 And another sign was seen in heaven; and behold, there was a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.

Rev 12:4 And his tail drags away the third part of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bring forth, so that when she brings forth he might devour her child.

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 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place there prepared by God so that they might nourish her there a thousand two hundred and sixty days.

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.

Rev 12:12 Therefore be glad, O heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea because the devil has come down to you and has great rage, knowing that he has only a short time.

Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man-child.

Rev 12:14 And to the woman there were given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the face of the serpent.

Rev 12:15 And the serpent cast water as a river out of his mouth after the woman that he might cause

- her to be carried away by its current.
- Rev 12:16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth.
- Rev 12:17 And the dragon became angry with the woman and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus.
- A. The people of God who produce the overcomers (the man-child) are full of light, showing that God's overcoming people are light-bearers, shining through all generations—vv. 1-5; S. S. 6:10; John 8:12; Matt. 5:14; Prov. 4:18; cf. Gen. 1:16-17.
- Rev 12:1 And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
- Rev 12:2 And she was with child, and she cried out, travailing in birth and being in pain to bring forth.
- Rev 12:3 And another sign was seen in heaven; and behold, there was a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems.
- Rev 12:4 And his tail drags away the third part of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bring forth, so that when she brings forth he might devour her child.
- 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.
- S.S. 6:10 Who is this woman who looks forth like the dawn, / As beautiful as the moon, / As clear as the sun, / As terrible as an army with banners?
- John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
- Matt 5:14 You are the light of the world. It is impossible for a city situated upon a mountain to be hidden.
- Prov 4:18 But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, / Which shines brighter and brighter until the full day.
- Gen 1:16 And God made the two great light-bearers, the greater light-bearer to rule the day and the lesser light-bearer to rule the night, and the stars.
- Gen 1:17 And God set them in the expanse of heaven to give light on the earth
- B. The man-child signifies the overcomers who cooperate with Christ to fight against His enemy and usher in God's kingdom—Rev. 12:5-10:
- 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 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place there prepared by God so that they might nourish her there a thousand two hundred and sixty days.
- 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.
1. The way to become the man-child is for us to be strengthened into the inner man, to be empowered to experience the riches of Christ, and to be strong through putting on the armor of God by pray-reading the killing word—Eph. 3:16, 18; 6:10-11, 17-18; Rev. 1:16; 19:13-15.
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
- Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,
- Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,

- Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
- Rev 1:16 And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword; and His face shone as the sun shines in its power.
- Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.
- Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.
- Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
2. “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”—12:11.

IV. The testimony of Jesus is the firstfruits, signifying the overcomers raptured before the great tribulation, and the harvest, signifying the majority of the believers raptured at the end of the great tribulation—14:1-5, 14-16:

- Rev 14:1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.
- Rev 14:2 And I heard a voice out of heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harp-singers playing on their harps.
- Rev 14:3 And they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the hundred and forty-four thousand, who have been purchased from the earth.
- Rev 14:4 These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.
- Rev 14:5 And in their mouth no lie was found; they are without blemish.
- Rev 14:14 And I saw, and behold, there was a white cloud, and on the cloud One like the Son of Man sitting, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand.
- Rev 14:15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, Send forth Your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come because the harvest of the earth is ripe.
- Rev 14:16 And He who sat on the cloud thrust His sickle upon the earth, and the earth was reaped.
- A. At His first coming to the earth, the Lord sowed Himself into His believers; all the believers since that time, who have received Him as the seed of life, have become God’s farm, His crop, on the earth—Matt. 13:3-8, 24; 1 Cor. 3:9:
- Matt 13:3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went out to sow.
- Matt 13:4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the way, and the birds came and devoured them.
- Matt 13:5 And others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much earth, and immediately they sprang up because they had no depth of earth.
- Matt 13:6 But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered.
- Matt 13:7 And others fell on the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them.
- Matt 13:8 But others fell on the good earth and yielded fruit, one a hundredfold, and one sixtyfold, and one thirtyfold.
- Matt 13:24 Another parable He set before them, saying, The kingdom of the heavens has become like a man sowing good seed in his field.
- 1 Cor 3:9 For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s cultivated land, God’s building.
1. The overcomers as the first ripe ones in God’s field will be reaped (raptured) before the great tribulation to be firstfruits to God and to the Lamb—Rev. 14:1-5.
- Rev 14:1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.

