

These will war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings. They also will overcome who are with him, called and chosen and faithful." (Revelation 17:14)

*Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the **eternal** gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth-- to every nation, tribe, language and people. He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and **give him glory**, because **the hour of his judgment** has come. **Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.**"* (Revelation 14:6-7 NIV)

We have been conditioned to **assume good news needs to be coupled with bad news** to counter it. But **is it necessary** to have **bad news as the context** for good news, or does the **eternal good news supersede and eclipse** all other news? **Eternal good news precedes all other news!** The **bad news** came in **long after the good news** was simply the **norm**.

The gospel is **not a declaration of war**. That was long ago initiated by Michael. The gospel is **a declaration of victory**, and the **Lamb** is the **overcomer** who is **installed as King**. To be **recognized** and acknowledged as king means that everything He says is **authoritative** and valid.

What is this war that this gospel of the Kingdom has **overcome** and defeated?

*"How you are fallen from heaven, **O Lucifer**, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: '**I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.**' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.* (Isaiah 14:12-15 NKJV)

*And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, but **they were defeated**, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The **great dragon** was **thrown down**, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, **the deceiver of the whole world--he was thrown down to the earth**, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming, "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah, for **the accuser of our comrades** has been **thrown down**, who accuses them day and night before our God. But **they have conquered him** by the **blood of the Lamb** and by the word of their testimony, for they did not cling to life even in the face of death.* (Revelation 12:7-11 NRSV)

*When they have finished their testimony, **the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them.*** (Revelation 11:7)

***They worshiped the dragon**, because he gave his authority to the beast, and **they worshiped the beast**, saying, "Who is like the beast? **Who is able to make war with him?**" A mouth speaking great things and blasphemy was given to him. **Authority to make war** for forty-two months was given to him. He opened his mouth for **blasphemy against God**, to blaspheme his name, and his dwelling, those who dwell in heaven. It was given to him to make war with the saints, and to **overcome them**. **Authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation** was given to him. (Revelation 13:4-7)*

*for they are spirits of demons, performing signs; which go forth to the kings of the whole inhabited earth, to gather them **together for the war of that great day of God, the Almighty.*** (Revelation 16:14)

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So far we have seen **the two sides in this war** and those who align behind their leaders.

Michael fought against the dragon, the accuser, the deceiver. Why? Because the dragon misrepresents the God who created him originally to share the light of love and truth which was his name Lucifer.

Both protagonists have a **wide array of names** and titles, but their nature and character clashes.

The war started in heaven and was a **revolt against the principles of love and order** that is the basis of how God governs all creation. **Lucifer came to desire more power, more authority, more worship and admiration than he was created for**, meaning he **chose to break out of the boundaries** of his very **design**, to grasp for illicit power and greatness that **turned him into a tyrant**, an authority abuser and a **manipulator** like no other. And to attract as large a following as he could find, **he accused God** and anyone who sided with God of having the very character that he himself was forming in his rush for control of the universe.

This is the **backdrop**, the context that allows us to see **how important the gospel is** beyond what we have imagined. Too long we have **assumed** that the gospel was good news about **how we could escape punishment** from God in hell, or something along those lines. But those notions originated in the father of lies, not from the truth as it is in Jesus. All who **cling to such dark views** of God as an **intimidating deity** demanding blood to appease his wrath are **siding with the dragon** version of God, and end up **reflecting those sentiments** in how they treat others who don't align with their demands.

We must understand that **this war is not pitting raw power** against power, but rather **incompatible views of reality** and striking differences in **how war itself is to be waged**, what **motives** are relied on to win, and even **what victory looks like** itself. Without this perspective the methods and motives of the Lamb and all those who choose to follow Him make little sense. But when we realize **the war is over what we will believe about God's heart**, God's **motives**, God's **methods** and God's **integrity**, suddenly everything begins to **make far more sense**. Then the gospel, the good news is seen entirely different from how it has been framed previously in the dark framework of religious control agendas.

*For **the kingdom is Yahweh's**. He is the ruler over the nations. All the rich ones of the earth shall eat and worship. All those who go down to the dust shall bow before him, even he who can't keep his soul alive. Posterity shall serve him. Future generations shall be told about the Lord. They shall come and shall **declare his righteousness** to a people that shall be born, for **he has done it.*** (Psalms 22:28-31)

*For I am not ashamed of **the Good News of Christ**, for **it is the power of God for salvation** for everyone who believes; for the Jew first, and also for the Greek. For **in it is revealed God's righteousness** from faith to faith. As it is written, "**But the righteous shall live by faith.**"* (Romans 1:16-17)

Jesus overcame the world by **revealing** clearly the **righteousness of God** – what the world denies. **This is the gospel core** – that **God is righteous**, that He alone is good, that **no darkness** is in Him. This is why the Son of God was **first God's Christ** long before humans ever existed. The core of the **war is the contention over God's goodness**, trustworthiness, consistency and integrity. So the **gospel targets the very center** of the contention on which the war started, **highlighting the truth** in sharp contrast to, and exposing as fraudulent all the lies that have disrupted the free flow of God's love.

This was the **focal point of Jesus' life** among us as a **human reflector of God's glory**. Previously He worked tirelessly **as God's Christ** among the angelic beings, and now He adds the role of **being our Christ** to rescue, salvage and restore God's image in willing human beings – **all for God's glory**.

*Jesus answered them, "The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Most certainly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone. But **if it dies, it bears much fruit**. He who loves his life will lose it. He who hates his life in this world will keep it to eternal life. If anyone serves me, let him follow me. Where I am, there will my servant also be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. "Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say? 'Father, save me from this time?' But **for this cause I came to this time. Father, glorify your name!**" Then there came a voice out of the sky, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." (John 12:23-28)*

How does the gospel **relate to God**?

How does the gospel relate to and **affect humans**?

What do we believe about **what it means to overcome**?

What or who is being overcome?

How does one overcome?

How did Jesus overcome?

Why did Jesus come to this world in the first place?

Whose version of overcoming do we choose to endorse and embrace? There are **two definitions**.

Overcoming for a true believer in the Lamb version of God, is **never achieved by fighting but by affiliation**, choosing to **embrace our identity in the Lamb**, staying aligned with our Leader.

The Lord is my Shepherd...

The Shepherd is my Lord

The Lamb is my Lord!

Humans are designed to **reflect what they believe** about God, His motives, His methods and reality.

We exercise our **freedom** of choice to **determine whose version** of God **we will reflect**.

We choose sides by **choosing what to believe** about the **nature of the war** itself.

We choose sides by **choosing what methods and motives** will propel us.

We choose **which version of winning** we will embrace.

We choose sides by **choosing who to agree with** about **how victory is defined**.

*"I have spoken these things to you in figures of speech. But **the time is coming** when I will no more speak to you in figures of speech, but will **tell you plainly about the Father**. In that day you will ask in my name; and **I don't say** to you, that **I will pray to the Father for you, for the Father himself loves you**, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from God.*

I came out from the Father, and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."

His disciples said to him, "Behold, now you speak plainly, and speak no figures of speech. Now we know that you know all things, and don't need for anyone to question you. By this we believe that you came forth from God."

*Jesus answered them, "**Do you now believe? Behold, the time is coming, yes, and has now come, that you will be scattered, everyone to his own place, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. I have told you these things, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have oppression; but cheer up! I have overcome the world.**" (John 16:25-33)*

The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour. These have one mind, and they give their power and authority to the beast.

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