

Front Page - 2015 08

The Grand Finale

Introduction

On Sunday, July 13th 2014 there was a military conflict in Libya, another between Israel and Hamas, and at the same time, far away in Rio de Janeiro another contest was being fiercely fought. It was not between militaries, but a sports contest to determine the best soccer team in the world. The final was between Argentina and Germany, and for 112 minutes the hard played contest fluctuated, at times appearing that one side would win and then the other. Then it happened, during the 113th minute Germany scored a goal, and while the Argentines played with skill and heart, the last 7 minutes was simply the prolonging of the enviable defeat. Finally, the whistle blew and it was all over. The Argentinian players stood defeated and downcast, as tears rolled down their faces, unexplainable despair was etched on both the players and supporters. In stark contrast the German players were unabashedly rejoicing as their children, wives, and some loved ones flooded onto the field in rapturous delight. Amid much cheering and singing the captain of the German team led his men to the victory podium, and having received the golden globe, lifted it high to the thunderous clapping and shouting of the masses.

That Which It Brought To My Mind

I thought of another conflict, and another finale. That conflict which I began musing on is the conflict of the ages which began back in Eden when Satan lured the man through the woman to change loyalties from God to him. His Satanic majesty presented God as a spoil sport who was holding man back from making him all he could be. At the very root of his activity was the questioning of God's love, for the suggestion was, "God does not really love as I do, else would He not let you eat of every tree?". Throughout the centuries the drama unfolded. At times it looked as if God was about to be defeated and his purposes brought to nought as when Athaliah slew all the seed royal (as she thought) (2 Kgs. 11:1), but God was in control and Jehosheba took Joash and hid him for six years (2 Kgs. 11:2-3). Thus, despite being down to a little one year old baby, the line was not extinguished. God is never a loser and despite how things looked, God was winning the conflict.

- a) In broad strokes, the first major offensive was when God began to reveal the coming Deliverer for humanity from the power of Satan (Gen. 3:15).
- b) The second major offensive was when Christ was born, and at that point a counter attack came when Herod, being satanically blinded, sought to destroy the child (Matt. 2:13).
- c) Finally, it looked as if Satan had finally succeeded when the Lord was rejected, crucified, and died on the cross (Mk. 15:37). If there was rejoicing in the satanic government it was to be very short lived. Three days later Christ rose triumphantly from the tomb (Mk. 16:9), living in the power of an endless life (Heb. 7:16). John saw Him holding the keys of death and hell and heard His words: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:18.)

However, just as the Argentineans did not give up when the Germans scored the goal, neither does Satan give up trying to thwart the purposes of God. For some two thousand years now, he and his satanic government have sought to check-mate God. The question is, "What shall the end be?".

The Final Chapters

1) Observation

- a) In the consideration of prophecy there is one aspect which we can easily miss. It is God's unfolding of the manifested defeat of Satan. Whither it is any of the resurrections of which there are at least four: The rapture (1 Thess 4:13-17); the resurrection of the two witnesses (Rev. 11:9-12); the saved persons (Dan. 12:1-2); or the unsaved (Rev. 20:12-13); each one is a tumultuous declaration of Satan's defeat, for he had the power of death (Heb. 2:14).
- b) It is very hard for Satan to accept his ultimate demise which, in the type of the Old Testament king, he is almost jeered in his humiliation. Isaiah speaks in this way: "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming . . . All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave . . . How art thou fallen from

Front Page - 2015 08

The Grand Finale

heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! . . . thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit” (Isa. 14:9-16). Utter humiliation and ignominy, accompanied by complete defeat, awaits Satan, and every event in the prophetic calendar is a movement toward God’s supreme purpose which is God as all in all and Satan utterly removed eternally (1 Cor. 15:28).

- c) It is my understanding that there are multiple major events. Our meditation will focus on the presentation and formalization of Christ. (Rev. Chs. 4-5)

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2) The Background of Revelation 4-5

- a) As in any situation it is important to understand the background of the event and for this situation the background is found in Psalms 93, 97, 99; Dan. 2:44; 7:9-21. In Revelation chapter four God is seated on the throne of the universe, it is not on earth (Matt. 19:28; 25:31), neither in an undisclosed place (Rev. 20:11) but in Heaven. He is the Moral and Final Authority of the Universe, the Judge and Sovereign of all events. There are many Biblical sights which are frightening (Rev. 6:13-16) and this is one of them. God is never seen ascending the throne for He sits there in permanency, ruling over the kingdoms of man (2 Chron. 20:6; Dan. 5:21).
- b) The three above mentioned Psalms all begin the same way: “The Lord reigneth”, with Psalm 92 stating: “there is no unrighteousness in Him” (Psa. 92:15). Due to His moral character there are exclamations and exultations praising His holiness (Psa. 93:5; 97:12; 99:9) which is in accord with (Rev. 4:8) declaring that the rule of God is an administration of holiness. Furthermore, these Psalms all have to do with the millennium, and when the Lord reigns then we find that (apart from Psalm 94 where the Lord judges before the millennium) the intervening Psalms emphasize the truth of Heaven and earth's rejoicing (Psa. 92:1; 95:1; 96:1; 98:1) when God’s manifested rule is evident. He is unchanging in His position, the character of His judgment, and His goal which is the rule of heaven on earth, the answer to that which is called the Lord’s prayer (Matt. 6:10).

