

The Lion of Judah overcomes.

Wish speak this evening about the Lion of Judah who couldn't be conquered or overcome.

Read **Revelation 5. 1-8**. My text is 'the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome (has prevailed, triumphed, conquered), to open the book and the seven seals thereof', verse 5.

First, a few comments on the context.

Book/scroll open. On right hand, in open palm. There for taking. But worthy – possess necessary qualifications, fulfil conditions, credentials. Elders – identity not given; suggests wisdom and delegated authority because on thrones with crowns. Interesting only other time meet one, assure Tribulation saints that God wipe away all tears, Rev. 7. 17. There also concerned with tears. Open/loose seals, verse 2. Sealed seven seals. Under Roman law, wills or other official documents sealed by seven witnesses. Seals properly broken only one due authority, F F Bruce. Opened in 6. 1 to 8. 1. Fireworks start. Series of devastating judgements fall on earth. Contrast another scene and another scroll ... Luke 4, the synagogue of Nazareth. There stood to read: now Lamb 'stand' (vigour) forward, Rev. 5. 6-7. Question of who is worthy to 'open' book. Then hand of attendant; now of the Throne-sitter. Be described of sorts, Rev. 4. 3, but never named. Awesome. Luke 4, possible prior arrangement; find place – begin Isa. 61 – 'the Spirit of Lord is up on me ... to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance'. Close scroll - abrupt stop/break. Sit, every eye fasten/rivet with expectation. 'Been fulfilled' – in Nazareth of all places, where grew up. Now in Revelation and onwards is the day of vengeance; see Rev. 6. 10.

Behold the Lion. Why the Lion? Behold the man, who came out wearing thorns and purple, John 19. 5. Behold the Lamb, John 1.29. Would be fitting as title. Yet need ask what title represent. Characteristics. Not read 'Jesus' for 'Lamb'. What 'Lion' convey? Majesty; 'the lion, which is mightiest among beasts and does not turn back before any', Prov. 30. 30. Fearless, not swerve aside. 'I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame', Isa. 50. 7. 'When the time was come that He should be received up, He set His face to go to Jerusalem', Luke 9. 51. 'Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem', 2 Kings 12. 17. But 'Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed things ... and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the Lord ... and sent it to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem', verse 18. 'They were in the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going before them: and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid', Mark 10.32 ... 'in the way', one of seven from Caesarea Philippi to Jerusalem. The disciples were afraid, apprehensive, filled with foreboding, He was resolute and determined, taking purposeful strides as the Lion of Judah paced His way to Jerusalem.

Need survey territory to cover : **Herod** couldn't destroy Him; **Satan** couldn't corrupt Him; **Peter** couldn't stumble Him; **the demons** couldn't withstand Him; **the Pharisees** couldn't trap Him; **the Jews** couldn't stone Him; **Judas** couldn't fool Him; **Pilate** couldn't fault Him; **death** couldn't hold Him; and **the grave** couldn't contain Him.

(Start Matthew)

Herod couldn't destroy Him, Matt. 2 .8, 11-13. Herod the Great planned destroy Jesus under guise of worshipping Him, to wise men from east, 'Go and search diligently for the young child; and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also', 2. 8. Slaughter of innocents was entirely in character. 'He was a man of great barbarity towards all ... a slave to his passion', Josephus, Ant. 17. 8. Murdered many of own family – wife; her brother, mother, uncle, grandfather; own uncle. Three years before death, had two sons strangled in prison; five days before death had eldest son stabbed to death. Reported Augustus quipped, '*it is safer to be Herod's pig than his son*' (huos {hw-os}, huios {hwee-os}) – allude fact not eat pork; for, although Idumean, lived as Jew. Insanely jealous. To be asked, 'Where he born king of the Jews', v. 2, was red flag to bull. But threat no problem to God – simply use two dreams (as later direct Joseph back to land of Israel and when afraid to Judea because Archelaus, to Galilee) : (i) Wise men warned by God not return Herod; depart own country other way, not most convenient. (ii) Joseph warned by angel, 'Arise, take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt; for Herod is about to seek the young child, to destroy Him'. There till death of Herod, that might be fulfilled, 'Out of Egypt', Hos.11. 1. Herod couldn't destroy Him!

