

The Overcomer in the “Eternal” Plan of God Part IV

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The Burden of the “OVERCOMER” – Christ Jesus

Genesis 2:4 (ESV) ⁴These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were *created*, in the day that the LORD God *made* the earth and the heavens. *Emphasis mine*

God’s desire and purpose is to have a corporate man to express Him in His image and to represent Him with His authority is unveiled in Gen. 1:1 – 2:3. The remainder of ch. 2 is an added record to reveal the way, the procedure, in which God takes to accomplish His purpose. God’s *WAY* is *LIFE* based on *TRUTH*. In order for man to express God and represent God, he must have God as his life, which is signified by the Tree of Life in Gen. 2:9.

However, the LORD God knows that the fallen man cannot be allowed to eat from that tree in a fallen state because there would not be a righteous way through which grace would be found. Man would have the likeness of God; however, the divine image of God, which is His divine nature, would be unattainable. Therefore, man would be eternally cursed with the accuser.

The Tree of Life was symbolized as the Son of Man. Jesus was the promised seed that must fall into the ground and die; therefore, the revelation of God’s purpose is known to us through Christ Jesus.

John 12:24-26 (NKJV) ²⁴Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵He who loves his (*soul*) life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it *for* eternal life (*living in His resurrection life*). ²⁶If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him *My Father* will honor. *Emphasis mine*

What should never be missed is that Jesus’ burden came from the Father, and Jesus tells us that the accomplishing of the Father’s goal was felt in His soul. Jesus then shares the thoughts of His heart with us.

John 12:27-28 (NKJV) ²⁷ “Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? *But for this purpose, I came to this hour.* ²⁸ *Father, glorify Your name.*” Then a voice came from heaven, *saying*, “I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again.” *Emphasis mine*

God the Father now openly speaks so that all could hear. Emmanuel, with the element of the Father and the Spirit was concealed within Jesus of Nazareth, and that eternal LIFE was released through His death. The glorification of the Son of Man, Jesus of Nazareth, is His resurrection, ascension and enthroning that would yield many grains of wheat as His increase, the church.

Jesus’ burden is shared with His future overcomers; yet, they too must ask the Father in His name. Jesus said to us, do not fret, because “*the Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.*” *Matt. 6:8*

Jesus gives us a blueprint to release power of the Holy Spirit, to build the house of God, the Body of Christ, the church.

Matthew 6:9-10 (NKJV) ⁹ *In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.* ¹⁰ *Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* *Emphasis mine*

In the same dictation, it is as if Jesus was going back to the beginning, into the garden of Eden in Matt. 6:13 with a renewed warning.

Matthew 6:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

Jesus as the Overcomer did everything according to the Father’s will, having the full power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish it. To understand the burden of Christ and His church, let’s look back to the beginning.

Genesis 2:9 (ESV) ⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God *made* to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The *TREE OF LIFE* was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. *Emphasis mine*

The record of Genesis begins with God first creating the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1 (ESV) ¹ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Then God *made* the earth and the heavens. In God's *creation*, it was first the heavens and then the earth, whereas in God's *restoration* and further creation, it was first the earth and then the heavens. *J. Vernon Magee favorite topic*

Genesis 2:4 (ESV) ⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were *created* (*creation*), in the day that the **LORD God made** (or *restoration of*) the earth and the heavens. *Emphasis mine*

Okay, someone may ask: what's the difference between "created" and "made"? Create is starting from nothing to something, whereas made is fashioning from what is already created. *Note: There is probably many a theological thesis on that.*

In the Bible, **created** (*Bara* - Hebrew) means to bring something completely new into existence out of nothing. **Made** (*Asah* in Hebrew) means to fashion, shape, or build something using materials that already exist.

Genesis 2:4 also gives us the first use of LORD as a name for God. Something took place in Genesis 1 that required this designation.

Genesis 1:27 (KJV) ²⁷ So God created man in *His own* image, in the image of God created *He* him; male and female created *He* them.