3) Revelation 4-5

- a) The Throne Sitter and His characteristics:
- i) The characteristics of the rule of God are indicated by the matters spoken of. For instance, before the Throne there are seven lamps burning, that is light which consumes all that which is contrary to God and this government of covertness. The rainbow reveals Him as the God of the covenant (Gen. 9:13) which, being like an emerald, is a fixed green indicative of the unchanging freshness of His covenant whither it has to do with Christ manifested as Judge (Acts 17:31); King (Psa. 2:6); the assurance for victory (Psa. 45:3-6); or creation in the

Front Page - 2015 08

The Grand Finale

millennium (Isa. 11:6-11; 35:1-2). The song of worship is centered upon His creating and purpose: “Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure (will) they are and were created” (Rev. 4:11). God’s glorious purpose is to remove all that is contrary to God and establish all under His rule. This begs the question: “How can and will this be done, for it must be done by a man?” (Heb. 2:5-9)

b) The Crisis:

i) The cry goes forth: “Who is worthy?”, and the answer is: “No man is found worthy!” (Rev. 5:2-3). Suddenly it appears that all the purposes of God for Christ and His own glory have been stopped and John begins to weep (Rev. 5:4). I understand it to extend beyond humanity and indicate that no individual, whither satanic, angelic, or human, has the legal and moral qualifications.

c) The Declaration and Confirmation:

i) At this point John’s attention is directed to one who is the “Lion of the tribe of Judah or the Root of David” but sees Him as a Lamb, slain. I am aware that it is often said “freshly slain”, but I can find no evidence for the word “freshly” in this passage. What is taught is that the Lamb has the manifestations of having been slain and is standing, that is, He is raised from the dead. Furthermore, He has perfection of power (the seven horns) and a perfection of perception (the seven eyes). (Rev. 5:6)

ii) The only man in all creation, the only individual in all the universe, who can righteously meet the requirement of God and to whom God can entrust this great work is the Lamb who was slain. What a responsibility is His? The man who John is directed to will have the responsibility to break every opposition to God and utterly remove all that is contrary to His holiness, and set up the kingdom of the God of Heaven (Dan. 2:44). Whither the opposition is against the government of God, the covenants of God, or the presence of God, Christ is the only one who can fulfill the task. The Throne Sitter holds the book of judgments, but where is there a man that is worthy to look, open, and read the book? Whoever He is He must have the moral qualifications and legal rights to be the King of Israel. To be able to judge all others He must be free from sin, free from partiality, and be fully capable to judge according to the rebellions committed. The law of sowing and reaping must follow through just as with Adoni-bezek (Jud. 1:7), and those who slaughter the saints (Rev. 13:10; 16:6).

d) The Confirmation, which is the presentation of Christ to God as the Ancient of Days:

i) Daniel chapter seven presents a glorious view of the events. Amidst pomp and glory and with the clouds (the angelic hosts, Dan. 7:13) in attendance, the Lord (the Lamb) is brought to the Throne sitter in whose hand is a scroll. Deliberately and in full awareness of the responsibility of taking the scroll, the Lamb takes the book out of the hand of God. It is an amazing sight, the Moral Governor of the Universe is handing over the responsibility of all judgment which will bring about God being all in all to the man who was slain and is now alive! Does God let Him take the scroll? “Yes”, and when He takes it heaven erupts in praise and worship.

ii) This is the scroll which contains God’s secret (as far as unsaved man is concerned) of how His judgment will fall and His kingdom come. The Lamb is God’s appointed Judge (Jn. 5:22, 27) and He has secured the right to Judge because He is the Son of Man, and the right to take and open the book because He was slain and redeemed men to God by His blood (Rev. 5:9). By His death He has judged sin and released man from the power of Satan and sin, making them kings and priests unto God. That scroll is the unveiling of how the heathen will become His inheritance (Psa. 2:8), and His Kingdom will come with man understanding the truth Nebuchadnezzar said so long ago (Dan. 5:21).

Front Page - 2015 08

The Grand Finale

e) The Celebration:

- i) When the Lord takes the scroll the exultation really begins. First, from the twenty four elders (Rev. 5:8), then in crescendo like fashion many angels around the throne, ten million and thousands of thousands begin to praise, then lifting to another level: “every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea” begin their acknowledgment and declaration of His worth-ship (Rev. 5:13). They sing a total of five songs:
1. Two are ascribed to God (Rev. 4:8-11)
 2. Two to Christ (Rev. 5:8-12)
 3. And one ascribed to God and Christ in perfect equality (Rev. 5:13).

I have heard some of the greatest choirs of earth from several hundred singers to many thousands, but to be in that choir and join in heart full appreciation of the worthiness of Christ will be unspeakable. Heaven’s vaults will reverberate as voices in perfect pitch and multi levels begin to sing the three fold song:

“Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.”

- ii) Then it would seem to me there is a moment of silence, followed by two glorious happenings:
1. The four beasts (Living creatures) say “Amen”
 2. The twenty-four elders fall down and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever.

As I muse on these things my heart sings, and like a child filled with excitement at a birthday party, I rejoice and impatiently wait for those events of unspeakable joy. May God open our eyes to appreciate the wonder of that which lies ahead.

. . . . Rowan Jennings