Heb.12:2- “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author & finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

**1)** Today we are going to consider the significance of the end of our Christian race from the last section of these verses. There we read about Christ, that He “has set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” While this last section of verse 2 specifically tells us about Christ’s victory & the reward He has entered, Christ has also showed us the race we can accomplish- to join in His victory & reward!

TITLE OF OUR MESSAGE: **THE TRIUMPH OF THE OVERCOMERS**

**2)** We know Christ finished His race, His mission at the cross: Jesus cried out “it is finished,” which is one word in the original Greek: “Tetelasti.” It meant His mission was accomplished! The war is won!

**3)** Descending in death into the lower parts of the earth (Eph.4:9). Proclaiming His victory, Jesus rose again with the keys of death and hell!

**4)** After 40 days, He ascended back to heaven in the clouds…. Returning as the triumphant King!

**5)** Daniel saw a vision of when Christ returned to heaven, to be honored & rewarded by God the Father, called “The Ancient of Days” in Daniel’s vision, chapter 7:9-10 & 13-14

“I watched until the thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days sat, whose robe was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool. His throne was like flames of fire, and His wheels like burning fire. A stream of fire went out and came out from before Him. A thousand thousands served Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The judgment was set, and the books were opened….I saw in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And dominion and glory was given Him, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages, should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

**6)** When Christ returned to heaven, he sat down on the throne of God, having finished His race and entered into His reward (Rev.5:6 John saw Christ the Lamb at the Throne of God)

**7)** Christ is resting in His triumph as the Victor- waiting for the Father to place all the enemies under His feet (the church!) There will be victory- and authority- out of Zion!

“The Lord (God the Father) said to my Lord (God the Son), Sit at My right hand until I place Your enemies as Your footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion: rule in the midst of Your enemies.”  -Psalm 110:1-2 The Old Testament Zion was the place of David’s throne, but the New Testament heavenly Zion is at the throne of Jesus, the Son of David, Rev.14:1-3.

**8)** Christ is resting in His triumph seated on His throne, awaiting the timing of the Father: waiting for the full victory to be revealed

1 Cor.15:23-25 THE STEPS TO FINAL VICTORY: “But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward those who are Christ's at his coming (the Second Coming).   Then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to God the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet.”

9) Waiting for His people to also finish their race & be prepared for His return

10) Christ is waiting for us to finish the race and enter into His triumph and reward!

11) Last chapter of the Bible- some of the very last words of Christ to His people:

Rev.22:12- “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”

- We cannot earn salvation by our good works (only Christ’s good work on the cross can bring us salvation)

- But we gain eternal rewards & honor by our works- by how we run our race!

When Christ finished His life’s work, He sat down on the throne of God- but in Rev.3:21 The Lord told us,

12) “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and have sat down with My Father in His throne.” -Rev.3:21 THE FATHER & SON TOGETHER- & US!

13) Christ will return from heaven as the King of kings, to sit on His throne in Jerusalem for 1000 years: “For the Lord Almighty will reign on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and before His elders with great glory”-Is.24:23

14) Zech 14 is a beautiful prophecy of the second coming of Christ- how He will return just when the Jews are losing the last battle for Jerusalem- then Christ returns to rescue them! Then as the Messiah, Jesus, reigns in Jerusalem for 1000 years, we are told in verse 16: “And it shall be, everyone who is left of all the nations… shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.” As we are nearing the return of Christ and the starting of His millennial kingdom, Christians from around the world have started to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles, as we see in this picture. It is a sign that the kingdom of Christ is at hand- Jesus is coming soon!

15) But while Christ will rule the world for 1000 years as the King of kings, he will not be the only one sitting on a throne! John recorded what He was told about the coming kingdom of God: “and I saw thrones, and they sat on them…. they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” -Rev.20:4 & 6.

- THOSE WHO FINISH THEIR CHRISTIAN RACE WELL WILL ALSO SHARE IN CHRIST’S TRIUMPH!

16) Jesus the King of kings- but many kings! David will be Israel’s King for 1,000 years: “But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.” -Jer.30:9

17) Jesus declared that the 12 Apostles will sit and rule on thrones as governors

“And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel.’” –Mt.19:28 (Judas replaced by Matthias in Acts 1)

18) REIGNING WITH CHRIST:
 1. KING OF KINGS: Jesus!

 2. KINGS- David ruling Israel, Jer.30:9. Perhaps Joseph ruling Egypt, and Esther ruling Iran?
 3. GOVERNORS- 12 Apostles over the 12 provinces of Israel & many others in other nations
 4. MAYORS- multitudes of faithful servants of God, Lk.19:17 & 19

 5. LOCAL POSITIONS OF LEADERSHIP in each nation?

 MULTITUDES WILL ENTER THE TRIUMPH OF THE OVERCOMERS!