In Genesis 1:1, God, **Elohim** (*Triune God*), is *the name of God in His relationship to His whole creation*. In Genesis 2:4, the use of LORD (YHWH – YEHOUAH, JEHOVAH) means I am who I am, indicating that Jehovah is the self-existing and ever-existing eternal One, the One who was in the past, who is in the present, and who will be in the future forever. *Note: No need to get into a name discussion for GOD.*

The most significant thing about the name **JEHOVAH** is that *the name is associated with its close relation to His greatest creation, man*. Thus, we have the many additions to the name Jehovah, and the greatest of these is Jehovah-saved (*Yehowshuwa*), i.e., Jesus the Christ.

Exodus 3:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

Revelation 1:4 (NKJV) ⁴John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from *Him who is and who was and who is to come*, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

What is meant by our Lord Jesus Christ bearing the curse on Calvary?

Excerpts from The Conquest of Canaan by Jessie Penn-Lewis, April 1911

The order of God's dealing with Adam and Eve and the serpent in the Garden of Eden is worthy of notice.

- ✓ **First**, He spoke to Adam: "The LORD God called to the man, and said unto him, Where art thou?"
- ✓ **Second**, He called to the woman: "The LORD God said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done?"
- ✓ **Third**, He turned to the serpent as the first cause of sin, and declared, "Cursed art thou."

God's interrogating order was reversed when God pronounced judgment upon them.

- ✓ **First** the judgment was upon the serpent, who was cursed as the first cause of the *transgression (rebellion intentionally)*, and the first in order;
- ✓ **Secondly**, then God turned to the woman, and although she had been deceived, she was told she could not escape the consequent suffering;
- ✓ And **Third** the man was told, "With the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread."

The order in which God addresses the three — first the man, then the woman, then the serpent — and the reversal of it in the pronouncement of judgment — first the serpent, then the woman, then the man — is very remarkable and suggestive.

It is equally remarkable to notice that because the woman was *deceived* by Satan, and *was not a willful transgressor, she was chosen as the means of his defeat*.

Paul points out in his first letter to Timothy that *Adam's transgression was willful*, that is, fully knowing he was doing wrong, and that there would be resulting consequences; he was not therefore chosen for the undoing of the serpent's work, but was given the part of toiling at the cursed ground for material sustenance. *The woman, who had been deceived innocently, was chosen*

to produce the promised Seed which would bring about the absolute defeat of Satan.

1 Timothy 2:14-15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. ¹⁵ Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

The statement "continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control" meant to me a clear definition of my favorite benediction.

2 Corinthians 13:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

*By faith we enter into the **grace** of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son, because of the **love** of God the Father, and through **fellowship** with the Holy Spirit, the Power of God, we will be made **holy**. If this Fruit of the Spirit comes to fruition, it should yield **self-control**.*

In this we may learn the lesson that God will turn the very devices the enemy uses against His children into weapons for his defeat. **Willful** transgression brings the judgment of God upon it, even though the transgressor is forgiven; *but every single thing in which Satan may have deceived you, as an innocent victim of his wiles, can become the very cause of his defeat.* Great News!

May God give you that comfort through this glimpse into the fall in Eden—especially those of God's children who have been deceived by "supernatural manifestations" which they afterwards found were not of God, and who have fallen into depression, darkness and despair. *This was Jessie Penn-Lewis' calling.*

Yes, every single thing in the past, where you have been honest and true and sincere, and yet *misled by the enemy*, can be turned to his defeat. (See, for example, Luke 22:31-32.)

Luke 22:31-32 (NKJV) ³¹ And the Lord said, "**Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.** ³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; *and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.*" *Emphasis mine*

Now let us look at the curse which God pronounced in Eden. The Lord said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." *The curse was pronounced upon the*

serpent, and also upon the ground. If we turn to Genesis 8:21, we shall find a precious word in regard to the latter, where we see that, when Noah came to the new world – carried to it in an ark upon the waters of judgment – the Lord took away the curse from the ground.