Satan couldn't corrupt Him, Matt. 4. 1-11. Central issue was whether be persuaded to act independently of Father – to go own way, do own will. Met temptations with three well-chosen texts of scripture - select all three arrows from quiver of Deuteronomy; book of wilderness. (1) 'If are Son ... as baptism. Speaking of baptism, that strange Baptist man, 'Think not say within selves, We have Abraham as our father: God able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham'. Surely, with the power with which just been anointed ... (eye to Acts 10.38, 'God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with Holy Spirit and power')'. 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word proceed mouth of God'. And had had no word. 'I trust God'. (2) Took holy city, set on pinnacle/wing of temple – 'Oh, so you trust God and His word do you? ... cast down, for written, He shall give His angels charge concerning you, and in hands shall bear you up, lest at any time, dash foot against stone'. Let's look at stones in another way – not as opportunity miracle but danger to life. What audacity! Quote Psalm 91. 11-12. Context : 'Surely he shall deliver you from the snare (LXX = of devil, 1 Tim. 3. 7, overseer good testimony, lest fall into) of the fowler', v. 3; 'His truth shall be your shield', v. 4 'You shall not be afraid of the arrow (dart, Eph. 6. 16) that flies by day', v. 5. 'You shall tread upon the lion and serpent: the dragon you shall trample under feet', v13. profound cheek. 'Written again, you shall not tempt the Lord your God - put God to test'. Not question of trusting God but tempting God. The One who would not doubt God and His word, would not presume on God and His word either!

(3) Drop/discard mask. Come into open. Exceeding high mountain, showed all world's kingdoms and glory – in moment of time, Luke 4. 5 - offer in exchange His homage/worship. 'The devil said unto him, All this authority will I give you, and the

glory of them: for that is delivered to me; and to whoever I will I give it. If you therefore will worship me, all shall be yours', Luke 4. 6. Was genuine offer. In Rev. 13 read of Satan's superman – 'the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority ... All the world ... worshipped the dragon which gave authority to the beast', Rev. 13. 2-4. God had said, 'Ask of me, and I shall give you the heathen for your inheritance', Psa 2. 8. Satan offers Jesus a short-cut; the kingdom of heathen on cheap. The kingdom without the cross – the glory without the suffering – this is his bargain. 'Get hence (go), written you worship'. End all/every kind temptation, Luke 4. 13. Exhaust all ammunition, held back nothing but achieve nothing. Fiery darts found no combustible material. 'Ruler of this world comes, and has nothing in me', John 14. 30 - a Hebrew idiom meaning Satan has no legal claim on me. Satan couldn't corrupt Him!

Peter couldn't stumble Him, Matt 16. At Caesarea Philippi. 'You are an offence to me = stumbling-block/cause of stumbling to me', v. 23. Incident begin, 'From that time forth, began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Pity yourself – by no means shall this be to you', vv. 21-22. 'From that time' - cf 'From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand', 4. 17 – that part was fine with Peter. But this not part program. Son of man must go to Jerusalem and reign! Peter didn't share popular view about His identity (John Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, one of prophets – different category) but he certainly shared popular view of what Messiah would be and do. Lord detect echoes of three years back. Heard two voices – that of Father at baptism (You are My Son, Mark 1. 11 – You are the Christ, the Son of living God) and hiss of serpent in wilderness (deflect cross). Name is (Thou art) 'stone/rock' – can be living stone built into house ('My church') or placed in road to stumble over 'Turn', probably towards him – 'behind Me'. Peter couldn't stumble Him!

(Move into Mark)

The demons couldn't withstand Him, Mark 1, 5, 9. Unable resist His all-powerful 'Come out'. Ch 5 = country of Gadarenes/Gergasenes, unclean, not bind or tame/subdue. Dwell tombs - unclean spirit in unclean place, because bones. Legion = 5-6,000. 'unclean spirit, **come out** of the man'. 'Went out'; enter swine, sit, clothed, right mind. Ch 1 = unclean, man in synagogue of Capernaum. Rebuked, '**Come out** of him'. Tore him and cried out – but 'came out!' All amazed = strong word = greatly astonished. 'What is this, for with authority He commands even unclean spirits, and they obey Him', v. 29 – shortly before in synagogue been 'astounded at His teaching, for taught as One having authority and not as scribes', v. 22. Ch 9 = foot Mount of Transfiguration, another unclean; found disciples dispute scribes, man = deaf and dumb, 'when seizes son, it tears him, he foams, grinds teeth, and goes rigid. To disciples to cast it out, and couldn't!' 'How long shall I be with you; bring him to me'. When saw, immediately spirit violently threw, roll ground foaming. 'How long has this been happening to him?' Since child, whatever in there, often cast into fire and water to destroy. If you can do anything, have compassion and help us. 'If you can! all things can be to him that believes'. The father thought the crucial question was whether Jesus could heal the boy. Jesus explained that it was really whether the father believed that Jesus could heal him. Rebuked unclean spirit - 'I command you **come out** and never enter into him again'. Spirit cry out, rend violently; seem dead. Took hand and lifted up.

