

VICTORY!

SETTING THE STAGE

- Today chapters are in many ways the climax of the whole Scriptures.
- Not “the end”; not necessarily “the best bit” –like the hobbits on Mount Doom.

IN THE GARDEN (CURSE)

- Adam & Eve created for loving relationship with God and each other.
- They disobey, and God gives them the consequences of their actions – the Curse. Thorns, pain, relational strife.
- Then He promises that the offspring of Eve will crush the head of the snake.

THE EXODUS (CURTAIN)

- God’s people have been enslaved, but God rescues them powerfully.
- As He accompanies them through the desert, they cannot face Him, and plead with Moses to talk to God on their behalf. This separation of God from direct contact with His people continues with a tent and the Holy of Holies. God dwells behind a curtain.
- Cherubim on the curtain – the same as held the flashing sword in Eden.
- But God promises to Moses that He will raise up “a prophet like you” from amongst the people.

THE KINGDOM (CHAOS)

- God’s people kept rebelling, and wanted a human king over them.
- God gave them Saul, but he rejected God. Then He gave them David, a man after His own heart. But after David’s death, the people kept rebelling against God and the Davidic line fails.
- But God promises to David that his throne will be established forever.

THE SILENCE (CORRUPTION)

- Again and again throughout history, wicked people prosper and those who try to be righteous suffer. More than that, even those who try to be righteous, fail to do so.
- But God promises that He will send a messenger like Elijah as a warning, and then come to right wrongs and bring justice, bringing righteousness like the rising sun.

SO – FOUR ENEMIES, FOUR PROMISES

- Curse, Curtain, Chaos, Corruption
- Crush the serpent, raise up a prophet, establish David’s throne, restore righteousness

THE WORK OF CHRIST

- When looking at the death and resurrection of Christ, it is common to focus on Christ's payment for our sins in our place. This is a good focus!
- There are other ways of looking at what happened – not contradicting, but enriching.

PROMISES FULFILLED

- Eve and the Curse
 - Victory over the curse symbolised in wearing the crown of thorns.
 - Offspring of Eve crushing the serpent:

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son ... having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. (Col 1 & 2)

- Moses and the Curtain
 - The curtain is torn in two. The cherubim lower their flashing swords.

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. (Heb 10)

- David's kingship vs Chaos
 - David was the Shepherd King, and shepherds suffer for their sheep. So however brutally it was meant, the crown of thorns was fitting.
 - But more than that, in keeping with how the Kingdom of God works, as Christ humbled Himself more than any other, He was raised higher than any other.

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2)

- Malachi's promise and mankind's Corruption
 - Jesus: "Elijah has already come". John the Baptist, preparing the hearts of the people. Zechariah's prophecy over his son:

And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven... (Luke 1:78)

- The sun of righteousness has risen, granting to us His righteousness and bringing healing – physical, mental, and spiritual.

VICTORY WON

- Christ has conquered death. If His death on the cross speaks of atonement, of victory over sin, His resurrection and ascension to heaven speak of His victory over death.
- We are “raised with Christ”, “co-heirs with Christ”, “more than conquerors”. We get to live in victory.
 - That can be misused: “I’m victorious so I’m going to get that promotion” or “I’m victorious so I’ll survive this illness” or even “I’m victorious so my children won’t ever doubt their faith.”
 - We need to remember that some victories are won on crosses, and some in resurrections.
 - The point is this – Christ has won! And because of Him, whether in suffering or in triumph, we can also “reign in life”.

For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God’s wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ. (Rom 5:17)