Genesis 8:21-22 (NKJV) ²¹ And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "*I will never again curse the ground* for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done." ²² "While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease."

So apparently, in the new world, clothed with beautiful fresh verdure (*the fresh, green color of thriving plants, or lush green vegetation itself*) and brightness, the curse on the earth itself was removed. *Note: I believe animal life still harbored hostility toward us. The lion is not lying down with the lamb yet.*

Then comes a painful story in Genesis 9:25 of what happened in the new world to the very one who had led his family out of the old world into the ark. Noah was drunk, and when he came out of his drunkenness, he said, "*Cursed be Canaan.*" Into the ark with Noah had gone his three sons, Shem, Ham, Japheth – and Canaan was the son of Ham and the grandson of Noah.

Genesis 9:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Then he said: "*Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brethren.*"

In one of the Minor Prophets there is a sly reference to Canaan as a "trafficker" (Hosea 12:7) in whose hands are "the balances of deceit"; this may show that Canaan had something to do with the disgraceful condition of Noah, and that Ham "abetted." *Abetted*: a legal phrase for helping someone commit a crime.

Hosea 12:7 (NKJV) ⁷ "A cunning Canaanite! Deceitful scales *are* in his hand; He loves to oppress.

In Habakkuk 2:15, we read also, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink . . . and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look upon their nakedness!" This verse seems to refer back to the episode involving Noah, his son, and his grandson.

Habakkuk 2:15-16 (NKJV) ¹⁵“Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor,
Pressing *him* to your bottle, Even to make *him* drunk, That you may look on his
nakedness! ¹⁶You are filled with shame instead of glory. You also--drink! And
be exposed as uncircumcised! The cup of the LORD'S right hand *will be* turned
against you, And utter shame will be on your glory.

When we take both passages together, along with the action of the sobered Noah toward his grandson Canaan, it seems clearly to show that, in some way, Noah was deceived into the condition he fell into. Eve was deceived in Eden by the serpent; and now once more the archenemy of God and man gained a fresh advantage on the newly cleansed earth by deceiving, through the agency of someone in his family, the man who was the head of the new government.

The curse upon Satan has never been taken away. The curse that came upon the Canaanites was the result of their being given up to satanic powers, right from the time that Canaan had the curse pronounced upon him by Noah.

Turning from the history of Ham and Canaan, with their descendants occupying Canaan, we may trace the line of the godly seed of Shem, and find them gathered together at Sinai where God gives them the law as a nation.

Afterward we find Moses commanded to recite to them the *curse* that would come upon *them* if they broke that law; and THAT CURSE HAS NEVER BEEN LIFTED. It runs in a continuous line with the curses that precede it – *first*, the curse pronounced upon Satan; *then*, the curse running into the Canaanitish races, and manifested through their sorceries and spiritualism; and *finally*, the curse of the law to be realized in Israel's disobedience, pronounced when God took the godly line of Shem and, gathering them at Sinai where the law of the Lord was given, rehearsed through Moses those awful curses upon all who broke His law (Deuteronomy 27-29).

We find, therefore, three sets of "curses" in operation in the world:

- 1) the curse on Satan pronounced in Eden, and never annulled;
- 2) the curse on the Canaanites through their forefather Canaan, bringing upon them the judgment through Israel; and
- 3) the curse on all who broke the law of God given at Sinai – which abides, as we shall see further on, until this day.

Galatians 3:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "*Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.*"

In this passage we come further down the centuries and nearer to ourselves than Sinai. Note that the apostle writes, "As MANY as are of the works of the law," i.e., as many as rely upon their keeping of the law of God, "are UNDER A CURSE, for cursed is everyone who continued not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law, to do them."

Is there a soul who will rise and say that he keeps absolutely, without one jot or tittle being broken, all God's law given at Sinai?

If not, you are under the curse of that broken law, as stated in Deuteronomy 27. This was the way Paul brought souls to see their need of Jesus Christ, through conviction of the curse of the broken law.