- Rev 14:2 And I heard a voice out of heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harp-singers playing on their harps.
- Rev 14:3 And they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the hundred and forty-four thousand, who have been purchased from the earth.
- Rev 14:4 These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.
- Rev 14:5 And in their mouth no lie was found; they are without blemish.
2. The majority of the believers will ripen with the help of the sufferings in the great tribulation and will be reaped at the end of the great tribulation—v. 15.
- Rev 14:15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, Send forth Your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come because the harvest of the earth is ripe.
- B. The rapture is not mainly for our enjoyment but for God's enjoyment; we need to make ourselves ready to be raptured not for our happiness but for the fulfillment of God's purpose—12:5, 7-11; 14:1, 4b; 19:7.
- 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.
- Rev 14:1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.
- Rev 14:4b ... These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- C. The meaning of rapture is to be taken into the Lord's presence; in order to be taken into the Lord's presence, we must be in His presence today—2 Cor. 2:10; 1 John 1:3.
- 2 Cor 2:10 But whom you forgive anything, I also forgive; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ;
- 1 John 1:3 That which we have seen and heard we report also to you that you also may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.
- D. The rapture of the overcomers is for defeating the enemy and satisfying God; the Lord needs the man-child to fight against His enemy, but He needs the firstfruits even more for His satisfaction—Rev. 14:1, 4b; cf. S. S. 8:6, 13-14.
- Rev 14:1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.
- Rev 14:4b ... These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.
- S.S. 8:6 Set me as a seal on your heart, / As a seal on your arm; / For love is as strong as death, / Jealousy is as cruel as Sheol; / Its flashes are the flashes of fire, / A flame of Jehovah.
- S.S. 8:13 O you who dwell in the gardens, / My companions listen for your voice; / Let me hear it.

S.S. 8:14 Make haste, my beloved, / And be like a gazelle or a young hart / Upon the mountains of spices.

V. The testimony of Jesus is the victorious ones standing on the glassy sea, signifying the late overcomers who will pass through the great tribulation and overcome Antichrist and the worshipping of Antichrist—Rev. 15:2-4:

Rev 15:2 And I saw as it were a glassy sea mingled with fire and those who come away victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name standing on the glassy sea, having harps of God.

Rev 15:3 And they sing the song of Moses, the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and wonderful are Your works, Lord God the Almighty! Righteous and true are Your ways, O King of the nations!

Rev 15:4 Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; for all the nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous judgments have been manifested.

A. The late overcomers sing the song of Moses (indicating God's triumphant judgment over the enemy of His people) and the song of the Lamb (indicating Christ's redemption experienced by God's people in the presence of their enemy)—v. 3a; Exo. 15:1-18.

Rev 15:3a And they sing the song of Moses, the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, ...

Exo 15:1 Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to Jehovah and spoke, saying, I will sing to Jehovah, for He has triumphed gloriously; / The horse and its rider He has cast into the sea.

Exo 15:2 Jah is my strength and song, / And He has become my salvation; / This is my God, and I will praise Him; / My father's God, and I will exalt Him.

Exo 15:3 Jehovah is a man of war; / Jehovah is His name.

Exo 15:4 Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has thrown into the sea; / And his choice officers have drowned in the Red Sea.

Exo 15:5 The deep waters cover them; / They went down into the depths like a stone.

Exo 15:6 Your right hand, O Jehovah, is glorious in power; / Your right hand, O Jehovah, dashed the enemy in pieces.

