

Super Bowl



Every year there is a final to determine who will be the champion of the NFL (National Football League) in the US.

The Super Bowl of 2020, played in Miami in February 2020, was a classic game between the Kansas City Chiefs and the San Francisco 49-ers. The game went backwards and forwards – towards an amazing ending for Kansas City.

So what has this got to do with anything? Well, we live in a world where there is a constant battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Right from the start of time, the devil has been waging all-out war against God and this battle is still going on. But maybe we can learn something from the Super Bowl...

Revelation 12.10-12 (from the 'NLT' translation of the Bible)

Then I heard a loud voice shouting across the heavens,

"It has come at last—
salvation and power
and the Kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Christ.
For the accuser of our brothers and sisters
has been thrown down to earth—
the one who accuses them
before our God day and night.
And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb
and by their testimony.
And they did not love their lives so much
that they were afraid to die.
Therefore, rejoice, O heavens!
And you who live in the heavens, rejoice!
But terror will come on the earth and the sea,
for the devil has come down to you in great anger,
knowing that he has little time."

OK so since Genesis 3 we find that there has been a war between God and the devil for the whole of time. The devil was sent packing because of his pride, arrogance, his attempts to overthrow God so that he could try to be 'God'.

But God removed him and his supporters before he could do anything (they would never have succeeded anyway because God is so much more powerful than the devil it'd be like an tiny bug trying to kill an elephant...)

But since then the devil is furious, hates God and hates anyone who believes in God. So he does whatever he can to stop God's plans. He tried to kill mankind at the beginning of time, tried to wipe out Israel (and keeps on trying), tried to kill Jesus and persecutes the church in every nation.

He also tricks people into thinking that God is trying to control people and ruin their 'fun' so he sets up all kinds of things for people to do to 'be free'. But actually all these things are empty and lead people into destruction.

So we are in a very real battle and there are only two sides. You are either with God or you are against God. There is no middle ground and you cannot be 'neutral'.

The Bible tells us that one day the devil will be destroyed by Jesus with just one breath. But history has to play out first – God is at work helping as many people as he can. There are some dramatic and scary things that will happen in the world (see Revelation) but if you believe in Jesus, you don't have to fear. And the good thing is that God wins (in fact the Bible say he has already won – we're just watching the end of the battle). One day all evil will end and the devil will be destroyed.

Back to the Super Bowl



The Super Bowl 2020 was a game that was hard fought with two sides doing their best to win. At times it got a little bit messy... a bit like life as a Christian can be at times.

We're going to think of the Super Bowl as a representation of this fight between good (God) and evil (devil). In this little pretend scene, we're going to use Kansas City Chiefs (KC) to represent God and the San Francisco 49ers (SF) to represent the devil.

But remember, this representation is just made up!! Obviously in real life, San Francisco are not the devil and Kansas City is not God – I know, I've lived there for a bit!!

So the Super Bowl started and SF went ahead...

In a way this must have been how things felt after God created the world and then man messed up and rejected God. It must have looked like the devil was winning when he got man and woman to turn against God. But Genesis 3 tells us that God had a game plan up his sleeve... We find that in Genesis 3 when God revealed his future plan of Jesus – saying that the devil would do some damage but God's plan would smash the devil out of the game.

Kansas City go 10-3 up

In the next phase of the game, it looked like Kansas City were going away with the game. They scored a touchdown and then kicked a field goal to make it 10-3. When Jesus came to the earth, the people thought he was going to be the one who would overcome the Roman Empire, start a revolution and be the 'Quarterback' they'd always thought of.

San Francisco make a come back

Then the 49ers started a comeback with a touchdown, bringing them back to 10-10 in the game so at half time, the score was tied at 10-10. The disciples must have thought that Jesus was getting ready to start this revolution of God's power and love when he started training them to live out his Kingdom. They'd seen Jesus heal all who were sick and everyone who the devil was deliberately injuring. Jesus turned it all around. But then suddenly, they found Jesus was arrested and taken away. Then he was crucified on a Cross. How could Jesus, the Messiah (the 'chosen one') – the 'perfect quarterback' be killed? What was going on?

It looked like stalemate.



In the second half, the 49ers go into the lead

The 49ers started the half by scoring a field goal, taking the score to 13-10.

If we think about the story of Jesus, this must have looked like what was happening to the disciples. Jesus was crucified and it seemed like the church was defeated. But God still had a plan.

But then the 49ers scored a converted touchdown, making the game 20-10 to San Francisco. When we think about what had happened to the disciples – Jesus was taken away; he was tortured; he then suffered death on a cross. The disciples were now feeling lost and abandoned, not knowing what to do. Then someone reported that the grave where Jesus had been taken, was empty.

What was going on? Where was God? And more importantly, where was Jesus?

This is a good time to think about where we are at the moment in the 2020s and Revelation 12 seems pretty appropriate right now – as do Bible chapters like Matthew 24. This is not a political statement or anything against anyone but we live in a world that seems increasingly hostile to Christians and their beliefs.

Christians are under attack from communist governments, in Islamic countries, in Hindu nations and even across the West from secular liberals who want to silence Christianity and remove it from history and every day life. Christians are being killed around the world and even in the West, there is a growing hostility from people in media and power, with some Christians losing their jobs, being hated and losing businesses.

Christians even seem divided. It seems like people who hate God are getting the upper hand. But stand strong. God has a plan and he is working out his plan. God has already won the battle, even when some fights seem to be lost. God's way is also unlike any other way. God's love is about loving even enemies, forgiving others, blessing those who hate God and carrying on doing good.

When Chinese churches had aid money taken away from them by the government, they went out in the streets during the Corona Virus and brought people help and God's love anyway. So stay strong, stay united and stay showing God's kind of love!

The Chiefs make a comeback

In the second half, the Chiefs then rallied and scored a touchdown, with the ball being thrown 44 yards for the score. The score was now 20-17 to San Francisco. This was just the start of the turnaround.

Back to the disciples who were still reeling from losing Jesus. But then Mary came along and had seen Jesus, alive. Things were looking up! Then Jesus appeared to other disciples like Peter and even those with doubts like Thomas.

Back to the Super Bowl

Kansas City then went on to score another touchdown, taking the score to 24-20 to the Chiefs.

The disciples were given a great boost when in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit was given by God and the disciples were filled with God's presence. In the past, God had been with people and had even spoken through them. But now, God was living in the spiritual hearts of all his people – God in us, the hope of glory.

Then, the Kansas City Chiefs scored again, 31-20 the final score

One day, Jesus will return. That day is getting much closer. The Bible says all kinds of things about what the world will look like just before he returns and as ever, the Bible is spot on. There are wars, nationalism, a much higher level of stress, people going out of their way to be offended by others, people hating Christians and events in our climate that are signalling the world is gradually decaying.

It's ironic that many of the things that people are doing to silence Christianity, saying it's not real or true, are actually things (that God predicted) that therefore prove Christianity is real and true!

But one day God says he will make all things right. God is a God of complete, total and perfect justice. Not only does God 'win' but he will also set things straight – he'll turn things the right way up. And he will reward those who love him and have served him the best they can. And these rewards won't just be for 80 or so years that people live but for ever – eternity.

Back to the Super Bowl, the MVP (most valuable player) was Patrick Mahomes, the Kansas City Quarterback. He's a strong Christian. Along with other players, he prayed on his knees before the Super Bowl and gave God praise for everything. The chairman and CEO is Clark Hunt who is also a strong Christian who gave God glory for everything and said his identity is in Christ. Now I bet you didn't read about that on the BBC! (You didn't, as they didn't say anything about that! Equality doesn't seem to include Christians...)

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