Ask Mary Magdalene – out of whom expel seven, Luke 8. 2. Matt 12 = blind/dumb demoniac brought to Him: healed. Crowds = 'This cannot be the Son of David, can it?' No case blind person healed in OT. Of Messiah, 'Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened', Isa. 35. 5; 'tell John ... (first) the blind receive their sight', Matt. 11. 5. Pharisees respond = not cast out demons except by Beelzebul, ruler of demons. Collusion, league Beelzebul. 'Every kingdom divided self brought desolation. Every city/house divided self not stand. If Satan cast out Satan, how then kingdom stand? But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then Kingdom of God come upon you' – explanation not collusion with empire of evil but invasion by superior power. Enter house strong man, bind and spoil – ransack - goods. Finally, He disarmed, repelled, spoiled principalities and authorities, exposing them to open shame (making public spectacle), triumphing over them in it – His cross, Col.2. 15. The cross appeared to be the evidence and symbol of Christ's defeat; Paul speaks of it as Christ's chariot of victory. The demons couldn't withstand Him!

(Now into Luke)

The Pharisees couldn't trap Him, Luke 20. 20-26. After some sickly flattery, 'is it lawful for us to 'give' tribute Caesar or no?', v.22. 'Perceived their craftiness', v. 23 – their cunning, trickery. Matt = intention 'entangle', ensnare, catch in trap - Mark = 'catch' by hunting – in words. 'Why you tempt me?' – Matt = disciples Pharisees and Herodians partner up in unholy alliance – if yes, disciples of Pharisees discredit before people and alienate Him from them; if no, lay Himself open to a charge of treason and Herodians (political party) denounce before Roman authorities.

'Show me the tribute money', Matt. 22. 19 – not any coin. Fumble folds of garments. Not necessarily evidence of His poverty – Judas not have bag for fun. This coin bore the image of the emperor, and the inscription 'Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus' on one side, and words which Jews understood in the sense of high priest on the other. Both inscriptions were highly offensive to the Jews. But more than anything else they hated because sign/symbol of their submission to Rome. But fact they possess prove that accept and use as lawful coinage. He draw particular attention to Caesar's 'image and superscription' on denarius – prove minted by and for Caesar – ie ultimately was *his* coin. It was only proper therefore for them to 'render' (give back/repay as a debt, as a rightful due) if he called for it; if he should require it. They said only 'give'. Implication of render to God! Foiled. The Pharisees couldn't ensnare Him!

(Now into John)

The Jews couldn't stone Him, Two separate occasions – end of chs 8 and 10; John 8. 59; 10. 31. Irony chapter 8 begins with their hypothetical question about woman in adultery - 'Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?' – and end very real attempt – 'Then they took up stones to throw at Him', v. 59 – an unlawful action. At one point 'Abraham is our father. Jesus said to them, If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. You are of your father the devil. He was a murderer from the beginning'. Debate end, 'Before Abraham was (became), I am'. Implication was clear. Hands went down, took up stones to cast at Him. ***Hid Himself and went out*** of temple. Ch 10 = 'I and Father are one', v. 30. 'Jews took up stones again that might stone Him'. ***Escape out of hands***, v. 39. Wrong time, place and way. Point = wasn't stoned by Jews – was crucified by Romans. 'What accusation against this man ... if not malefactor/evildoer, not delivered ... you take and judge according to your law ... not lawful for us to put any man to death ... that saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which spoke signifying death about die', John 18. 29-32 – refer back, 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die', 12. 32-33. Lift up earth crucified. Else what of Psa. 22. 16 (pierce hands/feet); 'Zech. 12. 10 (will look on Me whom they pierced); Deut. 21. 23 (cursed everyone hang tree, Gal. 3. 13). The Jews couldn't stone Him!