Galatians 3:22 (KJV) ²² But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

In relation to these words, Paul says that God "shut up all ... under sin" (Galatians 3:22), so that no one can find a way of escape which will enable him to say that he is not a sinner.

James says if we offend in one point, we are guilty of all, so that one single point of the broken law brings us under the curse of the law. What hope is there for Jew or Gentile, and for Paul's readers or for us?

Here Calvary comes in – God's remedy. The apostle wrote, "CHRIST REDEEMED US FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW, HAVING BECOME A CURSE FOR US; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hanged on a tree" – referring to Deuteronomy 21:22-23.

Deuteronomy 21:22-23 (KJV) ²² And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: ²³ His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged *is* accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

Galatians 3:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "*Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree*").

Have you ever taken the position that is yours in Christ towards Satan, and his accursed doings, in which you may ask God to fulfill His curse upon them? When Satan attacks you, *you may remind him that God's curse is upon him*, and he will flee away. Do not forget that which is written about the serpent: "The LORD God said, Cursed art thou."

There are hymns depicting Canaan as heaven, but there is no sin in heaven, and no war there. There were both sin and war in Israel's Canaan. It is, really, a picture of a stage in the Christian life. There is the wilderness stage, out of which Joshua leads Israel through Jordan into Canaan, and on Canaan side is the war to take possession of the land. On the wilderness side of the Jordan, the people were occupied with their own troubles about what they should do.

For instance, they needed water, and when they could not get it, they were filled with a murmuring spirit; that was the wilderness stage, where Moses, the man of God, had to bear with them, and stand between them and God – sometimes Moses stood as an intercessor, so that God would not destroy them.

There came a time, however, when God said to Joshua,

Joshua 1:2-3 (NKJV) ²“Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them--the children of Israel. ³*Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses.*”

Before they crossed the Jordan, they had a declaration from God that every place that the sole of their feet should tread upon HAD BEEN GIVEN THEM; *but they had to walk over it, and take it foot by foot—for God did not hand it over to them and say*, "Now you have it," so that they had nothing further to do. He said, "I have given it. Now *you* must take it step by step."

It was very important that Joshua should be clear on the point that the land in front of him had been given by Jehovah to Israel *before* he started out to *take* it, so that he would always act from the faith position of assured victory.

Joshua 1:5 (NKJV) ⁵ No man shall *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.

This promise of the land already given is followed by a second promise made directly to Joshua in verse 5, "*There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.*"

But as we read on, we see that, on Joshua's part, it was necessary that he be strong and courageous, so as to cooperate with God in the fulfillment of these promises. The words of God ring out in power: "*Only be thou strong and very courageous, and then shalt thou cause this people to inherit the land.*"

These words make it appear that Joshua was responsible for the courage. "ONLY be thou strong . . .," said Jehovah. This is what every child of God must take heed to in the battle of today. *We are responsible not to get depressed or discouraged for a moment by yielding to the temptations of the enemy to look away from God. You must settle it that all discouragement is from the enemy, and not under any circumstances yield to or accept it.*

Joshua 1:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.

Spiritually, *Jordan represents Calvary*. The ark is the type of Christ. Just as the ark went first, and stood in Jordan while all the people passed over, so Christ carried the whole of His Church in Himself into the death of Calvary. The waters of judgment came upon Him as He hung upon that cross, and the whole Church of Christ was buried in Him, and, so to speak, "blotted out" in their connection with the fallen race of Adam — even as "all flesh" was "blotted out" by the waters of judgment at the Flood, when only Noah and his family escaped by being carried through the waters of death in an ark (Genesis 7:23).