Exo 15:7 And in the greatness of Your excellence / You overthrew those who rose up against You. / You sent forth Your burning wrath; / It consumed them like stubble.

Exo 15:8 And with the blast of Your nostrils the waters were heaped up; / The flowing currents stood up like a heap; / The deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.

Exo 15:9 The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; / My desire will be satisfied upon them; / I will draw my sword; my hand will destroy them.

Exo 15:10 You blew with Your wind; the sea covered them; / They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

Exo 15:11 Who is like You, O Jehovah, among the gods? / Who is like You, splendid in holiness, / Awesome in praises, doing wonders?

Exo 15:12 You stretched out Your right hand; / The earth swallowed them.

Exo 15:13 In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; / You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation.

Exo 15:14 The peoples heard; they trembled; / Pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.

Exo 15:15 Then the chiefs of Edom are dismayed; / The mighty men of Moab-- trembling has seized them; / All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.

Exo 15:16 Terror and dread have fallen upon them; / By the greatness of Your arm they have become as still as stone, / Until Your people passed over, O Jehovah, / Until the people whom You purchased passed over.

Exo 15:17 You will bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, / The place, O Jehovah, which You have made for Your dwelling, / The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established.

Exo 15:18 Jehovah shall reign forever and ever.

B. The late overcomers praise God for His works and His ways, that is, for His acts and His principles; God's ways are righteous in His principles and true in His promises, while His works are great in manifestation and wonderful in nature—Rev. 15:3b-4; Psa. 103:7; cf. 107:10-20.

Rev 15:3b ... saying, Great and wonderful are Your works, Lord God the Almighty! Righteous and true are Your ways, O King of the nations!

- Rev 15:4 Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; for all the nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous judgments have been manifested.
- Psa 103:7 He made His ways known to Moses; / His acts, to the children of Israel.
- Psa 107:10 Some inhabited darkness and the shadow of death, / And were bound in affliction and irons,
- Psa 107:11 Because they rebelled against the words of God / And spurned the counsel of the Most High;
- Psa 107:12 Therefore He brought down their heart with labor; / They stumbled, and there was no one to help them.
- Psa 107:13 Then they cried out to Jehovah in their trouble, / And He saved them from their distresses.
- Psa 107:14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, / And He broke apart their bonds.
- Psa 107:15 Let them give thanks to Jehovah for His lovingkindness / And for His wondrous deeds to the children of men.
- Psa 107:16 For He breaks down the doors of bronze / And cuts down the bars of iron.
- Psa 107:17 Some were fools, because of their way of transgression; / And because of their iniquities, they were afflicted.
- Psa 107:18 Their soul loathed all food, / And they drew near to the gates of death.
- Psa 107:19 Then they cried out to Jehovah in their trouble, / And He saved them out of their distresses.
- Psa 107:20 He sent forth His word and healed them, / And He delivered them from the pits of destruction .

VI. The testimony of Jesus is the bride of Christ—the overcomers who are the cokings of Christ during the millennium—Rev. 19:7-9; 20:4, 6:

- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousneses of the saints.
- Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
- Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and of those who had not worshipped the beast nor his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.
- Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.
- A. The Lord's recovery is for the preparation of the bride of Christ—19:7-9; 21:2.
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousneses of the saints.
- Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- B. Ultimately, we will be conformed to be the wonderful Shulammitte, who, as the duplication of Solomon, is the greatest and ultimate figure of the New Jerusalem as the counterpart, the bride, of Christ—S. S. 6:13; Rev. 21:2, 9-10; 22:17a.
- S.S. 6:13 Return, return, O Shulammitte; / Return, return, that we may gaze at you. / Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte, / As upon the dance of two camps?
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues

- came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! ...
- C. The Shulammitte is likened to the dance of two camps, or two armies (Heb. *mahanaim*), in the sight of God; after Jacob saw the angels of God, the two armies of God, he named the place where he was Mahanaim and divided his wives, children, and possessions into “two armies”—S. S. 6:13; Gen. 32:2:
- S.S. 6:13 Return, return, O Shulammitte; / Return, return, that we may gaze at you. / Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte, / As upon the dance of two camps?
- Gen 32:2 And Jacob said when he saw them, This is God's camp. So he called the name of that place Mahanaim.
1. The spiritual significance of the two armies is the strong testimony that we more than conquer, we “super-overcome,” through Him who loved us, according to the principle of the Body of Christ—Rom. 8:37; 12:5; Deut. 32:30; Eccl. 4:9-12.

Rom 8:37 But in all these things we more than conquer through Him who loved us.

Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Deut 32:30 How shall one chase a thousand, / And two put ten thousand to flight, / Were it not that their Rock sold them, / And Jehovah delivered them up?

Eccl 4:9 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor;

Eccl 4:10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls and does not have another to lift him up!

Eccl 4:11 Again, if two lie together, they keep warm. But how can one be warm alone?

Eccl 4:12 And while a man may prevail against the one, the two will withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.
 2. God does not want those who are strong in themselves; He wants only the feeble ones, the weaker ones, the women and children; those who are counted worthy to be overcomers will be the weaker ones who depend on the Lord—1 Cor. 1:26-28; 2 Cor. 12:9-10; 13:3-5; S. S. 8:6.

1 Cor 1:26 For consider your calling, brothers, that there are not many wise according to flesh, not many powerful, not many wellborn.

1 Cor 1:27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world that He might shame those who are wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world that He might shame the things that are strong,

1 Cor 1:28 And the lowborn things of the world and the despised things God has chosen, things which are not, that He might bring to nought the things which are,

2 Cor 12:9 And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.

2 Cor 12:10 Therefore I am well pleased in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions and distresses, on behalf of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am powerful.

2 Cor 13:3 Since you seek a proof of the Christ who is speaking in me, who is not weak unto you but is powerful in you.

2 Cor 13:4 For indeed He was crucified out of weakness, but He lives by the power of God. For indeed we are weak in Him, but we will live together with Him by the power of God directed toward you.

2 Cor 13:5 Test yourselves whether you are in the faith; prove yourselves. Or do you not realize about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are disapproved?

S.S. 8:6 Set me as a seal on your heart, / As a seal on your arm; / For love is as strong as death, / Jealousy is as cruel as Sheol; / Its flashes are the flashes of fire, / A flame of Jehovah.

VII. The testimony of Jesus is the bridal army, who fights together with Christ, the

embodiment of God, to defeat Antichrist, the embodiment of Satan, with his armies—Rev. 19:14-19; 17:14:

- Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.
- Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
- Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
- Rev 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come here; gather yourselves to the great dinner of God,
- Rev 19:18 That you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of generals and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and slave and small and great.
- Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with Him who sits on the horse and with His army.
- Rev 17:14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and faithful, will also overcome them.

A. In Ephesians 5 and 6 we see the church as the bride and the warrior; in Revelation 19 we also have these two aspects of the church—Eph. 5:25-27; 6:10-20; Rev. 19:7-9, 11-16:

- Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her
- Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,
- Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.
- Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
- Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,
- Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.
- Eph 6:13 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.
- Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness
- Eph 6:15 And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace;
- Eph 6:16 Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.
- Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,
- Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
- Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,
- Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I would speak boldly, as I ought to speak.
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
- Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
- Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.
- Rev 19:12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written which no one knows but Himself.
- Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.

- Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.
- Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
- Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

1. Before Christ descends to earth to deal with Antichrist and the totality of human government, He will have a wedding, uniting His overcomers (who have been fighting the battle against God's enemy for years) to Himself as one entity—vv. 7-9; cf. Dan. 7:25; 6:10; Eph. 6:12.

- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
- Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
- Dan 7:25 And he will speak things against the Most High and wear out the saints of the Most High; and his intention will be to change the times and the law; and they will be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.
- Dan 6:10 Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously.
- Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

2. After His wedding Christ will come with His newly married bride to destroy Antichrist, who with his army will fight against God directly—Rev. 19:11-16.

- Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.
- Rev 19:12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written which no one knows but Himself.
- Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.
- Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.
- Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.
- Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

- B. In Ephesians 5 the word is for the nourishment that leads to the beautifying of the bride for God's expression, and in Ephesians 6 the word is for the killing that enables the church as the corporate warrior to engage in spiritual warfare for God's dominion, thus fulfilling God's original intention—5:26-27; 6:17-18; Gen. 1:26.

- Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,
- Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.
- Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,
- Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
- Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

VIII. Ultimately, the testimony of Jesus is the New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of the tabernacle and temple—the eternal divine-human incorporation, the eternal building, of God and man—Rev. 21:9, 3, 22:

- Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
- Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.
- A. We can live out and work out the New Jerusalem as the divine-human incorporation by taking the Lord as our abode for us to be His abode—John 15:4-5:
- John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.
- John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
1. When we love the Lord Jesus, He manifests Himself to us, and the Father comes with Him to make an abode with us for our enjoyment; this abode is a mutual abode, in which the Triune God abides in us and we abide in Him—14:23.
John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.
 2. We abide in Christ that He may abide in us by dealing with the constant word in the Scriptures that is outside of us and the present word as the Spirit within us; when we abide in the Lord and let His words abide in us, we are one with Him in actuality—5:39-40; 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6; Rev. 2:7; John 8:31; 15:7.
John 5:39 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me.
John 5:40 Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.
John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples;
John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.
- B. The overcoming believers as the constituents of God's building, the New Jerusalem, are signified by jasper and other precious stones—Rev. 21:9-11, 18-21; 1 Cor. 3:12a:
- Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
- Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
- Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
- Rev 21:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysopease; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

- Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.
- 1 Cor 3:12a But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, ...
1. Jasper signifies the appearance of God shining with the glory of God as the light of the New Jerusalem for the expression of God—Rev. 4:3; 21:11, 18-19.
 - Rev 4:3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and there was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.
 - Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
 - Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
 - Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
 2. The other precious stones signify the riches of the beauty of Christ in different aspects for the foundation of God's eternal dwelling—vv. 19-21.
 - Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
 - Rev 21:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.
 - Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.
 3. By the judging Spirit, the burning Spirit, and the flowing Spirit—the Lord Spirit—we are being transformed by the experiences of the riches of Christ as the God of resurrection gained through sufferings, consuming pressures, and the killing work of the cross—Isa. 4:4; 11:2; John 4:14b; 2 Cor. 1:8-9.
 - Isa 4:4 When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and has cleansed away the bloodstains of Jerusalem from her midst, by the judging Spirit and the burning Spirit.
 - Isa 11:2 And the Spirit of Jehovah will rest upon Him, / The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, / The Spirit of counsel and might, / The Spirit of the knowledge and fear of Jehovah.
 - John 4:14b ... but the water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water springing up into eternal life.
 - 2 Cor 1:8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were excessively burdened, beyond our power, so that we despaired even of living.
 - 2 Cor 1:9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;
 4. By our growth in the divine life in Christ as the living stone, we are being transformed into precious stones; through the process of transformation, the Triune God is being wrought into and structured together with us to the praise of the glory of His grace with which He graced us in the Beloved for us to become the New Jerusalem as the ultimate testimony of Jesus and the good news to the entire universe—1 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 21:18-21; Eph. 1:3-6; cf. Luke 4:18-19.
 - 1 Pet 2:4 Coming to Him, a living stone, rejected by men but with God chosen and precious,
 - Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
 - Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
 - Rev 21:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl;

the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoptase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,

Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,

Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Eph 1:6 To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved;

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed,

Luke 4:19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, the year of jubilee."