19) Not only will victorious Christians be rulers in the coming kingdom, they will also be priests!

 - Rev.1:6 “And has made us a kingdom, priests to our God”

 - 1 Pet.2:9 “You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood” -a *kingly* priesthood!

20) Priests are to teach the people the ways of God: MANY TEACHERS IN CHRIST’S KINGDOM!

 Mal.2:7 “For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, & they should seek the law at his

 mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.” Teach the difference between the

 clean and the unclean.

21) Zion has a strong calling to the teaching ministry, in the Old Testament, among New

 Testament churches with the vision of Zion today, and for Zion in the Millennium!

“And many people shall go and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and **he will teach us of his ways**, and we will walk in his paths: for **out of Zion shall go forth the law**, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” -Isaiah 2:3

 Many of you have a calling to teach God’s Word- & as priests in the Millennium!

22) OTHER PRIESTLY MINISTRIES: SONGLEADERS, MUSICIANS & SINGERS. In O.T. Israel, all the singers & musicians were priests. These will also be Millennium Ministries!

23) There will be worship celebrations! Ps.149:3 “Let them praise His name with the dance”

24) There will be Feasts to Celebrate (ex: the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Harvest)

 Passover will be a great feast- for the Jews in the Millennium & for Christians

 \* There may be more yearly celebrations & holidays, led by the Millennial Priests!

 -perhaps the day of Christ’s 2nd coming will become a worldwide holiday: LIBERATION DAY!

25) Maybe Christmas will be purified & celebrated! (A lot of mixture today, but also good!)

26) When we finish our race & enter our reward, there will be much for the kings (rulers) and priests (spiritual leaders & teachers) to do for 1000 years!

“And has made us kings and priests to our God, and we shall reign on the earth” -Rev.5:10

27) The Christian race that we are all to run is not just for a few ultra-spiritual saints to win!

 Multitudes-many millions-will win & enter great victory &triumph!

-yes, there are weak denominations and backsliding nations, where many *will* fail: but that does

 not have to be ***us***! that does not have to be ***you****!* Each of us who is listening to this message can

 become overcomers and run your race victoriously!

-Proverbs 13:20 tells us, He who walks with the wise shall be wise, but a companion of fools

 shall be destroyed.” Walk with the wise- run with the overcomers! Look to Jesus!

-Always remember the great cloud of witnesses, those who finished triumphantly!

-Fellowship with those who are running after God!

**-WE CAN ALL OVERCOME THE DIFFICULTIES WE FACE IN RUNNING AFTER GOD & FULFILLING HIS CALLING!** As God told Paul when he was repeatedly attacked by a messenger of satan & he asked for deliverance- “**My grace is sufficient for you**” -for ***you***!

28) We can all join Christ & the heroes of faith! They didn’t all work miracles etc., many of their

 trials of faith are the same as we face!

- One work of faith: overcoming poor living conditions (Abraham, Heb.11:9-10) – He lived in a

 foreign country- lived in a tent! Abraham didn’t live in a prosperous city, like sinful

 Sodom, or in a nice house (like his nephew Lot)- Abraham waited for a city, whose builder and

 maker was God- therefore God prepared a city for him. Heb.11:16

-Overcome health difficulties (Sarah)- She was barren- maybe your health makes it difficult for

 you to fulfill God’s call on your life- but God can give you a breakthrough!

-Overcome persecution & accusation (Joseph) His family persecuted him and sold him for

 money… Potiphar’s wife accused him of attempted rape, and had him thrown in prison…

-Overcome worldly wealth & honor (Moses). He “considered the reproach of Christ as greater

 riches than the treasures of Egypt- for he looked to the reward,” Heb.11:26. We can also go

 beyond looking for worldly riches and fame: look towards the end of the race!

-overcome moral failure (Samson) He suffered greatly for his sins- down, but not out!

\* Have you fallen into moral failure? get back up- start running again!

\* You are listening to this message because God has not forgotten you!

Don’t look at your failures- don’t listen to the accusations & lies of satan

Look to Jesus, the author & finisher of your faith: “He that began a good work in you shall complete it” “God’s grace is sufficient for you” - Look to Jesus! Listen to the encouragement of the cloud of witnesses, cheering you on!

WE ALL FACE DIFFICULTIES -BUT WE CAN ALL WIN THE RACE!

29) At the end of our race, may we all say, like Paul, “I have finished the race- now a crown of righteousness is waiting for me.”

30) And may we all look to Jesus- may we hear Him say to our hearts, “I have finished the race and have entered My reward – now you run the race with endurance! My grace is sufficient for you! He that overcomes will sit on My throne with Me!