This crossing of Jordan is the most striking picture you can have of what it means to be crucified with Christ, and buried in His death. We were nailed to that cross in Him — identified with Him. We are thus buried into Jesus Christ, baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3-4), so that we may always look upon ourselves as buried in the Jordan; and once we have taken the position of faith in Him, crucified and

buried in Him, *the old life should not be dug up for examination, but always accounted as put out of sight and buried in the waters of death.*

The Stones in the Jordan and The Stones on the Banks of the River

The two-fold aspect of our identification with Christ is portrayed by these two sets of stones. On the one hand, twelve stones were buried in the river flood, and on the other, twelve stones were taken from the riverbed and carried to the Canaan side as memorials of their separated life unto God.

Similarly, we are taken into the death of our Lord and there buried so far as our relation to sin and to this world is concerned (Romans 6:1-13, Colossians 2:20 and 3:3), and out of that riverbed of death, *we are taken into His resurrection and triumphant life.*

When the twelve stones were brought out of Jordan, they represented a new Israel. The old Israel was, in the purpose of God, left buried in the Jordan waters, and they rolled between them and the wilderness.

The chosen people first crossed the Red Sea into the wilderness — this being the first stage of death on the cross, where the sea stood between them and Egypt. They were brought, so to speak, out of the world-sphere — Egypt — through the Red Sea into a new path, and then through the wilderness (a transit which should have lasted but a few months), and finally into Canaan — the land which is a picture of the heavenly sphere on earth, where the child of God is united with the Lord, a new creation in Him, and, having been equipped for war with the adversaries of God, is led forward by Him in victory.

The Work of the Overcomers in the Body of Christ - Reiterated

In examining the principle of the overcomers, we must notice two things: (1) that whenever the whole body fails, God will choose relatively few to stand for the whole body; and (2) that God calls these few to carry out His command so that through them He may later reach the many.

When God chose the children of Israel, He called them all to be a kingdom of priests among the nations (Ex. 19.5-6). But at Mount Sinai they worshipped the golden calf and failed terribly. Because of this, God selected the Levites — who

kept His command to be His overcomers. They were given the priesthood in lieu of all the rest of the children of Israel (Ex. 32.15-29).

The Overcomers in Christ Must Stand in Death That Others Might Live

God put the priests in the place of death so that the children of Israel might have a way to life. The priests were the first to step into the water and the last to come out of it. They were God's overcomers. Today God is seeking a company of people who, like the priests of old, will step into the water, enter into death, accept the dealings of the cross, and stand on the ground of death first, so as then to open a living way for the *ONE* church. God puts us first in death to give life to others. God's overcomers are God's pioneers.

The riverbed is the place of death. Nothing at all comfortable, nothing at all appealing. Not restful, not sitting, not lying, but standing. If I live according to my ill-temper, Christ cannot live in others. But if I stand at the bottom of the river, other people will cross the Jordan to victory. Death works in me, but life works in others. In my obedience to death, life will operate in others for their own obedience to God. The death of Christ quickens His life in us. Without death there can be no life.

God says explicitly that this would not be easy; nonetheless, this is the only way towards the realization of God's eternal plan.

Many people are not disobedient; they are just not fully obedient; with many people it is not a not paying any cost, it is rather a paying insufficiently; with many it is not a spending of no money or of sending no soldiers, but it is a committing of less than all (see Luke 14.25-35). Gethsemane is reached by way of the cross. Without the dealing of the cross none can say, **"nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."** *Matt. 26:39*

God leads us through death so that other people may have life. We are required to go through sufferings and pain before there can be life in others. The church is unable to cross to the mainland for victory because there are no priests at the bottom of the River Jordan. All who stand at the bottom of Jordan are capable of creating a seeking heart in others.

If a truth, i.e., Christ Jesus as TRUTH in life, has been deeply organized in me, that will draw others to seek the same.

The "Overcomer" said.

John 12:32 (NKJV) ³² *And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."*

Many of the truths of God are waiting to be organized within men. As we let truth be worked into and organized in us, we allow the stature of Christ to grow an inch in us. The overcomers receive life from above and from the Holy Spirit within to supply the Body of Christ.

Now, be thou strong and courageous, for greater is He that is within us than he that is in the world.

Even so, Come Lord Jesus.