Judas couldn't fool Him, John 13. 11. Follow feet-washing - 'You (plural) are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, You are not all clean', vv. 10-11. Not only knew hour, Father given into hands, all come on, but who betray. Judas didn't deceive Jesus as he did other disciples. Said back in John 6. 64, 'Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him'. In garden, 'Hail, Rabbi', kiss affectionately. 'Friend, do that for which you have come', Matt 26. 50. Important note that not word of intimacy, endearment as John 11. 11 (our friend Lazarus sleeps). Comrade, companion, associate, Matt. 20. 13 (vineyard; do no wrong), 22. 12 (how garment). Never insincere. Judas couldn't fool Him!

Pilate couldn't fault Him, John 18. 38; 19. 4, 6 AV – 'I find no fault in Him' x3. Word properly = find no crime, charge, ground accusation. 'My kingdom not world... if, servants fight not delivered Jews ... king then ... you say, for this I was born and for this I came into the world, that might witness to the truth ... everyone of truth hears my voice ... what is truth'. But not wait find out. A fanatic – if only kingship = truth, no cause of death. But Pilate *may* well meant more. 'He took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of *this just person*', Matt. 27. 24; wife's dream, 'When he was set down on the judgement seat, his wife sent to him, saying, Have nothing to do with that just man', v. 19. Regard as a just/righteous person. Pilate couldn't fault Him!

(Finally into Acts)

Death couldn't hold Him, Acts 2. 24 – Peter, 'Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains/pangs of death [either the birthpangs – death no more hold Christ than pregnant woman her child – or possibly the cords/bands of death. Meaning clear = having delivered Him from the power and dominion of death] because it was not possible for Him to be held by it' – not possible for death to maintain its 'hold' on Him – 'to be strong, to prevail against'. John 10. 17-18 = 'therefore Father love me, because lay life take again. No man take it from me but I lay of self, have authority lay down and authority take again'. Rev 1. 18 – transcendent Christ, fall feet as dead, 'Fear not, first and last, living One, keys'. Alien province/territory never been before nor will again.

Devil and death both met Waterloo. Faced devil in his own domain. 'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy (render ineffective, put out commission) him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage', Heb. 2. 14-15. Death not imprison or conquer. Enoch/Elijah simply side-step/bypass. Lazarus temporarily escape clutches, come out on parole – report back in due course. Come out through same door been carried in! He not side-step or escape for short-term – broke down doors and walls. Rom 6. 9, 'knowing that Christ having been raised out of the dead, dies no more'. Death couldn't hold Him!

The grave couldn't contain Him – any more than grave clothes could. Cntr Lazarus, 'loose him and let him go', John 11. 44. Peter go on point out that 'David both dead and buried, and sepulchre with us to this day', 2. 29. But because God not permit Holy One see corruption, His tomb have no significance, vv. 27, 31. Thrill, 'He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay', Matt. 28. 6. 'Low in grave lay, waiting coming day, up grave arose, mighty triumph over foes'. The grave couldn't contain Him!

Herod couldn't destroy Him; Satan couldn't corrupt Him; Peter couldn't stumble Him; demons couldn't withstand Him; the Pharisees couldn't trap Him; the Jews couldn't stone Him; Judas couldn't fool Him; Pilate couldn't fault Him; death couldn't hold Him; and the grave couldn't contain Him. He was – and is – the Invincible Christ.

"THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH ... HAS PREVAILED", REV.5.5.

Herod couldn't *destroy* Him

Matt.2.12-13

Satan couldn't *corrupt* Him

Matt.4.1-11

Peter couldn't *stumble* Him

Matt.16.21-23

The demons couldn't *withstand* Him

Mark 1.23-27; 5.1-15; 9.14-27

The Pharisees couldn't *frighten* Him, and they couldn't *ensnare* Him

Luke 13.31-32; Mark 12.13-15

The Jews couldn't *stone* Him

John 8.59; 10.31

Judas couldn't *deceive* Him

John 13.11

Pilate couldn't *fault* Him

John 18.38; 19.4, 6

Death couldn't *conquer* Him

Rom.6.9; Rev.1.18

The grave couldn't *hold* Him

Matt 28.1-6; John 20.19-20

YES - HE HAS PREVAILED ! AND HE IS WORTHY!